

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 1988

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The House met at 2.30 p.m.

ABSENCE OF MR SPEAKER

The Clerk informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr Speaker.

The Chairman of Committees (Mr E. C. Row, Hinchinbrook) read prayers and took the chair as Acting Speaker.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Development of Moreton Bay

From Mr Burns (191 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will make available for public scrutiny and debate all reports and recommendations affecting the development of Moreton Bay.

Compulsory Wearing of Safety Helmets by Cyclists

From Mr McPhie (113 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will legislate to ensure the compulsory wearing of safety helmets by cyclists.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Intellectually Handicapped Citizens Council of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1988.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Order in Council under the Fisheries Act 1976-1984

Regulations under—

Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Act 1984-1988

Motor Vehicles Safety Act 1980-1985

State Transport Act 1960-1985

Children's Services Act 1965-1988

Reports—

Egg Marketing Board (South Queensland) for the year ended 24 June 1988

Royal Children's Hospital Foundation for the year ended 30 June 1988.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Voluntary Employment Agreement for Sea World Employees

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Peak Downs—Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs) (2.34 p.m.), by leave: I am greatly concerned about statements currently being made by the Trades and Labor Council, apparently on behalf of a large number of major unions in Queensland.

The Trades and Labor Council has sought a dispute conference in the Industrial Commission over an attempt by Sea World on the Gold Coast to invoke a voluntary

employment agreement. Inherent in statements that the TLC secretary, Mr Dempsey, has been making is a threat of industrial action against this employer if attempts to obtain a voluntary employment agreement are continued.

The kindest thing that I could say about Mr Dempsey and his colleagues in regard to this issue is that they totally misunderstand the legislation. Mr Dempsey has made comments in the media that the implementation of such an agreement could leave the employees without the protection of an independent body. I point out that that is not the case, since the legislation contains a positive role for the State Industrial Commission and protection for all parties.

Mr Dempsey is reported in the media as saying that these workers are being treated like dolphins. However, it would seem that Mr Dempsey himself has a very low opinion of the capacity of the employees involved to make decisions and, indeed, choices about their own working conditions. In the first ballot conducted, some 95 per cent of the Sea World work-force expressed support for a voluntary employment agreement. The TLC obviously believes in democracy only when everyone else agrees with it.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr LESTER: Once again, this is an example of the union movement wishing to place itself above the law of the land. Voluntary employment agreements are established under an Act of this Parliament and are available for the use of all employers and employees covered by the Queensland Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

When the legislation was prepared, the Government had to include a provision in respect of the type of action that is now apparently being contemplated by the union movement. Accordingly, the Industrial (Commercial Practices) Act was amended to make it an offence for unions to induce an employer or an employee not to enter into a voluntary employment agreement.

I suggest to Mr Dempsey and his colleagues that they bear very much in mind the existence of this provision before they contemplate any further action which could hurt them and an important tourist attraction in Queensland.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Babinda Sugar-mill

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Primary Industries) (2.38 p.m.), by leave: I refer to a statement made yesterday by the honourable member for Mulgrave during the Matters of Public Interest debate concerning the Babinda sugar-mill. The Babinda co-operative mill has had a number of difficulties to overcome since it was severely damaged by cyclone Winifred in February 1986.

As honourable members are aware, a joint Queensland/Commonwealth financial assistance package was made available to the Babinda co-operative to facilitate rationalisation of the industry in the Innisfail/Babinda area by the purchase and closure of the Goondi mill and the rezoning of Goondi assignments between the Babinda and Mourilyan mills. Over \$12m was involved, with \$8m coming from the State. Naturally, with such a large investment of public funds, both the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments insisted on certain conditions especially regarding the future management of the Babinda co-operative. These conditions were agreed by the Babinda directors and the growers at a special general meeting.

With regard to the composition of the Babinda co-operative board of directors—the agreed requirement, which I emphasise was one of the pre-conditions of the financial assistance, was that the board would be made up of three Babinda grower representatives, two ex-Goondi grower representatives and two independent directors with financial, commercial or industrial backgrounds, who were acceptable to both the Commonwealth

and Queensland Governments. One of those independent directors was to be appointed chairman and a Babinda grower representative was to be appointed deputy chairman.

The Government-appointed directors were to remain on the board for five years whilst the grower-elected directors were to commence retiring but be eligible for re-election after three years. At the end of five years, all original directors, Government as well as grower, were to have retired.

It is important to note that on a grower director's retirement, that is, at the end of the third year, the replacement director was to be elected by Babinda growers generally, not on a regional basis. At the end of year five, all grower directors would have been elected by Babinda growers generally and it would be expected that the Government directors would then have stood down.

I emphasise that these were some of the pre-conditions of Commonwealth/State financial assistance which were agreed by the co-operative's grower suppliers. They were put in place to provide a reasonable level of protection for substantial public funds.

The honourable member for Mulgrave also raised supposed details of an offer by the Bundaberg Sugar Company Limited for the Babinda co-operative mill. Let me make it absolutely clear that the Bundaberg Sugar Company Limited has not made a formal offer to purchase the Babinda co-operative mill. Its communication with Babinda could be described as a starting point for discussion.

How the Babinda co-operative responds is a matter for co-operative member shareholders and the directors of the co-operative. In this regard, I expect and require the directors of the co-operative to exercise their duty of care and to acquaint themselves with the details and implications of any offer forthcoming, including any that may come from the Bundaberg Sugar Company Limited. However, as the outcome will have a fundamental impact on all Babinda share-holders, I expect and require the Babinda grower directors to acknowledge their responsibility for communicating the results of that evaluation to their share-holders, bearing in mind that a 75 per cent vote of share-holders present at a meeting is necessary to change the co-operative's rules to allow any sale to take place.

In these circumstances, I do not think that it is appropriate for the Government-appointed directors to communicate their views publicly, as that could be interpreted as reflecting Government policy. However, because of the well-known commercial skills of the two Government-appointed directors, I am sure that their contribution to the confidential discussions within the board room would be most important.

Following the rationalisation of the sugar-milling operations in the Innisfail/Babinda area in 1986-87, made possible by extensive Government financial assistance, the Babinda co-operative mill is now operating efficiently. Mill upgrading has resulted in a reliable crushing rate of 345 tonnes of cane per hour, and the budgeted profit for 1988-89 is forecast at \$2m.

I believe that the Babinda co-operative share-holders, both the original and those rezoned from Goondi, want to get on with the job of growing and milling sugar-cane. That is why the Commonwealth and State Governments backed them so substantially after cyclone Winifred. I believe that the resultant restructuring has established a viable business enterprise and I wish the share-holders every success in continuing their participation in the sugar industry on a sound commercial footing.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. Coal-miners' Average Weekly Earnings and Hours of Work; Coal Industry Tribunal

Mr VAUGHAN asked the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Affairs—

“With reference to the answer he gave to the question asked by the member for Broadsound on 24 August—

(1) What were the average weekly earnings of coal miners for 1987-88?

- (2) What was the weekly award wage for a coal miner as at 30 June 1988?
- (3) What were the average weekly hours of work worked by a coal miner for 1987-88?
- (4) Was the coal mining industry awarded a 35-hour week in 1971?
- (5) Is it not true that he and the Queensland Government support the abolition of the Coal Industry Tribunal?
- (6) Is it not true that he and the Queensland Government supported the abolition of the 17.5 per-cent annual leave loading?
- (7) Is it not true that he and the Queensland Government support the abolition of penalty rates?"

Mr LESTER: (1 and 2) Given the range of classifications inherent in the term "coal-miner", and also the fact that the industry is differentiated between the underground and open-cut sectors, it would not be meaningful to attempt to define average weekly earnings or weekly award wages within the industry. The situation is further compounded by the prevalence of overtime, shift allowances and production bonuses that would vary greatly from one worker to another.

(3) Miners usually work a minimum 40-hour week, consisting of 35 hours at ordinary time and five hours' overtime. An additional eight hours' overtime may be worked, resulting in maximum overtime of 13 hours a week.

(4) Yes.

(5) There is a general acceptance of a need to change the structure of the way that industrial relations in the coal industry are handled. That is a general conception. In fact, the Commonwealth Government has on many occasions supported the abolition or restructuring of the Coal Industry Tribunal.

In early July this year, the Prime Minister convened a meeting in Canberra with the Premiers from Queensland and New South Wales and their Ministers for Labour to discuss the industrial relations situation in the coal industry. All Governments agreed that there was a need for change and that discussions about the matter would continue.

(6 and 7) The honourable member's question is directed at the coal industry, and benefits such as holiday loading and penalty rates for that industry are set by the Coal Industry Tribunal. The Queensland Government has never made any submissions in that tribunal on these matters. The Government's policy is that such matters are properly dealt with within the structures of the appropriate tribunals.

2. Tertiary Education for Children of Primary Producers

Mr SLACK asked the Minister for Finance and Minister Assisting the Premier and Treasurer—

"With reference to the Federal Labor Government's recent decision to apply an assets test as well as an income test to the families of applicants for AUSTUDY and in view of the lack of income of many rural people due to continuing drought and low commodity prices over the last seven years—

Is he prepared to consider allowing those people in need concessional interest rate loans through the Queensland Industry Development Corporation to enable their children to obtain tertiary education?"

Mr AUSTIN: I am aware of, and deplore, the Commonwealth's decision to apply an assets test on top of the existing income test for Austudy and the Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme. This newly introduced assets test forms part of what the Commonwealth describes as a new commitment to higher education in Australia. I am sure that drought-affected primary producers who are struggling to provide a decent education for their children are not at all impressed with the Commonwealth's so-called new commitment, and I fully appreciate the concerns of the honourable member in regard to the Commonwealth decision.

The State is endeavouring to provide the maximum support possible for drought-affected primary producers within the constraints set by the Commonwealth under the natural disaster relief arrangements. Indeed, the State has put to the Commonwealth a submission seeking, amongst other things, a doubling of the maximum carry-on concessional loan for long-term drought-affected primary producers.

While the State understands the problems that are faced by primary producers in this regard, the fact is that with the severe funding constraints placed on the State by the Commonwealth in an effort to improve its own budgetary position, the State simply has no spare capacity to assist in this area of Commonwealth responsibility.

As an illustration of this, I would again remind honourable members of the last Premiers Conference, where Queensland was offered a 4.2 per cent reduction in real terms in general revenue grants; a massive 32 per cent reduction in Queensland's share of the global borrowing limit; and only partial introduction of the Grants Commission's recommendations which, if fully implemented, would have meant an additional \$40m to Queensland.

The problem raised by the honourable member is a serious one, which I am sure that rural communities will remember well at the next Federal election. It is, however, of the Commonwealth's making and falls fairly and squarely on the Commonwealth to correct.

3. Fruit and Vegetable Exports to New Zealand

Mr SLACK asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

“What is the present situation with fruit and vegetable exports to New Zealand and, if problems do exist, what action is being taken to ensure that Queensland growers are not being disadvantaged within the current free trade policy between Australia and New Zealand?”

Mr HARPER: Exports of fruit and vegetables from Queensland to New Zealand are proceeding normally except for cucurbit vegetables, namely, zucchinis, cucumbers, melons, squash and pumpkins.

On 10 October, New Zealand quarantine authorities placed a suspension on all cucurbit exports out of Queensland following detection of dead larvae in a consignment of zucchinis that was exported out of Brisbane. That was the fourth such interception of cucurbits in the last 12 months. The larvae were dead or dying in all four cases indicating that fumigation procedures that had been carried out on all of those commodities had been successful. No quarantine risk to New Zealand existed. Following detection in 1987, the dosage rate of fumigation was doubled to ensure extra security.

New Zealand has indicated that the suspension will be lifted once a detailed protocol is finalised. This matter has been under discussion between the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service of the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy and the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food since November 1987, and the latest draft is with the New Zealand authorities. This matter should be finalised soon.

A disturbing aspect of this matter is that comments from New Zealand which criticise the inspection systems and methods that are being used on the produce before it is exported are being made in the media. I am concerned also that those comments may have a detrimental effect on Queensland's reputation as a supplier of good-quality produce. Audits of the inspection system have shown that they are effective in detecting insect infestations, and fumigation procedures are also effective. This has been confirmed by detection of only dead larvae in New Zealand.

I am giving consideration to travelling to New Zealand to discuss these matters with the New Zealand authorities. I am concerned that Queensland growers should not be disadvantaged by unjustified action by quarantine authorities in New Zealand, as I

am sure the New Zealand Minister would be if a sector of his industry appeared to be under particular threat.

4. Commission of Inquiry into Fire Services

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Corrective Services and Administrative Services—

“With reference to his recently announced inquiry into fire services and his commitment several weeks ago to announce the Commission to assist the Commissioner—

- (1) How many members will sit on the Commission?
- (2) Will he name the members of the Commission?
- (3) Will he explain the delay in naming the members of the Commission?”

Mr COOPER: (1 to 3) The commission of review of fire services, as widely publicised recently, consists of one person. She is consultant Dr Sally Leivesley, a Queensland-born expert on the organisation and delivery of fire services who has an international reputation in this field. What the honourable member probably was thinking about when he framed his question is the special advisory group which I said was being formed to assist Dr Leivesley.

That group has been drawn from a wide range of people with an interest in fire services. Among its members are fire-fighters, union, local authority and fire brigade board representatives, business and industry-leaders. Each member of the advisory group has been contacted by me and agreed to serve on the body assisting Dr Leivesley when the review begins officially on 1 November.

I seek leave to table details of the advisory group for the interest of members.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr COOPER: I might add that already a number of submissions have been received, the first of which were from individual fire-fighters. Submissions are invited from all community organisations and individuals who believe that they can make a contribution to that important review. Such submissions will remain confidential to Dr Leivesley unless the contributors agree to their being published in part or full at a later stage in the review process.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr Justice Vasta

Mr GOSS: In directing a question to the Premier, I point out that it relates to the position of Mr Justice Vasta. I do not seek to canvass in any respect any allegations or criticisms in respect of His Honour.

I refer to a letter dated today, which was sent by Mr Justice Vasta to the Premier, a copy of which I table.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr Austin: He sent it to you.

Mr GOSS: That is not correct. That is simply not correct. It is false.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will be allowed to ask his question.

Mr GOSS: I refer to the letter from Mr Justice Vasta to the Premier dated today, a copy of which I have tabled, in which Mr Justice Vasta expresses a lack of confidence in disclosing confidential matters to the Premier. In view of the way in which Mr Justice

Vasta was removed from the court calendar by Executive Council, and in view of the fact that he asks for the allegations against him to be referred to a panel of judges, I ask: given the strain on the courts from suspending the judge from duty for up to a year, the drain on the public purse and the erosion of public perception of the integrity of the judiciary by the Premier's delaying action until next year, is the Premier prepared to adopt the course of action suggested not only by the Opposition and the Queensland Bar Association but also by Australia's highest legal authority on the matter, Mr Justice Thomas, and appoint a panel of judges to prepare a report for Parliament?

Mr AHERN: A couple of things need to be stated. This commission of inquiry is not being run by the Leader of the Opposition, and it never will be; nor is it being conducted by Mr Justice Vasta. It is being run by Commissioner Fitzgerald, and it is being supported at every level by the Queensland Government. The issues are now being carefully examined, professional advice is being taken and an announcement will be made in due course after appropriate consideration.

Mr Justice Vasta

Mr GOSS: I ask the Premier: in the event that the matters relating to Mr Justice Vasta are dealt with by the Fitzgerald inquiry, as has been suggested, and specifically dealt with in the report to be received by the Government next year, and that there is an adverse finding in relation to Mr Justice Vasta by Mr Fitzgerald in his report, what action will the Government then take to resolve that finding?

Mr AHERN: The question is hypothetical and therefore a nonsense. These issues are being dealt with on a day-to-day basis and we are proceeding carefully and deliberately with the best legal advice in the nation.

Mr Warburton: The best legal advice in the nation?

Mr AHERN: The honourable member for Sandgate is surely not suggesting that he has some better legal advice than we have?

Despite the badgering by honourable members of the Opposition during the year, this Government has always acted properly. None of their predictions in respect of the recommendations that the Government has made have come true. The whole matter has been carried through in a very positive way. The right decision will be made.

Mr Goss interjected.

Mr AHERN: The honourable Leader of the Opposition is interjecting. I ask him today: what is he doing in respect of statements that were made by the honourable member for Wolston at the Labor Party conference and statements that were made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition?

Mr Goss: I thank the honourable member for the question.

Mr AHERN: I have not completed my question at this stage. I would ask him to respond at some appropriate time—not now.

Mr Goss: Have a debate.

Mr AHERN: The issue is quite clear.

Mr Burns: Bring the matter on for debate. You want a debate.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! As far as the Chair is concerned, there will be no debate at the present time. I take it that the Premier has answered the question?

Mr AHERN: No, I have some further comment to offer.

The honourable Leader of the Opposition has been embarrassed by statements made by his front-bench colleagues, and it is up to him to respond to them.

Mr GOSS: I rise to a point of order. The statement is offensive and untrue. I am not embarrassed by the comments made by the member for Wolston. I stand by them. If the Premier wants a debate, let us have a debate. Or is he going to chicken out again? We will have a debate. We will debate the matter when he is ready.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has claimed that words stated by the Premier are offensive to him. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to state those words so that they may be withdrawn.

Mr GOSS: Mr Acting Speaker, I am surprised, but I am happy to do that. What I objected to was the reference to my being embarrassed, there being some implication in that statement that there had been something improper said or done by the member for Wolston and that the Opposition was somehow embarrassed by it. Members of the Opposition are not embarrassed. We stand by what our colleague said, because it is correct and it reflects the public concern.

Mr AHERN: I withdraw any statements that the honourable member finds offensive. Now I will quote to the honourable Leader of the Opposition what the honourable member for Wolston said at the Labor in Politics Convention a couple of weeks ago. He was quite critical of the Fitzgerald commission and its progress to date, particularly in relation to the drug issue in this State. If that is now official Labor Party policy, then that is the policy of the Leader of the Opposition, and he himself is critical of the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr AHERN: Yes, he has.

Mr GOSS: I rise to a point of order.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I consider that the rules generally applying to questions in this House have been severely strained by this exchange between the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. I suggest that the matter now be considered closed in relation to that question.

Increases in Consumer Price Index

Mr FITZGERALD: I ask the Premier: in regard to the latest CPI figures, what is Queensland's position and what is the overall economic outlook for Australia as a result of those statistics?

Mr AHERN: I thank the honourable member for the question. This is the type of issue that ought to occupy a considerable amount of the time of the Parliament. It is a serious issue that affects every man, woman and child in the State of Queensland in terms of their own hip-pocket and the moneys that they have available to them to spend on their daily living.

It is a very serious issue. The plain facts are that Queensland has fared reasonably well in recent statistics. CPI figures that relate to Queensland are 1.5 per cent, whereas the figure for most other States of Australia is considerably higher. Sydney is 2.6 per cent; Labor's Adelaide is 2 per cent; Perth, which is another pride and joy of the Labor Party in Australia, is 2 per cent. It all adds up to an overall figure—if it is extrapolated across a 12-month period—of 7.6 per cent, despite the Budget figure presented by Paul Keating to the national Parliament a few weeks ago of 4.5 per cent. What a farce!

The situation now is that the whole Budget strategy of the Commonwealth Government is clearly flawed. The average Aussie is suffering because of the price of his house and his car and the rising costs of food items, which are indeed of great concern. Labor has forgotten the average Aussie—there is no doubt about that—as its members swan around the nation. Queensland's Leader of the Opposition is now portrayed in that light as sipping champagne with the millionaires. There can be no doubt about that at all.

When this matter was raised at the recent Premiers Conference, the proposition was put to all the State Governments of Australia, including the Labor States, that the States' financial assistance grants should be calculated at an agreed projection of 4.5 per cent. The proposition was pushed very hard by the Commonwealth Government. All the States of Australia, including the Labor States, disagreed with the projections that were being made. The Premiers asked for, and finally received—at the last minute—a recommendation that the real inflation figure be written into the States' grants figures. If that had not happened, it would have created severe embarrassment for all the States of Australia in formulating their Budget strategies. However, the formula agreed to has meant many millions of dollars to the States of Australia.

Clearly, Labor has to get back to the grassroots and start thinking about the capacity of the average Aussie to pay. The Labor Party is running out of average Aussies, and the CPI figures clearly demonstrate that fact.

Amnesty on Illegal Firearms

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Public Works, Main Roads and Expo and Minister for Police, I refer to the amnesty granted Statewide to owners of illegal firearms, which I understand commenced in October, and I ask: when will the amnesty end? Where may illegal firearms be surrendered?

Mr GUNN: The amnesty is being conducted along lines similar to the very successful amnesty that was held in 1985. Several press releases have been issued from the Police Department. I thank the media generally for the great support that has been given to publicising this particular matter. So far, many illegal firearms have been forfeited.

I encourage people who may have any of these guns—and I refer particularly to concealable, unregistered firearms and fully automatic firearms—to hand them in to the nearest police station. I suggest that they do so. For the information of the honourable member, I point out that the amnesty concludes on 31 December.

Townsville General Hospital Psychiatric Unit

Mr BURNS: In directing a question to the Minister for Health, I refer to the serious problems at Townsville General Hospital's Ward 10B and to the *Sixty Minutes* report that was telecast on Sunday night, and I ask: can the Minister give an unqualified assurance that the doctor who had the decency and honesty to expose those problems in the interests of patients will not be dismissed, demoted or victimised in any other way? Can the Minister guarantee that this doctor will not be treated in a manner similar to honest police officers who have been persecuted and driven from the force as a result of statements they made prior to the Fitzgerald inquiry?

Mrs HARVEY: No, I will not give such assurances. The doctor concerned was involved in peddling patients' confidential files to the media. As I said in my ministerial statement, that action cannot be condoned. If that doctor had adopted the right attitude towards patients of that hospital, he would have followed the usual processes that are available to every doctor in this State. He was encouraged to do so.

He wrote letters to me, and I believe that he has told the media that they were never answered. I have in my possession those letters and the responses from my department. Every letter that he has written has been answered.

I am now awaiting the results of the Queensland Medical Board's examinations and the further information that will be provided to me from the Townsville Hospitals Board. In the mean time, I shall be quietly assessing the position of the doctor referred to by the honourable member.

Mr R. J. Gibbs interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Cross-fire and conversation in the Chamber will not be tolerated. The Chamber will come to order.

Introduction of New Schools Grant Scheme

Mr STEPHAN: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I refer to the Federal Labor Government's policy of centralism and its attempts to rule everything and everyone from Canberra. Examples of that policy are World Heritage listing and the expenditure every year of hundreds of millions of dollars on education because of bureaucratic, red-tape administration. In contrast to that, the State Government proposes to introduce a new schools grant scheme. I ask: will that move provide greater flexibility and autonomy for local schools?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Mr Acting Speaker, you would be aware that this scheme was announced in the State Budget. Since then I have been in the process of working out guide-lines and alerting people in school communities that this scheme will be introduced. The scheme has been extremely well received.

It seems to me that it is a bit embarrassing for some members on the Opposition side of the House because they have tried to mount a rearguard attack. An attack has also been made by the Queensland Teachers Union. I refer to yesterday's *Sun*, in which the following article appeared referring to the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha—

“Mr Schuntner said the plan meant control of annual budgets totalling as much as \$1000 million of taxpayers' funds would be transferred to groups and individuals, particularly school principals, who had neither the resources nor the training for these 'enormous' new responsibilities.”

The amount of money he referred to is erroneous.

In regard to the grants themselves, for many years school principals have had the responsibility for administering grants and operating within tight guide-lines. With the implementation of this new initiative, the same amount of money—although enhanced this year by \$5m—will be disbursed to the schools, but the guide-lines have been widened. The result will be a more efficient expenditure of the money.

I also note that the president of the Queensland Teachers Union has been rather critical of this initiative. Yesterday's *Courier-Mail* summed it up well in an article stating—

“The Queensland Teachers Union seemed to base its criticism on political, rather than educational grounds.”

I took note of that and yesterday I received the latest copy of the *Queensland Teachers Union Journal*. That journal contains an article entitled “November Council meeting to decide strategy for 1989 State election”. The article lists five options that the union would like Queensland teachers to follow. The options stated in the article are—

“1. comparison of party policies;”—

there is nothing wrong with that—

“2. support for policies of political parties;

3. campaign to put the Nationals last;”—

honourable members will remember the article I quoted in the *Courier-Mail* stating that the union's criticisms were politically based—

“4. support for the ALP; or

5. stand single issue education candidates in strategic seats and 'auction' preferences.”

This is democracy up for sale by the Queensland Teachers Union.

It is the policy of the Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Association to have the devolution of power and responsibilities back to the schools. The Government has done just that. Initially the president of the QCPCA was extremely supportive of it. However, she met with the QTU, talked it over for a couple of hours and has criticised the initiative, although she loves it in principle. In addition, I received a phone call from another senior member of the QCPCA who was ecstatic about the Government's

initiative and said that it was the best thing that has happened for years. I wonder if that organisation has any consistency.

Articles have come to me from various provincial newspapers throughout Queensland showing that p. and c. spokesmen are extremely supportive of the initiative. One of those articles comes from——

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: No, but I can tell the honourable member that Chinchilla does support it.

This article appeared in the *Morning Bulletin* in Rockhampton——

“A Rockhampton P and C spokesman has welcomed a State Government plan to give parents and teachers control of schools’ purse strings.

Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens Associations Rockhampton branch secretary Mrs Lyn Mitchell said the scheme could be a catalyst to get more parents involved in their children’s education.

‘It puts the authority back into the school and it gives the community a say in what happens,’ she said.

Mrs Mitchell said money would be spent more efficiently and parents would know what was happening with funding.”

The honourable member is quite correct when he says that this Government is offering much more flexibility, in contrast to what happens in Canberra.

Escape of Prisoners from Wacol Gaol

Mr INNES: I ask the Minister for Corrective Services: did two prisoners escape from Wacol gaol last night, are they suspected of having stolen a motor vehicle and— if they did escape—what circumstances led to their escape from a gaol which is more modern than Boggo Road prison?

Mr COOPER: I am not aware of an escape last night of two prisoners from Wacol gaol. I thank the honourable member for the information. If it is correct, I will take the necessary action.

Appointment of Judge Pratt to Commission of Inquiry

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Minister for Justice, I refer to a number of statements made by various Ministers over the past week claiming responsibility for recommending the appointment of Commissioner Fitzgerald or distancing themselves from suggestions that they were promoting the Chairman of the Police Complaints Tribunal, Judge Pratt. I ask: firstly, is the Minister aware that members of the private bar were approached by Judge Pratt to assist him in the proposed commission of inquiry and, secondly, if he is, with what authority or on whose intimation was the judge acting?

Mr CLAUSON: The appointment of Mr Fitzgerald, QC, as the commissioner was a decision taken by Cabinet. That is patently obvious. As to the other matters the honourable member has referred to, I have no knowledge of any of them and therefore cannot answer his question.

Commissions of Inquiry; Cabinet Discussions on Appointments and Support by Mr D. F. Lane for Judge Pratt

Mr LANE: I draw the attention of the Minister for Primary Industries to reports appearing in yesterday morning’s press regarding a statutory declaration that he provided to the Fitzgerald inquiry in which the Minister apparently stated that, in what are normally secret Cabinet discussions, I supported Judge Eric Pratt’s appointment to investigate the matter that was later reported on by Mr Des Sturgess and to head the current police inquiry. I ask the Minister: is it a fact that a number of names were canvassed by Ministers both inside and outside Cabinet as to who would conduct these

inquiries and was Judge Pratt's name only one of those which arose in those discussions? Were Mr Sturgess and, later, Mr Fitzgerald, QC, ultimately the unanimous choices of Cabinet for these tasks, and did this unanimity include myself? Was the Minister in his statutory declaration to the Fitzgerald inquiry suggesting any impropriety on my part in those Cabinet discussions?

Mr HARPER: I thank the honourable member for providing me with a written copy of his question so that I may adequately answer it.

Various options were discussed both inside and outside Cabinet as to the desirable qualifications for persons who may have been suitable for appointment to conduct inquiries into alleged sexual child abuse and male prostitution—the Sturgess inquiry—and into possible illegal activities and associated police misconduct—the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry.

It was in that context that the name of District Court Judge Pratt arose. I have always been of the view that decisions of the Cabinet, once taken, are unanimous. I am not aware of any action taken by the honourable member to dissociate himself from the unanimity of Cabinet's choice in recommending Mr Sturgess, QC, and Mr Fitzgerald, QC.

The statutory declarations provided by me to the inquiry being conducted by Mr Fitzgerald are accurate in detail, but in the particular reference to which the honourable member's question is directed, there should be no interpretation that he did not have a right to put his point of view to the then Premier and members of the Cabinet, if he so elected. I believe that was the right and proper forum.

Reallocation of Milk from Warwick Co-operative Dairy Association Ltd to South Coast Co-operative Dairy Association Ltd

Mr CASEY: In asking a question of the Minister for Primary Industries, I refer to the recent reallocation to the South Coast Co-operative Dairy, following its representations to him, of approximately 3 million litres of milk from the Warwick Co-operative Dairy that had been going to QUF in Brisbane to fulfil its manufacturing milk requirements and in turn to the action of the South Coast Co-operative Dairy, which is 40 per cent owned by QUF, of transferring, at the Minister's insistence, 3 million litres of milk to Norco Co-operative Ltd in New South Wales to fulfil its manufacturing milk requirements so that that company can sell its products on its best markets in Brisbane against its biggest Queensland competitor, QUF, which was getting the milk in the first instance.

In view of the economic problems that this has caused to the well-run Queensland company, Warwick Co-operative Dairy, its support industries and the town of Warwick in exchange for the financial gain of a New South Wales company, Norco, its support industries and the town of Lismore, I now ask: will he explain to the House the reasons why the Queensland National Party Government took such action, especially when the Premier had publicly promised the people of Warwick that he and his Government would look after them?

Mr HARPER: The preamble to the honourable member's question is wrong in fact. The matters to which he refers are presently before the court and therefore should not be dealt with in this place.

Mount Olivet Hospital

Mrs NELSON: In asking a question of the Minister for Health, I refer to recent reports on the financial position of the Mount Olivet Hospital in Brisbane. In the light of the remarkable work being carried out at the hospital, particularly in the care of the aged and hospice services, I now ask: what support does the Queensland Government provide to the hospital and to what extent is the hospital assisted by the Canberra Labor Government?

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs HARVEY: I am sorry. I thought the question was on notice.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I expect the usual decorum to be observed in the Chamber.

Mrs HARVEY: In the time when the Premier was Minister for Health, I was a member of his parliamentary health committee and I sat in on a very detailed meeting on the palliative care requirements of the Mount Olivet Hospital and the grave concern caused by the callous attitude of the Commonwealth Government. The then Health Minister decided that the role of the State Government would be to pick up on the concerns and the fine work done at the Mount Olivet Hospital and to prop it up as best as the Government could.

Since that visit the Premier has given strong support to the Mount Olivet Hospital. When I came into the portfolio I continued that strong support, and I have received the support of the Government in providing to Mount Olivet something in the vicinity of \$2m from the Budget. I anticipate that the Health Department will assist the Mount Olivet Hospital to the full extent of its capabilities. The department anticipates continuing that support by further reviewing its budget to see if more moneys can be found for that hospital.

I remind honourable members, especially members opposite who may have some small influence on their Canberra colleagues, that a place like the Mount Olivet Hospital is irreplaceable. No other institution in Brisbane or, for that matter, in Queensland can provide the extent of palliative care that that hospital provides for the aged, sick and dying in the community. Therefore, regardless of our political affiliations, we must all support it.

It is deplorable that the Commonwealth Government is continuing down the path of further drying up the necessary funds to support the Mount Olivet Hospital. I make a commitment that the Health Department will do everything possible to support the hospital. I thank the honourable member for her concern. At some time or other every member in this House will have a constituent, if not a relative, who will be very dependent on the services of the Mount Olivet Hospital. Therefore, it is incumbent on all of us to provide the support.

Listings under Cultural Landscapes Legislation; Kangaroo Point Precinct

Mrs NELSON: I ask the Minister for Northern Development, Community Services and Ethnic Affairs: will he advise the House of recent listings proposed and implemented under the auspices of the Cultural Record (Landscapes Queensland and Queensland Estate) Act, and will he also advise honourable members of recent actions undertaken by his department pertaining to the future of the Kangaroo Point precinct?

Mr KATTER: I must commend the work of the Brisbane River Committee.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr KATTER: I hear a lot of noise from members of the Opposition, who have done absolutely nothing in this field. They have not even asked any questions in the House on this aspect of my responsibilities.

I state for the record that, under the present chairman and the former chairman, the Brisbane River Committee and its members have a very enviable record of achievement along the Brisbane River. I think all honourable members have gazed from these precincts across to the Kangaroo Point cliffs, a place where the city of Brisbane was born. Every building of historical significance in this city was built out of stone carved out of those cliffs by convicts in days past. Those cliffs have been under threat from a number of projects over a protracted period. Only through the trenchant efforts of the Brisbane River Committee, the advisory council and Brisbane National Party members have those cliffs been protected.

As well, Shafston House, on the other side of Kangaroo Point from the cliffs, had a sign displaying "For redevelopment" and "At auction". That sign was put up by the Federal Government. Not one member of the Opposition raised a finger to preserve that building, which was constructed in the late 1850s and is arguably the most important heritage site in the State of Queensland.

After a protracted public battle lasting four months, in which the Government received no support from the Brisbane City Council—which is making a great noise about being so strong on heritage in that area—or from the Liberal Party, the fight was taken to the Federal Government solely by Government members. Ultimately, the Federal Government, by force of public opinion and the endeavours of this Government, preserved that beautiful building and perhaps one of the oldest and largest trees in Australia.

Mr Vaughan: Oh!

Mr KATTER: I hear scoffs from members of the Opposition. That is what I would expect from them. They have shown no interest in that area. It is painful for them, because they have done nothing in that area, they have achieved nothing and they are not likely to achieve anything in the future.

The Government is endeavouring to put forward a positive program in the vicinity of Kangaroo Point. At present, proposals similar to those carried out at The Rocks in Sydney are being discussed for William Street. If that proposal comes to fruition, people will be able to take a boat trip past the commissariat building, alight at a small landing area near old Government House and have lunch in the park. They will be able to visit old Government House and Parliament House. They will be able to go past the central business district and the Kangaroo Point cliffs. Yungaba is being redeveloped to provide parkland where people can moor their boats and have lunch in the vicinity of a house that was built in the late 1870s and move on to Shafston House and Newstead House, which have both been preserved by this Government.

In less than nine months the Government has been able to achieve a great deal in this area and will continue with similar achievements in the future.

ALP's Education Policy

Mr SIMPSON: I ask the Minister for Education: is it true that the State ALP education policy suggests State Government funding for a number of Commonwealth responsibilities in education?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: That is correct. Over the week-end, I perused further the State ALP education policy. Members of the House would be aware that in 1974 the Federal Government took over responsibility for complete funding of all tertiary institutions throughout Australia. They would also be aware that over the last nine months I have been battling extremely hard to try to obtain a fair share of funding for Queensland. It must be kept in mind that the amount of money coming back from the Federal Government to the States is being reduced all the time.

The ALP's education policy with regard to tertiary education proposes that the Queensland branch of the Labor Party will provide child-care facilities at all tertiary institutions; that institutions will guarantee places to mature people who lack formal entrance qualifications; that resources will be made available for academic, research and community activities as well as teaching; that residential facilities will be provided for further education, in particular to teacher trainees; and that training opportunities will be provided for teacher education lecturers.

All those things are already the responsibility of the Federal Government. However, the State Government has to take over the role of the Federal Government.

The interesting part is that one of the people on that committee is none other than Senator Colston. I suggest that the member for Rockhampton could give Senator Colston a caning for his inaccuracies.

Logan and District Public Hospital

Mr FRASER: I ask the Minister for Health: will she advise the House of the commencement date of construction of the Logan and district public hospital in Logan City?

Mrs HARVEY: The commencement date is around the end of December or early January, depending on weather conditions. The hospital will provide 90 to 93 beds.

The member for Springwood has shown a great deal of initiative in working through the design of the hospital. I applaud him for his efforts on behalf of his local community. I look forward to the completion of the hospital, which is proposed for the latter part of 1989. Eventually, the hospital will have a 200-bed capacity and will serve the entire area from Loganlea down towards the south coast. I thank the honourable member for his question and for his initiative in that respect.

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

At 3.30 p.m.,

In accordance with the provisions of the Sessional Order, the House went into Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY

Estimates—Eleventh Allotted Day

Estimates-in-Chief, 1988-89

Corrective Services and Administrative Services

Department of Corrective Services and Administrative Services

Hon. T. R. COOPER (Roma—Minister for Corrective Services and Administrative Services) (3.31 p.m.): I move—

“That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1988-89, a sum not exceeding \$64,915,000, Department of Corrective Services and Administrative Services—Salaries, Administrative Expenses, etc. (Consolidated Revenue).”

In presenting the Estimates of the Department of Corrective Services and Administrative Services it must be said at the outset that this is a department involved in a radical process of change.

There is not a single element of the department which is not undergoing this process, and in all cases the results are likely to produce a more cost-effective, efficient and productive Government operation. Probably the most widely publicised area of change is in the Corrective Services sector.

Over the years studies have been carried out into aspects of Corrective Services in this State and into the future needs of the service. As a result of such studies, certain plans were put into effect such as the development of three new prisons, which will be completed during 1989. Those studies, and the Government's response to them, underline the fact that Corrective Services has received significant attention in terms of Government policy and program implementation over the years.

However, there is no doubt that the six-month review of the system undertaken by Mr Jim Kennedy between March and August this year was the most exhaustive ever undertaken into this area of government in Queensland.

As outlined previously in this place, a record number of submissions were made to the review—in total, more than 1 000. In addition, Mr Kennedy and his consultative committee and secretariat undertook many follow-up discussions with those individuals, organisations and groups who made submissions. In addition, the commission itself

initiated further studies and reports into particular aspects of the system and sought material from sources in Queensland, interstate and overseas.

The result was a meeting-point of many ideas and philosophies on corrective services and the recommendations which flowed from the review—80 in all—represent many of those views.

Corrective Services and Administrative Services is a somewhat unusual portfolio in that it brings together a rather disparate grouping of Government activities. Under the umbrella of Corrective Services are the Prisons Department and the Probation and Parole Service. Administrative Services covers—

- State Fire Services;
- Rural Fires Board;
- State Stores;
- Government Motor Garage; and
- Government Printing Office.

Total estimated consolidated revenue expenditure, including special allocations, in the portfolio for 1988-89 is \$77.69m. The full break-down of estimated expenditure is provided in the Estimates. This appropriation will be used for the maximum benefit of the people of Queensland.

Chief Office

The major function of the small Chief Office organisation is to co-ordinate the activities of the seven subdepartments. In the interests of cost-effectiveness it also provides a centralised accounting service to the small subdepartments. Consulting and some research assistance is made available to subdepartments, and these services have proved to be invaluable in implementing changes such as the commercialisation of the Government Motor Garage and the Government Printing Office and during the course of the commission of review into Corrective Services in Queensland. The amount of \$1.67m will be made available for Chief Office this financial year.

Prisons Department

Total funding allocated to the prison service this year is \$55.71m.

A major recommendation of the Kennedy review, the establishment of a Queensland corrective services commission, has been accepted by the Government and necessary legislation is to be introduced soon. Under this proposal the Prisons Department and the Probation and Parole Service will be combined, thus drawing together the two arms which constitute the present system of corrective services. Primary objectives of the commission will include security, human resource management, efficient and effective systems, provision of appropriate work and programs for prisoners, and training and career development for staff.

The outcome of the commission of review has provided very real opportunities to make significant, worthwhile and lasting change in areas which, whilst being acknowledged and addressed in the past, for many reasons lingered on as problems to all those touched by them. For example, the approach to administration of parole will be changed significantly, as will the profile of custodial officers who in the past have been seen to be purely keepers of keys and not instrumental in any meaningful rehabilitation process. This will change through training, development and selection. Special attention will be given to young offenders and the special needs of minority groups. Health services will be improved, and prisoners will have greater access to library facilities, educational programs and, importantly, opportunities for meaningful employment. As a direct result of the review, additional funding of \$5m has been allocated to enable the initiation of new programs and the enhancement of existing programs.

Probably the most pressing issue in relation to prison management is overcrowding. Two new prisons, at Wacol and far-north Queensland, will be commissioned early in

the new year, and a third at Borallon in 1989-90. These new prisons, as well as alleviating overcrowding, will create significant employment opportunities with the recruitment of over 500 new staff.

Other major projects included in the Capital Works Program either completed in 1987-88 or approaching completion are—

Brisbane Prison Complex

- A new visiting area, incorporating a children's playground and visitors' waiting area.
- Upgrading of offices and legal visiting area.
- A new detention building with accommodation for six inmates.
- A new movement detection system installed to improve security.

Townsville Prison

- A new female unit with accommodation for 18 inmates.
- A new machinery and equipment building as well as a large packing shed are currently under construction in the farm area.

Woodford Prison

- A self-contained accommodation unit for 32 prisoners.

Wacol Prison

- Two new workshops, a tailors' shop and new book-binders' shop.

The Home Detention Program, approved by the Government in 1987, has been very successful. \$170,000 has been provided for this program, under which people convicted of offences such as drink-driving, fine-defaulting and minor property offences can be approved to serve the last part of their sentence at home.

Home detention allows offenders to hold employment, thus supporting and receiving support from their families. The program now operates in Brisbane, Gold Coast, Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay, Gladstone, Maryborough and Toowoomba, the expansion having been attained through the co-operation of the Probation and Parole Service in terms of supervision. Home detention is very cost effective. It costs \$20,000 per annum to maintain an offender in prison, whilst the cost per offender on home detention is \$2,000 per annum.

A classification, induction and case management program is to be introduced which will streamline present procedures and provide standardised sentence planning. This will allow for total management of a prisoner throughout his/her sentence and facilitate reintegration into the community upon release. \$300,000 has been provided for this program during 1988-89.

Tactical response training and ongoing security training for officers are necessities for any correctional service. Extensive staff development is planned to maximise effective service delivery. The training service will remain centralised in the main to maximise resource utilisation and ensure that auditing processes are maintained. \$120,000 has been allocated for this program during 1988-89.

The Government has announced a decision in principle to close Her Majesty's Prison, Brisbane, and to establish a new pre-trial centre and a new women's prison to be built on sites to be selected.

A number of non-profit groups continue to provide services to prisoners and their families. The contribution which these organisations make is acknowledged with appreciation, and \$69,000 has been budgeted by way of grants to enable them to continue with their work in this area.

The coming year will be a challenging one for all concerned with prison administration in Queensland. I am confident that a clear direction has now been established by the

commission of review, which, in turn, will lead to the attainment of the prime objective, which is one of revitalising and establishing integrated and effective corrective services in Queensland.

With regard to the proposed hand-over of the security patients' hospital at Wacol—this matter is progressing satisfactorily. Construction schedule for the John Oxley Memorial Hospital, to replace the security patients' hospital, on the Wolston Park Hospital reserve, is continuing and hand-over of responsibility remains on schedule at 1 July 1989. The Department of Health has appointed a director of nursing for the new institution, who will proceed with progressive staff appointments and other commissioning duties.

It is also intended to absorb into the prison service all personnel employed at the security patients' hospital at 30 June 1988. However, those staff with appropriate qualifications also will have the opportunity to apply, prior to transfer, for positions as registered psychiatric nurses at the new hospital to be advertised by the Department of Health.

Probation and Parole Service

As mentioned previously, the Probation and Parole Service will be combined with the Prisons Department under a new Queensland corrective services commission, operative as from 1 January 1989; thus will be consolidated the present divided system of corrective services in Queensland, providing a coherent organisation directed towards managing all aspects of corrections with a more economic and efficient use of valuable resources.

Community-based correctional programs continue to be widely used by the courts as appropriate sentencing options for those offenders not considered a risk to the community. The most recent Australian Institute of Criminology sentencing disposition figures indicate that Queensland is the second-highest user of community service among Australian States, and the third-highest user of probation. Every effort has been made to ensure that the programs provided by the Probation and Parole Service are in keeping with community expectations.

It has been accepted that the aim of supervision of offenders in the community is the protection of that community and that supervision should not singularly emphasise either rehabilitation or punishment. As a result, the operation of the Probation and Parole Service has been directed towards monitoring offenders in terms of their risk to the community and their needs as individuals.

To ensure that the practices adopted by the Probation and Parole Service were in keeping with this concept, alternative methods of supervision were developed and reviewed. Initiatives focused on improved assessment and supervision practices. A comprehensive evaluation of these initiatives was completed and published in 1986. As a result, group induction programs now operate in many large centres throughout the State. Group supervision programs have also been implemented and now operate in Brisbane, Woodridge, Townsville and the north and south coasts. These group programs address a range of issues relevant to local areas and include employment, substance abuse, assertiveness and cognitive programs. While initially organised for offenders, programs have been attended by family and friends of offenders.

Community corrections in Queensland is based on the idea that community corrections as a penal sanction must conform with the principles of due process of law. The confidence shown in the Queensland Probation and Parole Service by the courts and the Parole Board is reflected in the growth in case-load size over recent years. As at 30 June 1984, the total case-load of the Queensland Probation and Parole Service was 6 559, whereas at 30 June 1988, the total case-load had risen to 9 000, an increase of 37 per cent. Additional staffing has been approved to cater for increased case-loads, and an amount of \$400,000 has been allocated for this purpose. The four major programs administered by the Probation and Parole Service are probation, parole, community service and fine option.

Probation is a process which allows a convicted offender to remain in the community, provided that he or she observes certain conditions set by the court for a specified period of time. Probation aims to assist the individual offender to live successfully in the community, as well as providing protection for the community from offending behaviour. It is basically the close interpersonal relationships which an offender has within the community which form his attitudes, and then his behaviour. Probation and Parole Service officers work not only with the offender but also with those with whom they are in regular personal contact, such as family and employers. During the 1987-88 financial year, Queensland courts made over 3 000 probation orders.

Parole is in many ways similar to probation; however, instead of being a sentencing option, it provides an opportunity for sentenced offenders to return to the community after having served a specified period of time in prison. The decision to release a prisoner, except those prisoners facing indefinite sentences, is the responsibility of the Queensland Parole Board. Release from prison brings about sharp changes in the way an offender is expected to behave in the community. The period following release from prison is critical and it is in the public interest to place prisoners under some form of supervision during the early part of their release from prison. The Parole Board authorised the release of 300 prisoners during the year ended 30 June 1988.

Community service orders offer a worthwhile alternative to imprisonment. Under this scheme, the court may order a convicted offender to perform unpaid work through community corrections. Each offender is allocated a work project. Such projects include programs arranged by charitable, non-profit youth and service organisations and needy individuals. The fine-option scheme is similar, and provides community service as an alternative to the costly practice of imprisoning fine-defaulters.

Both these programs are positive Government initiatives which enjoy a high level of community acceptance. The daily average number of offenders engaged in community service work is 2 500. It is considered that if only 10 per cent of these had been imprisoned, it would have been necessary to build and staff an additional prison. Another consideration is the benefit derived by numerous community organisations throughout the State that have had work performed for them by offenders. Since the program commenced in 1981, 1½ million hours of work, valued at over \$10m, have been completed on hundreds of projects throughout the State. \$376,500 has been allocated for the community service and fine-option programs.

Facts such as these should dispel all conceptions that community-based corrections are soft options or let-offs. Courts are often criticised for underestimating the risk to the public that inevitably exists when they decide to place an offender under supervision in the community rather than sentence him to a term of imprisonment, and it is undeniably true that some offenders do reoffend. However, of the 7 656 supervision orders that terminated in the 1986-87 financial year, 1 467 or 20 per cent of those terminations were returned to court because they had breached a condition of their orders. This speaks highly for the quality of supervision that is provided by officers of the Queensland Probation and Parole Service. On the other hand, there are risks involved in sending low-risk offenders to prison. Often prison has a hardening effect on young offenders, worsening their subsequent behaviour rather than improving it. Imprisonment also has the additional disadvantage of punishing the prisoner's family and imposing additional welfare costs that have to be borne by the community. Imprisonment is something like 20 times as costly as community-based corrections. A total of \$5.111m has been allocated for the Probation and Parole Service for 1988-89.

State Fire Services

As honourable members will be aware, urban fire protection in Queensland is provided by both permanent and auxiliary fire officers. Those officers have an impressive record both in relation to their ability and their dedication to saving life and limiting damage to property as a result of fire. As announced recently, plans are under way to develop a strategic plan for Queensland's fire services.

The strategy will be developed through a commission of review as a matter of priority under the direction of one of Australia's leading fire and emergency services consultants. The review commissioner is Dr Sally Leivesley, who has an international reputation in that field and has carried out related tasks for the British Government. Dr Leivesley will closely examine all aspects of fire services in the State and produce a plan of action for the future. This will involve the structure, management and delivery of fire services. The aim of the project is to have ready for Cabinet consideration within six months from November a long-term strategy plan that is aimed at providing the most cost-efficient and effective fire-fighting forces possible.

In 1984, the insurance-based system of funding fire services was changed to a property-based levy system. Any new system is likely to have some difficulties, and it has been necessary to make a number of adjustments to the property-based levy system to correct anomalies and eliminate problems. This has been a difficult period and has resulted in cash-flow difficulties and deficit funding. Nevertheless, the debt, which at 30 June 1987 was \$33.37m, has been reduced to \$32m and further reductions are planned for 1988-89. The contribution from consolidated revenue in 1988-89 is \$9.6m, which is one-eighth of the total expenditure on fire services of \$76.8m.

I am pleased to say that during this time of financial constraint, urban fire brigades have not suffered through reductions in manning or the provision of new equipment and fire appliances. Improved management techniques and refined management systems have led to increased efficiency without consummate cost increases.

The past three years have seen a continuing commitment by the Government to upgrading the fire appliance fleet across the State. During 1985-86 approval was obtained to build seven appliances; in 1986-87, nine appliances; and in 1987-88, 19 appliances. During 1988-89 it is planned to purchase a further 15 appliances. At the same time, the fire appliance refurbishing program has placed a number of older but operationally acceptable appliances back into service. The sum of \$2.685m has been allocated for 1988-89.

The current financial year already has seen the introduction of a computerised database on hazardous chemicals known as Toxichem. Toxichem has been installed in the Brisbane Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board watch room and provides emergency information on more than 30 000 toxic chemicals. Fire brigades throughout Queensland have access to that information system, which assists fire officers to identify chemicals and plan emergency action swiftly and safely.

A high degree of standardisation has now been achieved not only with fire appliances but also in the area of training where standards and procedures for operational training have been accepted across the State and by the fire-service unions. A uniform recruit-training program has been adopted so that young firemen, wherever they serve in the State, benefit from the very same basic training to fit them for their role. A standard basic officers' program has been developed and trialled and reports on this are most encouraging. The sum of \$1m has been allocated in 1988-89 to continue with training programs and to introduce specialised training.

A reorganisation of the duties of regional staff in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Toowoomba, Brisbane and the south coast ensures that auxiliary brigades have the advantage of having experienced officers as instructors in essential fire-fighting skills, ensuring that the provisions of the Fire Safety Act are still met and specialist operational advice is available to brigades. Special attention has been given to upgrading the safety aspects of fire-fighting uniforms, and brigades have been given the tools with which to mount fire-safety education programs through all sections of the media. The information that is contained in one such educational community service video message is reported to have been instrumental in saving the lives of four people in a home which was badly damaged by fire.

I have recently appointed a senior operational officer as Commissioner of Fire Services, and I am sure that his appointment will provide sound leadership for the fire service. I would add that in the last year alone, three operational officers received

decorations for distinguished service, two received bravery awards, 17 received Government certificates of commendation for outstanding performance and three received Royal Humane Society citations. All Queenslanders can be justly proud of the role that is played by all members of the Queensland fire service.

Rural Fires Board

Fire has long been a key feature of Australia's fraternity with the environment. This association is particularly highlighted in agricultural, pastoral and forestry activities as many plants are dependent on fire for regeneration and cultivation. Accordingly, throughout Australia—as in many parts of the world—the safe and proper use of fire has been instrumental in shaping land-management policies and programs to best serve commercial and community needs. Uncontrolled fires or wildfires, on the other hand, result in significant property and natural-resource damage, often together with great loss of human and animal life. Most often that damage is irreparable or at best replaced at astronomical economic and social cost. Unfortunately, the memory of those losses is very short and major tragedies such as Ash Wednesday reoccur because not enough attention is given to fire prevention and to co-existence with the environment.

All fires are someone's responsibility. Often the cause is carelessness or misuse, although deliberately set fires are becoming an increasingly significant factor. Natural causes such as lightning are rare. Therefore, prevention is primarily a social issue that is best spearheaded by Government at all levels. Prevention can be achieved in large measure by public education and meaningful Government policies and sanctions. Containment and suppression is achieved by well-trained and equipped, properly organised fire-fighting resources. Government has a key responsibility and role in all those issues. Much of the Queensland Government's responsibility is vested in the Rural Fires Board. In addition to the major land-management and wildfire suppression activities, the Government through its rural fire services organisations has key responsibilities for public education and co-ordination of counter-disaster measures.

To fulfil its responsibilities, the Rural Fires Board has set its goals as—

- the establishment and maintenance of an orderly bush fire mitigation program based on the voluntary resources available in the State and working in conjunction with accepted rural land management practices;
- the establishment and maintenance of a bush fire suppression organisation based on the voluntary resources available in the State; and
- the maintenance of a bush fire awareness program aimed at reducing the incidence of wildfire caused by human negligence.

To achieve the above goals, the Rural Fires Board has produced a development plan which will systematically allow the board to pursue each of its goals on a progressive basis. In addition, the board continues to administer the Rural Fires Act and this is being achieved as an ongoing requirement. Despite a considerable shortage of funds, the Rural Fires Board has and will continue to achieve significant gains in its operations.

Briefly, the major developments which have occurred in recent years are—

- Internal accounting procedures have been computerised, in addition to in-house development of software for the introduction of a bush fire brigade status system.
- In conjunction with the Local Government Department, the board has produced a detailed planning publication titled *Bushfire Hazard Planning in Queensland*. This publication addresses the problems of development in rural residential areas prone to bush fire hazard, and suggests how development may occur which will reduce the risk of damage by bush fire.
- The introduction of aerial ignition provides a measure of control in hazard reduction burning in isolated parts of the State. The object of aerial ignition is not to burn all vegetation, but to break up the continuity of flammable fuel, thus ensuring that wildfire does not burn out the complete countryside.

- The introduction of a 24 hour bush fire telephone reporting service based on the 008 system has proved to be of immense value in providing rapid response to a wildfire.

The Rural Fires Board is vitally aware of the need for its bush fire brigades to identify themselves more closely with local authorities and other community emergency service organisations. Close liaison will hopefully be achieved in all local areas, thereby maximising available voluntary assistance in times of disaster.

Other planned future developments are—

- the introduction of a Statewide standardised form of training for both structural fires and bush fires;
- the development of other forms of fire-fighting equipment such as water trailers and portable slip-on units;
- the provision of an increased subsidy to bush fire brigades to encourage the purchase and use of modern fire-fighting equipment and facilities; and
- introduction of firefighting activities between local bush fire brigades to enhance their present training schemes and methods and at the same time develop a better community awareness of the brigades.

The volunteer rural brigades make a very significant, and, in many instances, an essential contribution to the welfare of the Queensland community. The type and amount of training given to bush fire brigade volunteers needs to be constantly reviewed in terms of financial and community support, to ensure that the Rural Fires Board is able to attain its goals.

In 1988-89, \$1.582m has been allocated to enable this organisation to continue with its valuable function. This includes additional funding of \$100,000 for upgrading training and inspection activities and \$182,000 for refurbishment of fire-fighting vehicles and appliances for bush fire brigades. Subsidy payments amount to \$650,000. Consideration is presently being given to various funding alternatives including a rural property contribution scheme.

State Stores

State Stores is a significant component of the Ministry of Corrective Services and Administrative Services overseeing a wide range of transactions with industry and commerce on the one hand and fulfilling the material needs and requirements for the operation of many Government departments on the other. The State Stores Board acts within Government purchasing guide-lines to ensure that the best value for money is obtained, whilst maintaining impartial treatment of suppliers.

To ensure that State Stores is employing the most effective methodology in its operations so that the Queensland tax-payer receives excellent value and services, a major review of the modus operandi of State Stores is taking place. This review will analyse any need for administrative reform, financial accountability and the cost effectiveness of State Stores.

The staff establishment at State Stores is expected to be maintained at no more than 141 officers, the same level as existed in 1987-88.

Initiatives already taken to improve performance have included—

- The streamlining of procedures for the receipt of late tenders to clarify some grey areas in processing tenders.
- The implementation of major performance indicators based predominantly on costs of services, and value of savings from contracts administered by State Stores. These indicators are providing better management reporting.
- The development of systems for slowing the extent of price variations on contract lines.
- The introduction of a word-processing system to improve the quality and turn-around time of the contracts system.

- Examination of the overall effectiveness of the whole service operation to test the extent to which a range of commercial practices can be implemented.

Major computer-related projects at State Stores for 1988-89 will include—

- Implementation of a computerised accounts payable system and online processing of Treasury pay-roll details.
- Upgrading of the stock and accounting applications package (Univisa).
- Provision of additional hardware to improve online access to the contracts system by the purchasing branch.
- Further enhancements to the production of microfiche.
- Reviewed and enhanced automatic stock reimbursement procedures, and the purchasing system.
- Reviewed procedures and practices employed in stock-handling at the Zillmere store.
- Investigation of future projects such as contracts' statistics and records operations.

Major high-volume contracts let by State Stores running into the financial year 1988-89 are very significant. State Stores contracts normally run for 12 months with the option to extend for a further 12 months. State Stores will continue to save many millions of dollars through its operations. Its consolidated revenue budget for 1988-89 is \$4.018m. In addition, special standing fund expenditure is proposed amounting to \$8.409m.

Government Motor Garage

In June of this year, the Government decided that the Government Motor Garage should operate on a commercial basis for a trial period of 12 months commencing on 1 July 1988. This decision has had a number of significant impacts upon the garage and user departments, including—

- Introduction of the user-pays principle, which means that any department receiving services from the garage is charged at commercial rates. Previously any services or goods were provided to non-trust funded departments at no cost.
- Operation on a self-funding basis. Costs have to be met from charges for services such as vehicle maintenance and repairs, vehicle construction, sales of fuel and disposal of fleet vehicles.

The Government is confident that its charge-out rates will be competitive with those of the private sector and that quality of service will remain second to none.

A major initiative undertaken by the Government Motor Garage has involved the refurbishment of vehicles for use by organisations such as the Rural Fires Board, the State Emergency Service, State Fire Services, and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr Davis: What about those charities? Are they still flogging the system?

Mr COOPER: No. They never have been.

Mr Davis: Yes, they were.

Mr COOPER: No. They never have flogged the system. It would be more likely that fellows such as the honourable member would do that. The program has been extremely beneficial to those services as it has been possible to provide units such as trucks and four-wheel-drive vehicles at less than 20 per cent of the cost of new vehicles.

The garage provides the expertise necessary to formulate specifications for Government vehicle contracts. There is a contract covering the passenger and light commercial range and a separate contract for trucks. The value of these contracts exceeds \$80m.

The garage also provides professional services to those departments that do not employ engineers in such matters as—

- formulating specifications;
- tender analysis;
- specialised design projects;
- manufacturing of special projects; and
- vehicle alteration.

Budgeted expenditure and revenue are estimated at \$6.26m and \$6.4m respectively.

Government Printing Office

Honourable members will be aware of the decision by the Government to commercialise the Government Printing Office, now known as Goprint. The direction of the Government Printing Office has been characterised by two major phases. In the last few years under the first phase, a drive toward efficiency has been dominant, but more recently, as a result of the change to commercialisation, a second phase has arisen involving a drive toward competitive service.

Under the first phase involving a drive toward efficiency, the Government Printing Office underwent major changes, particularly when the office moved to Woolloongabba. This resulted in significant improvements in: firstly, performance; secondly, improved means of measuring that performance; and thirdly, a concentration on high technology and computerised systems. Efforts in improving performance have generated significant reductions in staff, increased productivity, major redeployment and retraining without causing redundancies, and internal restructuring of the organisation's form and working practices.

Improved performance measures have introduced new job standards for those carrying out the printing, a performance appraisal system for management, and a wide range of management reports on performance. In turn, these have generated more accurate quotations and deliveries to clients, increased management accountability, and increased productivity. The use of improved performance measures has also extended to the introduction of Government Printing Office staff awards in recognition of personal contributions of staff members.

In the third area of high technology, new production equipment has greatly improved performance, while the use of computerisation has made significant improvements in management control and the management information system. Concentration on computer systems has resulted in the development of a major scheduling and job tracking, costing and purchasing computer system that is so advanced for its time that only recently has commercial enterprise been able to provide similar software systems. Development of a wide range of management reports from the computer systems has involved the computerisation of such areas as accounts, pay-roll and personnel. The sum total of this computerisation has allowed the Government Printing Office to significantly improve its controls on productivity factors, and accountability and to ensure there is better, more accurate and faster reporting on performance.

The overall results of this phase to improve the office's efficiency are quantifiable and have been recorded in annual reports over the last few years. These results are shown in lower overhead costs, cheaper printing prices to Government departments, and shorter delivery times. The Government Printing Office is justifiably proud of these significant steps forward in its drive towards efficiency, which is primarily internal and not well recognised or advertised externally.

Having concentrated on improving internal efficiency, the Government Printing Office recognised that it must concentrate on personal services to clients. In this regard, some time ago it introduced a client services section. The office also recognises that there is a shift in emphasis and a new phase exists involving a drive towards a more competitive service. The commercialisation of the Government Printing Office reflects and supports this emphasis and new direction.

To address this new direction, the Government Printing Office management has taken a more commercial approach to forward planning and has generated a range of strategic and business plans to cover the next few years. The shift in emphasis is recognised by the need for a change in corporate image, increased emphasis on such factors as marketing and sales as a means of upgrading its service, and changes in funding and accounting practices. The Government Printing Office management recognises that improved service involves improvements in the quality of service for its clients, quality of products produced and more commercially competitive prices. These changes will inevitably be supported by further enhancements and refinements in computerised management information and emphasis on innovation as a means of addressing the shifting requirements of clients.

In 1988-89, the Government Printing Office will not have an allocation from consolidated revenue. This office was transferred to a trust fund operation on 1 July 1988 as part of the commercialisation policy, and all expenditure will be accounted for through this fund. A budget of \$15.9m has been set for the year compared to \$13.9m last year. This expenditure includes \$1.5m for building rental not included in the previous year's expenditure. The Government Printing Office will be self-funded from charges made for printing services provided to departments.

The ability of the office and staff to face and address major changes in the past is a significant strength in facing future challenges and will be a major factor in achieving improvements in service. Overall, the Government Printing Office is anticipating that the end result of this present phase will be, firstly, the minimisation of printing service costs to Government and, secondly, the achievement of financial self-sufficiency.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to the under secretary, Mr Peter Jones, and other senior officers in the portfolio, without whose expertise and advice it would have been impossible for such significant progress to be made during the past year. I wish to mention in particular my own personal staff and thank them for the dedication and support that they have given to me since my appointment as Minister. I single out Mr Peter Hall in particular, and I make no apology for doing so. His contribution through persistence and dedication will prove to be of lasting benefit to the people of Queensland.

It would also be very remiss of me if I did not acknowledge and express my gratitude to all of the staff in all of the various areas of this varied portfolio who are, of course, the backbone of the organisation and carry out the duties and assume the responsibilities, be they great or small, which make it possible for the various services to be made available to clients and the public in such an efficient and effective manner.

I commend the Estimates to the Committee.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! I inform the Committee that, on the Chief Office Vote, I propose to allow a full discussion on the whole of the ramifications of a department (Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds).

For the information of honourable members, I point out that the administrative acts of the department are open to debate, but the necessity for legislation and matters involving legislation cannot be discussed in Committee of Supply.

Mr MILLINER (Everton) (4.08 p.m.): In his speech the Minister for Corrective Services and Administrative Services indicated quite clearly that his department is undergoing change. There is no doubt about that and the Opposition fully supports the initiatives taken by the Government in setting up various inquiries.

There has been the much-publicised Kennedy commission of review into corrective services in Queensland and the Opposition fully supports Mr Kennedy in his inquiry. As a matter of fact, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made a written submission to Mr Kennedy and also the previous shadow Minister for Corrective Services, the honourable member for South Brisbane, made verbal submissions to Mr Kennedy and encouraged other groups to make submissions to the review.

As I have stated previously in this Chamber, the findings of the Kennedy review are an indictment on previous Ministers who have administered this portfolio. There have been previous inquiries into corrective services in this State, but tragically, in the main, the findings of those inquiries have never been followed through. The Minister has indicated that he will pursue the findings of the Kennedy report and I hope that he does, because it is obvious that there are problems within the prison system.

The Honourable Geoff Muntz released a press statement in 1985 stating—

“... people serving sentences in Queensland jails have little to complain about.

Mr. Muntz said he is convinced Queensland has Australia's best prison system and possibly the best in the world . . . prison authorities in the United States would envy Queensland's record on prisons.”

Mr Hamill: The best police force money could buy.

Mr MILLINER: That is another question.

Mr Smith: He must have had a good set of blinkers on.

Mr MILLINER: Yes, he must have had a very good set of blinkers.

Mr Davis: The best type of buckets for their ablutions.

Mr MILLINER: Yes, that is true as well.

It is obvious that there have been massive problems within the prison system that were not addressed at that time. It is an indictment on Mr Muntz that he would say those things when there were obviously massive problems within the prison system.

I acknowledge the fact that a week or so ago the Minister tabled in this Chamber most of the annual reports relating to his department, and I thank him for that. Normally annual reports are tabled on the day on which the Estimates are due to be debated. I was pleased that most of the reports were tabled, although yesterday the Minister tabled an additional two reports.

I am critical of the fact that the final report of the Kennedy commission of review has not been tabled in this Chamber. I acknowledge the fact that I do have a copy of it, thanks to the Minister, but this is an important final review document and it should be tabled as quickly as possible so that honourable members are given the opportunity to study the report and the recommendations and criticisms contained in it. The legislation that will be introduced into this Chamber in the not-too-distant future will require detailed debate.

The interim report of Mr Kennedy was delivered in May this year and indicates quite clearly that there are two main areas of concern. Although there are many other problems, the two that Mr Kennedy quite clearly identifies relate to funding and personnel problems. In his interim report Mr Kennedy states—

“Many of the problems are symptomatic of the shoe string on which the Corrective Services in this state have been run. A major concern is to ensure sufficient funds are made available to run a modern and efficient prison system.”

Further in the report he suggests—

“About \$9 million in addition to what would otherwise be provided in next year's budget is needed to upgrade correctional service operations in this state.”

The Premier indicated in his Budget Speech that the sum of \$4m was being allocated to implement Mr Kennedy's recommendations. I am pleased that the Minister stated today that \$5m will be allocated. I hope that the ante keeps increasing and that the figure comes closer to \$9m.

Mr Cooper: It wasn't in a full year.

Mr MILLINER: I recognise that, but Mr Kennedy states that an additional \$9m needs to be spent. I realise that the Minister is operating within budgetary constraints

and everyone would like more money. I am pleased that he has at least found another \$1m over and above the figure stated by the Premier.

The other major problem identified by Mr Kennedy related to personnel. The Minister has appointed Brigadier Formby to take a very prominent role in the prison system. I think it is a gamble to appoint Brigadier Formby. I am in no way criticising him; he has a very distinguished military background. I say it is a gamble because he has indicated that he has never before been in a prison and he is taking on a very senior management role in the prison system. For the sake of the system, I hope that that gamble pays off.

A grave problem that comes through fairly clearly from the review and from subsequent events within the prison system is the training of prison officers. In his report, Mr Kennedy was scathing of the training received by prison officers. He said that the \$85,000 provided in 1987-88 was a farce and nothing short of scandalous. I note that in the presentation of his Estimates this afternoon the Minister said that \$120,000 was available for the training of prison officers. Although that is an increase, I must say that everything possible must be done to ensure that the State has an efficient and effective staff of prison officers. A facility at Wacol is available for the training of prison officers. Quite obviously, if there is an effective, efficient and well-trained staff, the State's correctional institutions will be well run. I would like to see a major emphasis placed on the training of prison officers.

I am very supportive of the concept, which was outlined by Mr Kennedy, of placing prison officers on probation. It is just not good enough to employ someone in such a sensitive area and give him a life-time job. People who are employed as prison officers should undergo a 12-month probation period. If they are found to be unsuitable for that position, they should be removed from it.

Mr Cooper: They will be.

Mr MILLNER: I hope that happens. Many of the problems that have been identified in the report have resulted from insufficient training of prison officers. I am very keen to see something substantial done about that.

The report identified the lack of resources such as computers. In this day and age, when there is a need to gain access to a great deal of information, computerisation is needed. Although that will cost a fair bit of money, if the State is to have an effective and efficient system of corrective institutions, that needs to be done.

The report identified a lack of library facilities. If prisoners are to be rehabilitated, they need access to libraries. That ties in with the need to educate prisoners to help them rehabilitate themselves. Some time ago I spoke to a gentleman who carried out a similar inquiry into prison reform in New Zealand. He told me that it was interesting to look at the statistics of prisoners who undertook a comprehensive educational program when in prison and who did not reoffend after their release from prison. He told me that, when prisoners gain an education, it goes a long way towards helping them rehabilitate themselves. The number of such prisoners who reoffend is considerably smaller than those who do not undertake such a program of education.

The equipment that is provided within institutions needs to be considered. One item that has been needed of recent times is riot gear. There needs to be an ongoing effort to provide to prison officers the best riot equipment available should the need arise for that type of equipment.

I found disturbing Mr Kennedy's report on the problems with radio communications. When prisoners are being transported from one place to another, the vehicles transporting them need to have radio contact. With this sort of technology getting better and better, urgent consideration needs to be given to that recommendation.

Violence is another problem that has been identified in the prison system. Only recently there was another stabbing incident at Brisbane Prison. This sort of violence

has to be addressed urgently. There was also the case of the prisoner who was recaptured after breaking out. The police who recaptured him obviously knew that, when he was returned to Boggo Road, he would get a flogging, so they took the unusual step of having him photographed. I hope that action has been taken against those prison officers who were involved in that flogging. If the police knew that this was to take place, obviously it was premeditated.

Mr Cooper: It is normal procedure to photograph them.

Mr MILLINER: The police do it, do they?

Mr Cooper: Yes. I checked that out.

Mr MILLINER: I thank the Minister for that.

Mr Davis: They have been aware of that from the past.

Mr MILLINER: They have obviously been aware that something would take place. It appears to me to be an unusual procedure for the police to do that. If the Minister says that the police do it, I will take his word for it.

I am concerned about the number of escapes from prisons and the problem of recapturing those offenders. I find it disturbing that the dangerous prisoner who escaped from Etna Creek near Rockhampton some time ago by parting the bars virtually with a coat-hanger still has not been recaptured. Of the five who escaped from Brisbane Prison, only one has been recaptured. I was informed, although it has not been confirmed, that the prisons were advised that a major break-out was about to take place.

Mr Cooper: At Wacol.

Mr MILLINER: Yes, but I was advised that all prisons were put on alert because another break-out was planned. It is disturbing that the prisons were placed on alert, yet the break-out was still successful.

I turn now to the sentencing of prisoners. Far too often people are sentenced to prison terms for offences which do not warrant imprisonment. Fine-defaulters and people who have committed minor offences should not be sent to prison. Urgent action should be taken to ensure that people who do not pay fines and people who are convicted of minor offences are not sent to prison.

I am waiting for an explanation from the Minister regarding the prisoner G case. The 1988 annual report of the Queensland Prison Service, when dealing with the Home Detention Program, stated—

“Under the scheme, people convicted of offences such as drink driving, fine defaulting and minor property offences can be approved to serve the last part of their sentence at home.”

I do not believe that the prisoner G case comes under any of those criteria. That person was convicted of defrauding the Department of Social Security of \$8,000, which is a substantial amount of money. That case does not come under any of those categories. I am interested in the explanation of why that person received home detention. I note from the letter by Mr Lobban to the Minister, which was tabled in the Chamber, that Mr Lobban took responsibility for placing Mrs Knack on the Home Detention Program. I would like the Minister to explain that matter.

Mr Stephan: Didn't the prisoner or a relation contact Mr Goss?

Mr MILLINER: That is right. The prisoner did contact Mr Goss. Mr Goss told the prisoner's sister to go to her local member.

Mr Stephan: He advised her to do that?

Mr MILLINER: That is right. He advised her to go to her local member. The correct procedure was for the local member to make representations in the usual way.

What usually happens is that a reply comes back stating that the prisoner is not eligible for parole.

Mr Cooper: You either will or you won't. They're either eligible or not.

Mr MILLINER: That is right. I do not disagree with that. It is a legitimate right of members of Parliament to make representation to Ministers to ascertain whether a prisoner is eligible for parole or not. I hope that the Minister will give a full explanation of that matter.

I turn now to fire services. I support the inquiry into fire services. It is long overdue. However, it is obvious that a number of problems exist within the State Fire Services. I was concerned to learn of the problem with staffing levels in the metropolitan fire brigades. I am reliably informed that the Budget of the metropolitan fire brigades has been cut fairly substantially, which has led to the need to rearrange fire-fighting staff. I was very disturbed to learn that staffing at the Hamilton Fire Station, which previously had one officer and two firemen on a shift, has been reduced to one officer and two firemen on a shift. Honourable members must bear in mind that the Hamilton Fire Station is close to the area in which the dangerous situation was created by the spillage of petrol. That fire station is responsible for a major industrial area.

Mrs Nelson: Doesn't Kemp Place look after that?

Mr MILLINER: That is a back-up. The Hamilton Fire Station is the first station to respond to any major problem in the Eagle Farm industrial area. Having worked in that area, I know that that fire brigade makes a significant number of turn-outs. I am disturbed at that reduction in staff. That is only one indication of the problems that are occurring.

Problems exist on the Sunshine Coast. In the *Sunshine Coast Daily* of 14 September 1988, an article entitled "Where's the fire . . . fighter?" stated—

"Coolum's auxiliary fire station is standing idle because of a lack of staff.

Maroochy Fire Brigade station officer. . . said the brigade had a building and a small appliance at Coolum, but no auxiliary staff to man it.

He said any fires in Coolum would have to be attended by Nambour or Maroochydhore appliances, about 15 minutes away.

. . .

'It's a dangerous situation to be in,' . . . 'We haven't got anyone to respond to a fire call.'"

Because Coolum is a rapidly developing area, that article is disturbing. In a few weeks, a major resort will open in that area. As well, the airport does not have its own fire-fighting services. It is disturbing to discover that no fire-fighting services are available. When the commissioner undertakes her inquiry into the State Fire Services, she will uncover many problems.

Time expired.

Mrs NELSON (Aspley) (4.28 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to join in the debate on the Estimates. I congratulate the Minister on what he has done in the area of prison reform and place on record my strong support for the role that he and Mr Kennedy have played in bringing major changes to the systems, structures and procedures regarding correctional services in Queensland. I look forward to the day when the legislation is presented to the Parliament. It will have my strong support.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mrs NELSON: Obviously, the member for Brisbane Central is making the most of his last 12 months in the Parliament. He is continuing to make the asinine interjections that he has made over many years.

Mr Cooper: He'll still be here when the changes come in.

Mrs NELSON: Yes, he will certainly still be here when the changes come in. He commented about the navy and its training program. He should take note of the terrible state of the navy's finances and the dreadful reputation that his Canberra Labor colleagues have in regard to the defence forces of the nation. He should keep quiet on that subject.

This afternoon I want to speak briefly about the Government Motor Garage and to refer to the negotiations that have been under way for some months. I was a member of the working party and task force that examined that future role of the garage.

I place on record my very strong support of the manager of the Government Motor Garage, Max Duncombe, and his staff at Zillmere. The Government Motor Garage provides an outstanding service to the Government of Queensland. I am delighted that the Minister was able to convince Cabinet to retain the garage on a commercial basis for a trial period.

I understand that further negotiations have been entered into with the trade union movement in regard to the Government Motor Garage. I place on record my great appreciation of the role that the trade union movement has played in this whole exercise. The trade union representatives were very constructive and very positive. They dealt with the issues properly on behalf of the workers whom they represented. I believe that without their support and co-operation, we would not have achieved the result that we did achieve.

The trade union movement deserves a commendation for the way in which it handled that issue and approached its dealings with the Government. I think that was due in large part to the respect that the trade union representatives have for the Minister. It is a two-way street. I believe that if one deals with people intelligently, rationally, properly and in a caring way, one gets the response that is sought.

I congratulate the Minister on the way in which he handled the situation in relation to the Government Motor Garage. However, I serve notice on the Minister that I am keeping a pretty close eye on what is happening at Zillmere. I want to ensure that the Government Motor Garage stays on a commercial basis.

Mr Milliner: What about the privatisation of it?

Mrs NELSON: The member for Everton does not seem to understand that there is a difference between privatisation and commercialisation.

My view is that commercialisation of the Government Motor Garage is the correct way to go. That has always been my stated position. The Minister is aware of my position. I believe that commercialisation is the appropriate way for the Government to deal with the Government Motor Garage, which is a safety service. It provides a very necessary and important service to the Government and, more particularly, to the Government's employees.

Mr Milliner: I agree with you.

Mrs NELSON: I am pleased that the member for Everton supports what I am saying.

Mr Milliner: I am opposed to privatisation.

Mrs NELSON: I believe that many areas of Government can be privatised successfully. However, in areas dealing with safety and communications, I have strong philosophical commitments to commercialisation rather than privatisation, and the Government Motor Garage is one instance.

I commend the Government for its review of State Stores. There has been a need for an upgrading of the way in which it is managed, or run.

I am delighted that a friend of mine and a lady for whom I have great respect, Dr Sally Leivesley, has been appointed to review fire services in Queensland. I was unaware of who was going to be appointed until that announcement was made. I took great

pleasure in the fact that at last in Queensland her outstanding abilities had been recognised. I am sure that most honourable members are aware of the work that Dr Leivesley has done in Great Britain in relation to emergency services and civil defence. I am sure that her report will be well received by all members of this Parliament.

I want to make some comments about the changes to the prison system that were referred to by the Minister during the presentation of his Estimates. I know that I am drawing the longbow, but I want to relate that to the issue of education in Australia. The Minister himself referred to the fact that one of the critical issues in the management of prisons or correctional services generally is human resources management. One of the very serious problems that Australia faces is that the Federal colleagues of the members of the Opposition have become obsessed with the notion of education as a product. The Federal Government has lumped education with training and employment in the one portfolio. That is quite an unusual step. It is unheralded in Australian political life and I believe it is an entirely inappropriate placement.

Certainly the Dawkins approach to education is remarkable. However, I believe that his is a very dangerous approach to education. I earnestly and respectfully suggest that it is one that crosses party lines and that all members of this Parliament and other State Parliaments throughout Australia should begin to take issue with the Federal Government on the way in which it is regarding the future of education in this nation.

The fundamental fact of life is that it is ideas that matter; it is people that matter; and it is how people are managed and how they are cared for that matters. Although the role of science and technology and education as a product has some validity in a nation in which the value of the dollar is shrinking, if expenditure on education is going to be increased, it should not be done on a sectional basis. There are real risks to our long-term survival as a species and the importance of the nurturing role and the caring role in society if resources are taken from the humanities and diverted to science and technology. I believe most passionately that educational opportunities ought to be expanded in both of those areas in equal terms.

I listened to an address that was given in Sydney last Monday in which a prominent Australian writer and speaker, Dr Dale Spender, mentioned the words of Socrates. She said that Dawkins has given a whole new meaning to the words "user pays". In reality, Governments and systems in Australia have really been prepared by men, for men, without very much involvement by women.

One of the areas of real involvement by women in Australian society has been in the humanities. Unfortunately, the humanities have come to be seen as feminine. That is a mistake. The humanities were the province of the monks and the males in the Middle Ages and certainly up till the late eighteenth century.

Because the humanities faculties are seen as feminine faculties, their funding is now being downgraded. They are not receiving adequate resources. Funds are being put into what are seen as the strongly masculine faculties of science and technology.

The real future rests with people; it rests with new ideas; and it rests with new philosophies. From those people, those new ideas and those new philosophies will come changes in science and technology and other areas.

It will be a fundamental error on the part of society and will have a profound effect on things such as correctional services 25 or 30 years down the track if we become obsessed with the tools that science and technology provide and not how they can serve mankind.

I suggest earnestly that the Minister take those views on board in his dealings in Cabinet on this issue. Whilst his portfolio is one that needs radical reform in terms of technological updating and the use of computers, the bottom line for the success of his prison reform is how one deals with people. How one manages people comes from the humanities.

I was delighted to be provided with some material relevant to this issue. An example of the desperate need for education in the human species is that when applications were sought from prison officers for involvement in a training program to upgrade their qualifications, more than 400 of them applied for that course. That is a very positive sign and it bodes well for the future of the prison service, because I believe that within the prison service there is a strong body of support and an acknowledgement of the need for better education and training programs.

The Minister ought to be congratulated on his handling of prison security. The public only sees the escapes or hears about the attempted break-outs. That is bad news; therefore it is news. Most people are not aware that during the past 12 months the number of escapes and attempted escapes has declined. I congratulate the Minister on the handling of his portfolio, the responsibility for which he assumed at the end of last year. I exclude from my comments what I regard as an orchestrated break-out that occurred recently for quite different purposes. I am very confident that in the future the decline in the number of break-outs will continue. I believe that under the management of Mr Kennedy and the Minister, when the new legislation is introduced into this Chamber and implemented, one will see a different approach to security in prisons.

It must be remembered that security in prisons is the fundamental issue about which people are concerned. Prisons are not popular places. The prisons portfolio is not popular. It is a difficult portfolio.

Mr Beard: He loves it; he's having the time of his life.

Mrs NELSON: The Minister must be masochistic.

The fact of the matter is that the public demands that if a person breaks the law and needs to be held in custody, that custody should be secure. I alert the Committee to my views that I have expressed in this Chamber before about changes to sentencing options and procedures as well as the need to remember overall, despite all the needs for rehabilitation to which I shall refer in a moment, that the bottom line is the secure custody of the prisoner and the deterrent factor of prisons in the eyes of the rest of the community. Let us not forget that in our desire for change—I am sure that the Minister has not forgotten—the deterrent factor is the principal matter in which the public is interested. The public wants to make certain that when a man or a woman is convicted of a serious crime, he or she goes to prison, stays in prison and does not come out before he or she should. That acts as a deterrent and prevents other people from committing similar offences.

One of the great failures of the judicial system and the correctional services system in the last 25 years in this country has been poor sentencing by judges and a failure by correctional services departments to adequately implement those sentences. I have been working my way through the Kennedy report. I am delighted that a large number of recommendations have been made on that matter.

There is another part to sentencing options and procedures. A number of investigations have been conducted. Victoria conducted an intensive investigation into sentencing options and procedures. I have made my views known to the commissioner and his staff. It would be wrong for a member of Parliament, particularly a female member of Parliament, not to take the opportunity to refer to offenders of a violent nature. Apart from the deterrent factor, one of the real concerns is the fear factor, particularly amongst women in Australian society. This has much more to do with the judicial system, but it has something to do with correctional services as well.

It does not appear that adequate punishment is being given to violent offenders, particularly recurring violent offenders. It is totally inappropriate for people to be given paltry penalties for serious crimes and then to be let out of prison on parole within 18 months or two years, or even to abscond. Regrettably, a number of violent offenders behave like Goody Two-Shoes for the first six months that they are in gaol, they are then transferred to a prison farm, from where far too many of them abscond and commit further violent assaults.

Mr Comben: How many?

Mrs NELSON: I know of four in this State over the last five years. Prisoners have walked away from farms.

Mr Comben: Five walked out in one day.

Mrs NELSON: Let us say that they might have been helped.

I am very disappointed with Opposition members. I would have thought that as a party they would support the liberation of women and their equal opportunity in Australia, but they do not ever seem to put that into practice.

The fact is that the greatest threat to equality is the threat to liberty. How can a person be free if he cannot walk around the streets in his own country? Queensland's judicial system, as much as its correctional services, has not adequately deterred other people from committing violent crimes. I am delighted that the Kennedy report contains a recommendation about violent offenders. I congratulate Mr Kennedy and the Minister on ensuring that very secure systems, and very clearly known secure systems, will be used for violent offenders.

Ms Warner: Don't hold your breath.

Mrs NELSON: I think that Opposition members are quite wrong. They will be so disappointed at the speed with which the Minister acts. Yet another disappointment for the Queensland ALP!

Mr Beard: Able to leap tall buildings.

Mrs NELSON: In a single bound; that is right. Faster than a speeding bullet!

I think that most members of the Committee would have received a rather peculiar letter from a chap in Victoria who seems to want to have things such as the death penalty televised. For the offences of car theft, house-breaking and other types of theft, bashings and vandalism, he wants imposed a penalty of 100 lashes in public and seven days in the stocks. Yesterday, some honourable members found it amusing that that fellow in his letter said, "You will immediately say 'This guy's a nut'" and "Please treat this letter seriously."

The reality—and the difficulty for legislators—is that two-thirds of Queenslanders and probably two-thirds of Australians would like to see the death penalty reintroduced. It is pretty difficult for the Minister to introduce change and reform in an era when the population is looking for blood. Although that fellow's letter was absurd and outrageous, regrettably I believe that it expresses the feelings of very many Australians.

Mr Milliner: Where do you stand on capital punishment?

Mrs NELSON: I am totally opposed to the death penalty. I use the words of the Premier: "While I am here, it won't happen." Only one mistake needs to be made and an innocent person is dead. He cannot be brought back to life and no amount of compensation will overcome that.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mrs NELSON: I will be a member of this Assembly longer than the honourable member will. He will lose his seat at the next election. The National Party has conducted research in his electorate. He will be sorry that he ever nominated for pre-selection for the seat of Oxley. There will be a National Party member for Ipswich after the next State election, with the help of Liberal Party preferences that will be very tight.

On a more serious note—because of the emotional climate in Australia today it is very difficult for the Minister to institute change.

Mr Hamill interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Alison): Order! If the honourable member wishes to interject, he will do so from his correct seat.

Mrs NELSON: In an era when it is difficult to institute change, I congratulate the Minister on his steadfastness and his intelligent approach to the administration of his portfolio. He and his officers have my full support.

Mr PALASZCZUK (Archerfield) (4.47 p.m.): In joining the debate on the Estimates for the Corrective Services and Administrative Services portfolio, I place on record my congratulations to Mr Jim Kennedy on the completion of his inquiry into the Queensland prison system and the speed with which he compiled his report, which is of extreme importance to the entire prison system. Together with others, I look forward to the speedy passage of legislation that will implement Mr Kennedy's recommendations.

Unfortunately, at one stage it appeared that the Government was about to back away from its undertaking to introduce that legislation during this session of Parliament. If that was to be the case, it is to be deplored by all right-thinking Queenslanders.

Mr Cooper: That is hypothetical. It is over; it is right.

Mr PALASZCZUK: I am not saying this to score points from the honourable member or the Government. I seek a resolution of the problems that are endemic to our prison system.

Considering the high expectations that are engendered in the minds of prisoners by statements that have come from the Government about the implementation of the Kennedy report, any delays could lead only to an increase in the tensions that are already manifest in our gaols. I am sure that all honourable members would agree that our prison system is as antiquated as—if not worse than—systems in other States. The Kennedy report is to be the break-through that should put our prison system into the forefront of the nation's prison reform. It is pertinent to closely scrutinise the system as it exists today.

Because of staff shortages in prisons Statewide—and especially in Boggo Road—prison officers are working up to 16 hours a day overtime after completing an eight-hour-day shift the day before. As a result, the increased work and levels of stress that such tiredness causes means that officers are less concerned with prisoners' well-being than would otherwise be the case. On the other hand, because of the unexpected delays in the implementation of the Kennedy report's draft legislation, prisoners' expectations of reforms seem to have been dashed, leading to a sense of betrayal. It is no good using palliatives. A cure for the disease is needed.

The granting of an additional 30 minutes contact-time with relatives is a godsend. Let us face it—the previous arrangement of a 30-minute visit was generally taken up with tales of woe. As a typical example, the conversation would have been along the lines of, "Little Johnny has been caught smoking at school. The washing-machine has broken down again. The lawn-mower has blown up and the car payment is due." By the time that that discussion had been held, there was not time for the more personal messages that couples might like to pass across to each other. An hour is the minimum time that is necessary for contact visits. I understand that extra visiting-time was introduced last week-end. Prisoners have waited eagerly for that small indulgence, even though it should have been a right to them years ago. It is painfully obvious that our prison system is out of date. In fact, it is so out of date that, in the 1890s, it would have been considered regressive.

I take this opportunity to review the events that have occurred in Boggo Road during the past two weeks. Firstly, I cite the examples of the tragic death of Bradley Engelmann, who was a young fine-defaulter, and the uncontrolled argument that occurred between two prisoners, leaving one badly wounded. I believe that both of those incidents could have been avoided.

The recent well-documented escapes, cell searches and the vicious bashing of a prisoner by guards whom I believe are attached to the Initial Response Group have not

set the scene for a happy Christmas. Together with the Government's procrastination in introducing the legislation that would implement Kennedy's progressive reforms, those incidents can lead only to further increases in tensions, which will result in only one outcome.

Prison reform legislation must be introduced immediately. Prisoners in Queensland gaols were seething at the thought that Parliament was going to rise early to enable Ministers to go off on their Christmas jaunts without introducing that legislation.

Let me cite a few editorials that have appeared in newspapers in the past couple of days. The editorial in the *Sun* stated: "Speed up the prison reforms". The one in the *Sunday Sun* stated: "Correction is key to jail reform". On Monday the *Courier-Mail* editorial stated: "Delay over new prisons Bill". Prisoners who read these editorials in the newspapers are worried. They just do not know what is going on.

Let us have a look at the Government's record. Since the 1986 State election prison-staffing has been cut back to a bare minimum. Coupled with staffing reductions and an increase in the prison population, assaults on warders have also risen dramatically. At last count, to my knowledge, about 75 assaults have been committed on warders. That means that in the last two years one in every four warders has been assaulted. If the staff in any other profession or any other occupation were subjected to such treatment, mass walk-outs would occur.

Is this the reason why the Government keeps advertising for additional prison officers or people interested in the prison service to apply for the jobs? Is that why this Government is failing to fulfil its recruitment program? Is this the reason why prison officers' morale is at an all-time low? Is this the reason why so many prison officers are absent with stress-related illnesses? At this very time prison officers do not know what is required of them. If they go soft and give a prisoner a smoke, they are called crim-lovers. If they do not, they are called hard-liners.

These are obviously the reasons why prison officers are also calling for the implementation of the Kennedy report. As can be seen, two sides of this equilateral triangle desperately want to see prison reforms undertaken as soon as possible. The third side of the triangle is of course the public. For years the public has been calling for prison reform. Members of the public do not want offenders to be feather-bedded, nor do they want brutalisation of inmates; they want true reform. They want reforms that mean rehabilitation, with the protection of society in general as the main aim of any rehabilitation program. It is no good sensationalising prison reform with tough talk of reintroducing the death penalty. Prison reform is far too important to be side-tracked by macho displays of legal revenge.

As it stands at the moment, what chance is there for an offender to come back from his incarceration a better person than when he went in? My answer to that now is, "None". Even though the State's prisons are full of drug offenders and offenders who have committed drug-related crimes, no drug counselling is given.

Let me detail to this Committee a case in which the rehabilitation of an offender has been totally neglected. As late as Monday I was told of a prisoner in Wacol gaol who, when he was sentenced by the court, was recommended for psychiatric assessment in the hope that with the proper treatment he would be able to overcome his obsessions. This prisoner, whom I will refer to as Mr Smith, has, since the break-up of a de facto relationship, become obsessed with the idea of his former lover taking him back. To this end he has, over the last two years, followed, phoned, lurked about and harassed his erstwhile lover to the point at which she had no option but to seek legal protection from him for herself and her children. It was all to no avail.

Driven by his jealousy, he assaulted her, on the one hand accusing her of being unfaithful, but on the other hand begging her to take him back. For that assault he is currently serving time. He still sends her love-letters and birthday cards as though nothing has happened. At no time in prison has he been assessed or counselled by a psychiatrist. He has been left with his illusions and delusions intact.

Meanwhile, the object of his delusions is counting down the days to his release. She knows that the whole vicious circle is about to begin again. He has promised her as much in many of his letters. If proper assessment and treatment were given to him, there is a big chance that this woman would not be living in fear of Mr Smith.

I would now like to deal with three rather disturbing incidents. The first is so farcical that if it was not so serious it would have made a great TV script. It involved an armed guard from the elite Initial Response Group, a boom-gate guard and a prisoner who is serving a life sentence for a vicious sex attack on a baby. Apparently, the IRG guard was caught off guard when he decided to light up a cigarette. To do so he leaned his loaded carbine against the wall. After lighting his cigarette, he strolled on, oblivious to the fact that this carbine was still leaning against the wall. A prisoner saw the rifle. Can anyone imagine the quandary that this prisoner was left in? Can anyone imagine what was going through his mind? Would he leave it for the guard to realise his loss and come back to claim his weapon? Would he pick it up and return it to the guard? But hang on. By this time the guard was gone. In the end, this prisoner, who was due to be considered for parole,—and the operative word is “parole”—decided to take the weapon back to the guard at the boom gate.

I ask honourable members how they reckon the boom-gate guard felt when he saw an apparently armed prisoner coming towards him, especially when one considers the recent spate of break-outs? To be honest, one would probably have seen the worry stains on this boom-gate guard. And who could blame him? I do not think that any of us would have been in any better condition.

Fortunately, the prisoner handed the weapon over as meekly as a lamb and the whole matter was hushed up. Once again, a dangerous situation had been resolved more by good luck than by good management. Just think what the consequences would have been if the carbine had been picked up by someone of the ilk of the recent escapees. I believe that these situations arise from the present understaffing at the prison. Prison officers are overworked. They are not able to concentrate on their job as fully as they would like.

The second point again relates to the understaffing of prisons and in particular how it affects, and has affected, security at Boggo Road. I suggest that the recent mass escape of five dangerous criminals would not have happened had the staffing not been cut to the bone. I say that for two reasons. Firstly, such mass break-outs virtually were unheard of until approximately two years ago. I refer to a matter I mentioned earlier about the 1986 election and how staffing was cut to the bone. Secondly, owing to the cut-backs in staff and positions, No. 2 tower has not been manned for the past two years. Incidentally, No. 2 tower watches over the kitchen and C yard. It is there that the escapes originated and were executed. It is interesting to note that to this day, No. 2 tower has not been staffed even though it was an area of great concern in relation to break-outs.

The third point I wish to raise relates to the recent raid by the IRG at Boggo Road. I believe that the whole raid was nothing more than a publicity gimmick. It was successful, and I believe that it fooled everyone. However, I believe that closer scrutiny will show that it was not the coup that it was cracked up to be. It was certainly great exposure for the Minister who was showing off for the cameras among a large quantity of supposed contraband that had been seized in the raid. What the Minister did not tell the television-viewers or radio-listeners was that a good deal of the material displayed was in fact store issue, that is, items that had been issued upon requests being made by prisoners.

Mr Cooper: That the prisoners had access to.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Yes. Some of the items on display even had stock cards attached to them. Whether those items came from prisoners' cells or were brought out of the store is immaterial because they came from the same place. However, the fact remains that most of the items on display were prison issue.

In conclusion, I wish to refer briefly to matters I have raised previously in the Adjournment debate about double standards that have been adopted by prison administration officials. At that time I commented on the double standards that were in operation in dealing with prisoners who had AIDS. During that debate, I also said that a female prisoner who had AIDS was in need of proper medical care and attention. At that stage I said that I believed that that had not been given. I stated also that all female prisoners and prison officers had been lectured together on how to deal with prisoners suffering from AIDS.

I informed the Parliament of the basic instructions that had been given, that is, reassuring all present that AIDS prisoners should be treated no differently from other prisoners, provided that there was no possibility of the transfer of blood. I also mentioned that the particular prisoner was so weak that she experienced difficulty in fulfilling the requirements imposed upon her. The crisis point for this prisoner arose when she took a fit, expectorating blood. Owing to previous instructions that had been issued by the administration, the prisoner was left in that state on the floor of the kitchen until medical staff arrived approximately 30 minutes later. I firmly believed at that stage, as I do now, that that prisoner should not have been held on remand in the women's prison. I also pointed out that, irrespective of the crimes she had committed, she was already under a sentence of death.

I requested that the AIDS prisoner be taken out of the maximum security section of the gaol for reasons that were painfully obvious. I believe that when the Minister became aware of the situation, he acted swiftly and instituted actions that led to the prisoner's being put out of the prison. For that, I thank the Minister.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (5.04 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to join in this debate this afternoon and to support the Minister. I commend the Minister for his excellent presentation and for the excellent way in which he is handling his portfolio.

I congratulate the Minister most sincerely on the manner in which he is handling a very difficult and, at times, dangerous portfolio. To commence my speech, I could do worse than refer to some of the concluding comments made by the Minister in his presentation. The Minister stated—

“The ability of the office and staff to face and address major changes in the past is a significant strength in facing future challenges and will be a major factor in achieving improvements in service.”

That is what the administration of this portfolio is all about and previous speakers have already referred to that fact.

Mention has been made of the changes that have been effected to Queensland's prison system and to what various honourable members consider to be failings of the system that have been highlighted by the media from time to time.

I noted a comment made by the honourable member for Everton, Mr Milliner, who referred to the administration of the previous Minister, Mr Muntz. During the period of Mr Muntz's administration, I had the opportunity of inspecting prisons in southern States. Both Mr Milliner and Mr Palaszczuk have commented on the significant differences between prisons in Queensland and prisons in southern States. I inform the Committee that in Queensland at least a certain degree of discipline is evident in the prisons, as well as some respect for authority. There was little evidence of respect for authority or discipline in the prisons I inspected in southern States. During my inspection, I walked into a prisoners' dormitory and found a prisoner lying on a bed. In spite of the fact that an officer had also entered the room, the prisoner remained on the bed and showed no sign of courtesy or respect by getting up.

Mr Davis: Have you been through any prisons down south?

Mr STEPHAN: If the honourable member had been listening, he would have heard me say that a few years ago I accompanied the former Minister on an inspection of southern gaols. I had informed the Committee of the difference in standards that I

observed when I visited those gaols. I point out to the honourable member that I was inspecting the gaols and that I was not an inmate, if that is what the honourable member is implying.

Mr Palaszczuk also used a newspaper article to call on the Government to speed up its reforms and bring in amending legislation. I wonder what the honourable member meant when he said "speed up"? The honourable member made no comment about when he thought the reforms were to be introduced and he made no suggestions as to when the reforms should be implemented. All he did was hold up a newspaper and say that the reforms should be speeded up.

When the events of the last couple of months are taken into consideration and when the scope and magnitude of the task is measured by reference to annual reports, how much faster does the honourable member expect reforms to be implemented, bearing in mind that the legislation is due to be introduced very soon?

Mr Davis: Do you know a copy of the Prisons Act has been unavailable for 20 years?

Mr STEPHAN: I am not too sure that the honourable member has ever looked at a copy of the Prisons Act and, if he has, that in fact he has been able to read it. The amendments to the legislation are to be commended.

I take this opportunity to commend Mr Kennedy and Mr Peter Jones and their staff for the activities that they have undertaken. These gentlemen have great responsibilities and have made outstanding efforts in regard to this very worthwhile and important aspect.

State Stores involves a great deal of responsibility and is an area that the Minister has not neglected. Prison reforms have been discussed; but, in addition, reforms have been suggested to State Stores. Since December the Minister has carried out sweeping administrative reforms that will bring lasting and long-term benefits to the State. The Prisons Department, the Government Motor Garage and the Government Printing Office have all been reviewed and reformed. There is a current review of the State Fire Services, and the State Stores Board is about to undergo similar exhaustive examination. All of these departments cover fairly volatile areas that need close scrutiny.

The State Stores Board was first established in 1923 by an Executive Council minute, and this year the sixty-fifth annual report of the State Stores Board was presented to Parliament.

Mr Davis: Another brief, eh?

Mr STEPHAN: I do have notes here. I do not know whether the honourable member uses notes when he speaks, but I suggest to him that it would be better if he did have notes. In that way honourable members would be able to understand what he says.

Mr Cooper: That's a good idea.

Mr STEPHAN: It would be a very good idea and it would make sense when honourable members read *Hansard*. The honourable member would do well to take the opportunity to peruse the diverse functions carried out by State Stores. From time to time, if he had made use of the State Stores facility, parts of his electorate could have received benefits.

For many years State Stores has been an administrative and purchasing backwater with very few people being aware of its existence and perhaps even fewer being aware of its functions. Can any honourable member tell me what its functions are? Honourable members sit here in dumb silence and are not prepared to answer. It is obvious that this situation is now changing and will continue to change. State Stores had been described as a sleeping giant. In many ways this is a very practical and down-to-earth description of this powerful Government purchasing agency. This should not be underestimated or ignored.

The changes that will occur to State Stores were referred to by Mr Cooper in the foreward to this year's State Stores Board annual report, in which he stated—

“The aim is to ensure that State Stores is employing the most effective methodology in its operations so that the Queensland taxpayer receives excellent value and service.”

It is pretty hard to argue against that objective and I have no doubt that such a review will be an outstanding success.

It is interesting to note the comments made in various newspapers. The members of the Opposition are fairly keen to hold up newspaper comments and articles, and this afternoon I have one for them. A newspaper article states—

“Administrative Services Minister Russell Cooper has taken the first step in his plans to overhaul and upgrade State Stores, which spend almost \$1000 million of taxpayers' money each year.

He wants management consultants to study the operation and report back within 12 weeks.

Consultants have until November 7 to submit expressions of interest and to be short-listed.

Mr Cooper wants the department's performance, efficiency, effectiveness and service value analysed and reviewed.

The State Stores Board was set up in 1922 to arrange the 'most cost-effective procurement of goods and services on behalf of government departments.' ”

Mr Davis: A Labor Government.

Mr STEPHAN: It could have been a Labor Government at that time. A Labor Government was in office for quite some time but it did not do much. The article continues—

“. . . the operation had 'rolled along' unchecked since, but had maintained a reputation of professionalism.

Last year, State Stores spent \$155 million on fuel, \$75 million on cars and trucks, \$4 million on tyres and tubes and \$1.5 million on hospital bed linen.”

Mr Davis: Is that where the cars come from?

Mr STEPHAN: That is a different story. I will tell the honourable member about the cars later. The purchasing power of State Stores covers other areas, and cars is in fact one of them.

A feature of the State Stores annual report that impressed me—and it would have impressed the honourable member for Brisbane Central if he had read it—was that it can also be used as an information bulletin for officers in the public service. It makes good reading, as do all of the annual reports. Government agencies can make considerable economies if they use the professional services that are on offer at State Stores. Similarly, there is a potential financial bonanza for an alert and competitive private sector to compete for lucrative Government contracts.

The issue of quality assurance is certainly an issue of the future and has a direct link with State Stores operations, which is a major purchasing agency. All honourable members would agree that there needs to be an organisation to look at quality control. The Australian organisation that looks at quality control is performing a very useful and productive role in creating awareness for quality assurance systems to be in place as soon as possible. This organisation has had an excellent liaison with all Government departments, including State Stores. This aspect is not being ignored or forgotten.

The Queensland Government, through the State purchasing policy, has identified 1 July 1990 as the date by which firms which supply manufactured goods to Government agencies must have adequate quality assurance systems in place. I believe that this policy

has the solid support of the Cabinet and was ratified by a Cabinet decision earlier this year.

Manufacturers must become aware that Government agencies such as State Stores will select goods or services only if the quality is consistent and the supply is reliable. That is to ensure that the goods are there when people want them. State Stores, as of right, must demand quality products and must insist on an assurance that the quality level will be guaranteed over a long period of time.

The end result of corporate quality assurance will mean lower production costs, less waste, less scrap material, less work to be redone, higher productivity, higher profitability, consistent output, improved scheduling and reduced field services and warranty service. Companies that have already implemented such innovative programs have found improvement in the motivation and morale of employees. It is obvious that employees must feel a rising pride by being able to identify with a progressive company which involves them in the quest for improvements in quality.

I encourage those in the corporate sector not only to become familiar with quality assurance but also to practise it. I urge them to find out what is the difference between a quality plan and a quality manual and to learn what is a prime contractor, a product standard and multi-assessment of contractors. Those who seek out this information will have strengthened their corporate potential and their future capacity to compete for the Government purchasing dollar.

The responsibilities of State Stores are very diverse indeed. In addition to arranging special one-off deals for equipment, technology and services, it establishes period contracts for a wide range of items. An illustration is the fact that hospitals boards throughout Queensland are able to make significant savings by purchasing through this period contract system. During the last 12 months, the Gympie Hospitals Board has been able to purchase a number of different items.

Mr Davis: A bit of local stuff.

Mr STEPHAN: The board purchases fruit and vegetables locally; they do not come through State Stores. That produce is grown locally.

The board has been able to purchase anaesthetic units, oximeters, ventilators, computers and printers, just to name a few.

I now turn to the stock control section of State Stores. Goods stocked by State Stores fall into two main categories. Common-use goods are generally items such as stationery and office requisites that individual departments cannot buy from outside suppliers in adequate quantities to secure competitive prices. Collective requirements are co-ordinated by State Stores so that individual departments can receive the goods at the best available price from the State Stores warehouse. State Stores also stocks hospital linen items for use by hospitals and institutions. These items are produced by outside manufacturers using material supplied by State Stores and to specifications drawn up by the hospital linen committee. The value of stock issued during the year was \$7.8m. That amount resulted from the issue of more than 30 000 orders.

The prime responsibility of the contracts section is to establish the contractual arrangement between State Stores and a contractor, manufacturer or supplier. The section prepares formal letters of acceptance which, during 1987-88, encompassed 48 000 items in all.

The systems development group is responsible for the development, implementation and maintenance of all computing systems pertaining to State Stores.

Mr Davis: I always thought that the Estimates debate was for this Parliament to delve into the operations of departments, not just to give a list of figures.

Mr STEPHAN: I am delving into the operations of the States Stores Board at the moment.

Criticism has been directed at the practice of some non-Government car fleet buyers purchasing through State Stores. Churches and other non-Government bodies have been buying motor vehicles at discounts to which they have not been entitled. The Minister has said that stringent guide-lines will apply to the supply of vehicles to such organisations. This will apply particularly to luxury vehicles. If organisations are not eligible for the special treatment, they will no longer receive it. In cases where these groups can still buy vehicles through the State Stores contract system, the State Stores manager will have to be convinced that the vehicle is to be used for the purpose set out in the approved Government grant or subsidy. Cabinet's move on this matter was prompted by a State Stores Board memo setting out apparent anomalies in the buying practices of some organisations. One of these anomalies was the purchase of luxury vehicles as an incentive for school headmasters and senior officials within some organisations.

In the 1987-88 financial year, non-Government bodies bought 372 vehicles through State Stores, of which 27 were classified as luxury vehicles. However, there is no risk that church, charitable and other groups in receipt of Government grants or subsidies will not be able to continue to purchase cars, provided they fall under the proper guide-line categories. I am sure that even the most ardent objector from the Labor Party would agree with that.

One of the goals of the Rural Fires Board is the establishment and maintenance of an orderly bush fire mitigation program based on voluntary resources and the maintenance of a bush fire awareness program aimed at reducing the incidence of wildfire caused by human negligence. I also wish to mention the introduction of fire-fighting activities between local bush fire brigades to enhance their present schemes and methods and at the same time to develop a better community awareness of the brigades. There must be co-ordination between bush fire brigades and local fire brigades to ensure that fire-fighters are available in an emergency. One of the problems of bush fire brigades is that they are staffed by volunteers who are not necessarily available when a fire breaks out. It is reasonable to accept that those who need a fire put out will ring the nearest fire brigade even though they are not within that brigade's area.

I also wish to mention the criticism that has been levelled at the change from the insurance-based system of funding fire services. I am not saying that there are not anomalies with the property-based levy system. I am sure that the Minister would agree that there are anomalies and that a number of adjustments need to be made. However, be that as it may, it is obvious that those matters are being addressed. I have spoken to the Minister about addressing problems with the levy system as it applies to commercial premises. The levy charged for some commercial categories is vastly different from that charged for others. Some business-owners and sporting groups find they are greatly disadvantaged when they compare the amount of the levy with the benefit that they are receiving. The levy system should be examined so that in future it will be more equitable for everyone.

I return to the subject of the prison system. One matter that does not receive sufficient attention is community service orders. People who receive community service orders are doing a good job. After working with some of the voluntary service organisations in the community, the people who perform the work begin to appreciate the worth of those projects. Many of them have been known to return after the completion of the community service order to complete the project.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong) (5.24 p.m.): Firstly, I congratulate Mr Kennedy on his review of the prison system. I was pleased to hear that the Labor Party strongly supports that review. Mr Kennedy is proposing to privatise many aspects of the prison system. I am pleased that the Labor Party is supporting that. In today's *Sun*, an article to that effect appeared. With privatisation, large savings and significant efficiencies can be achieved in the prison system.

I turn now to the aspect of setting up a prisons commission. For many years, New South Wales has had a prisons commission, but it is now moving away from that system and back to giving power directly to the Minister; yet Queensland is moving to the

prisons commission system. I hope that Queensland's system will be different from the one that exists in New South Wales at present. Shortly I will say more on prisons.

I turn now to fire services, which are most important. I wholeheartedly support the inquiry into the fire services that the Minister is having conducted. Many anomalies exist in the fire services operation. I trust that the investigations will also take into account the fire levy groupings. From time to time, all members receive complaints about those groupings. It is difficult to explain why some categories are included in one grouping and not in another grouping. I trust that the investigations might take into account those shortcomings.

Grave problems exist in the fire services operations. I am sure that the Minister is aware of many of those problems. One needs look not only in Brisbane but also throughout the rest of the State to be aware of those problems.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board in particular is presently feeling a funding squeeze as indicated in both staffing levels and equipment. This year, the Government has approved a budget of \$26.5m, which is a reduction on last year. It is a reduction in money terms, and an even greater reduction in real terms when the Consumer Price Index is taken into consideration. In the Brisbane City Council area, income of approximately \$27.5m is received. However, the amount being expended this year is approximately \$26.5m; so \$1m is being syphoned off into other areas of Government activity, no doubt going to help pay for the infrastructure of the State Fire Services overall.

An alarming situation exists with staffing. The Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board has asked for an additional \$2.5m. If that money is not received, as from 1 March next year there will be a reduction of between 50 and 60 firemen. That reduction of staff can be carried out in a number of ways. At present, 753 people are employed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, which is 17 fewer than the establishment figure. Without the additional \$2.5m, a reduction of 50 or 60 firemen will occur. Alternatively, there will be a reduction in service by axing the night shift at suburban stations from 1 March next year. If the night shift at a number of suburban stations ceases, people in those areas should have their fires between 8 o'clock in the morning and 5 or 6 o'clock in the afternoon. If they have a fire at night-time, it will be tough luck; there will be no local fire brigade service.

I understand that 11 stations will be affected. One of the ways of measuring which fire stations might be affected is to ascertain the call-out demand. The fire stations likely to be affected are Mount Ommaney, Hamilton, Wynnum, Rocklea, Balmoral, Ithaca, Nundah, Enoggera, Taigum, Chermside and Camp Hill. If the night shift at those stations is axed, the city will be badly affected.

Members in the Chamber from the Gold Coast will be aware that the problem exists not only in Brisbane but also on the Gold Coast. Some fire stations on the coast close at 6 o'clock at night. They operate between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. and are not open at week-ends. This, of course, is very unsatisfactory because fire services are emergency services and, more often than not, the emergencies occur after-hours—at night-time and at week-ends.

The Government needs to examine closely just how many emergency services it is going to provide and to determine the role of fire services in the future. I notice that that is not very well spelt out in the Minister's report. One cannot help but realise that the Minister could be called the "Minister for Bits and Pieces". He has presented five or six reports to the Parliament, one for each section of his department. The report on fire services does not set out their role or goals. It does set out the functions and duties, but that is as far as it goes.

Perhaps one of the matters that the inquiry will investigate is the future role of fire services; whether it will take over more emergency services or whether they will be left to other authorities. There is no doubt that the fire services are now being called upon to attend more rescue operations and safety operations than they were in the past.

Another sad story is in the area of fire-fighting equipment, particularly fire-fighting appliances in the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board area. I understand that some of the ageing appliances are riddled with rust.

A new fire-fighting appliance called a type 3A Mitsubishi has been ordered and is being manufactured. These new units have been designed by the State Fire Services and have now been blackbanned by the firemen—by the union. That has occurred because of the poor design of the vehicle. It is very difficult to understand why that vehicle would have been ordered. It appears that the men do have a number of real problems in relation to this particular vehicle.

Mr Veivers: Has it got an automatic transmission?

Mr BEANLAND: I can assure the honourable member for Southport that these vehicles have a lot of shortcomings. If he talks with the firemen and the board members down in Southport, he will find out whether they have an automatic transmission. I thought that as the honourable member for Southport is a member of the Minister's committee, he would be aware of these sorts of things. I am very surprised that he is not. It shows that he is not doing his job. That is what is wrong in relation to this whole matter. The Government is not doing its job. I thank the member for Southport for that interjection because it reminded me that he is not doing his job.

I will return to the problems of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board. One of the problems in relation to the fire-fighting appliances is their height. That is a very elementary problem. The design of the hose boxes is another problem that has cropped up. One can understand why the firemen are upset. Apparently, the hose boxes are made of aluminium and they have very sharp corners on which, of course, the firemen can easily cut themselves when they are busily carrying out their duties.

Those are just some of the matters of concern. Some of the problems, such as the design of the hose boxes, are going to be sorted out by the board. However, I believe that these problems should not have arisen in the first place. Clearly, they show that a great deal more effort needs to be put into fire services by the Government instead of the short-changing of the fire brigade services that has obviously been occurring in recent times.

One cannot help but notice that on some shifts many of the appliances remain unmanned. I think that a member of the Government may have mentioned that the crew numbers are decreasing. In a number of instances the crews have been reduced from four men to three men. This is a matter of some concern to the boards because they are unable to keep up the manpower requirement.

I have mentioned that not only do these problems arise in Brisbane but also on the Gold Coast, which is an expanding area. There has been no increase in the manpower at the Surfers Paradise Fire Station over the last 20 years. That is a cause for concern. It is clear from examining the various fire services that things are not good. The Minister does need to pay some attention to fire services in between the break-outs from the various prisons. It is a very important aspect of the Minister's portfolio.

I was pleased to read in the Savage public sector review report that was tabled earlier this year that the Government is proceeding with a number of reforms. For example, the Government is examining the number of boards. I understand that there is to be some amalgamation of the boards. Perhaps the Minister might provide some further details on that tomorrow in his reply. The document I have was produced some two months ago. I am sure that there have been some changes in that area. There are presently 81 boards throughout the State. I understand that the Savage public sector review report recommends an amalgamation of some of the boards. I am sure that all members of fire brigades boards would like to know the exact position. This lack of knowledge is creating some uncertainty.

It is pleasing to see that changes to the building code in relation to fire safety arrangements are proceeding. I understand that it is planned to include that code as

part of the subordinate legislation of the revised Building Act as from December 1988. No doubt the fire brigades' requirements will be included in the Building Act by the end of June or beginning of July 1989. This will undoubtedly lead to a decrease in the number of people required by the various fire brigades boards to undertake supervisory work, which is another task for the local authorities. I am sure that local authorities are capable of that because they presently send building inspectors out to do other building inspections. Fire safety is probably a matter that should have been covered by the building code in the past so that building inspectors who are on the job can monitor the entire situation. I would be pleased if that did occur, and I trust that the various arrangements will be made in the not-too-distant future.

Looking further afield at the overdraft—an overdraft of about \$32m still appears in the books. Although Treasury has undertaken to guarantee the loan that it has granted to fire services, I notice once again this year that there is not reference to the interest rate charged on the loan or the term of the loan. That would certainly be useful and interesting information that the Minister could provide. At the present rate of reduction of the loan, it will be a long time before it is repaid.

I return briefly to the subject of prisons. Initially, I said that I was very pleased that the Government is considering seriously the privatisation of a number of areas of prisons operations. I am sure that greater efficiency and effectiveness of operation in the medium to low security area—the prison farm—will lead to great savings for the tax-payers of this State. Privatisation has certainly worked very well in similar areas in the United States. I know that it is being considered in Great Britain. New South Wales has made it perfectly clear that it will advance down this road.

The costs of keeping fine-defaulters in prison is horrific. It costs between \$20,000 and \$21,000 a year to keep each prisoner in a gaol. One can understand why other avenues of penalty for fine-defaulters need to be examined. I understand that between 2 and 5 per cent of prisoners in gaol on any given day are fine-defaulters. I know that the Government has been looking at other forms of penalty. I believe that the Government is looking further at community service orders. They work effectively and I am certainly a great supporter of them. Persons placed under community service orders carry out a great deal of work for a number of community organisations. Certainly a number of community organisations in my electorate have availed themselves of those services. The system has worked effectively and at the same time has provided a service to the community.

I was pleased to read in the Minister's report that the Home Detention Program will be maintained on a permanent basis. That is another option that can be used in penalising fine-defaulters. I am not aware that a system of suspension of licences of motorists who have refused to pay fines for traffic offences is being used at present. However, that is another option that could be examined by the Government. Anything that can serve as a penalty and save the tax-payer the huge costs involved with custodial penalties is worthy of consideration. I have been told that the average stay in prison of a fine-defaulter is 29 or 30 days—that is a considerable period—with 75 per cent of prisoners serving less than three months. A community service order is certainly an alternative that is worthy of consideration.

In conclusion, I turn to the Government Printing Office. I am pleased that this year the Government will run the Government Printing Office more as a commercial operation. A number of services could be improved, particularly those dealing with Acts of Parliament. Often a person has a need to refer to an Act of Parliament. However, when he obtains the Act of Parliament he finds that it is in half a dozen pieces and that the principal Act has not been updated by the addition of all the amendments that have been made to it. It is not always an easy task to read an Act. Honourable members have witnessed the number of amendments that at times the Government puts through this Chamber, which is sometimes referred to as a sausage machine. In some sessions the Government has been known to amend an Act on more than one or two occasions.

Members of the community do not find it easy to understand a Bill. Sometimes the contents of a particular Act of Parliament are not clear. The same thing could be said about regulations. It is virtually impossible for a member of the public to obtain an Act of Parliament and its regulations and to understand them because he has to go through a number of pieces of paper. He has little hope of following through what is generally a fairly difficult, tortuous task because there is a lot of legalese in many Acts of Parliament. I appeal to the Minister to give attention to that problem in the coming months because it is something about which I continually receive complaints, as I am sure do other members.

Mr LINGARD (Fassifern) (5.43 p.m.): It is my pleasure to take part in the debate on the Estimates of the Corrective Services and Administrative Services portfolio.

Mr Lee: Why?

Mr LINGARD: During my short speech I would like to concentrate on corrective services and the capital works program within the Department of Corrective Services and Administrative Services. Whilst I know that my good friend the member for Yeronga will quite cynically and often say, "Why?", I think that quite obviously this is a period in which this Government can take great pride. Corrective Services and Administrative Services is possibly one of the Government's greatest pluses at this stage. It is certainly a great plus as far as the media is concerned. I have no doubt that the member for Yeronga accepts the fact that he is being extremely cynical. After all, he was part of a Government and he knows how difficult that particular portfolio can be. He knows how cynical the member for Toowong has been and how difficult it is for some people to say a very nice "congratulations" to the Government or "congratulations" to the Minister. This is a very good period for the Minister because there is no doubt that things are really going well for him. In a department such as the Department of Corrective Services and Administrative Services, the more one experiments with human nature and the more one experiments with trying to do good things for corrective services, the more advantages some people will take of the system. There will be let-downs and there will be times when perhaps the Minister thinks that he has been a little bit too lenient and has done too much by way of experimentation. In such an area, if one is really going to improve things in the area of corrective services, one has to experiment. I congratulate the Minister on what he has done.

While I have been a member of Parliament I have held a number of positions. I was a member of corrective services committees for four years. I must congratulate former Ministers who have held the Corrective Services portfolio, such as Mr Geoff Muntz. When Geoff Muntz was the Minister for Corrective Services, this Government was asked to investigate the establishment of three new prisons in Queensland. The site at Parkinson was inspected. At a protest meeting at Logan the suggestion was made that Boggo Road would be removed and a shopping centre built in its place. I remember the cynicism that people displayed at that time. Both Mr Muntz and Mr Neal experienced that cynicism, and now Mr Cooper is enjoying a reasonably good period because this Government is spending a lot of money on the construction of three new prisons in Queensland.

I congratulate the Under Secretary of the Department of Corrective Services and Administrative Services, Mr Peter Jones, on the work that he has done. As all honourable members would be aware, his department is not an easy one to administer. I congratulate also the Comptroller-General of Prisons, Mr Alec Lobban.

Opposition members cannot deny that 1988 has seen a lot of capital works. In the Brisbane Prison Complex a new visiting area incorporating a children's playground and visitors' waiting area was opened in July. A new detention building has been constructed. In Townsville, a new female unit with accommodation for 18 inmates was opened this year, as well as a new machinery and equipment building. At Woodford, a self-contained accommodation unit for 32 prisoners was completed. At Wacol, two new workshops, namely, a tailor shop and a new book-binder shop, were opened.

I turn now to the three prisons that will be built in Queensland in the near future and the new security measures that will be adopted. During the four years that I have been a member of the various Ministers' corrective services committees I have travelled throughout Australia and inspected prisons.

The first prison that I inspected was Boggo Road. No matter what Opposition members say, I am sure that any person who walked into Boggo Road would be impressed initially with the discipline that is shown in Queensland prisons and the standard of dress of prisoners compared with the situation in gaols such as Long Bay, Bathurst and Pentridge. During my visit with Mr Muntz to Boggo Road prison an inmate challenged the Minister and asked why he could not have long hair and a beard. He stated that that was his basic human right. When one visits gaols such as Pentridge and witnesses the virtual filth in which those fellows allow themselves to exist, one realises that Queensland's disciplinary system, in which inmates wear uniforms, are shaven and have decent hair-styles is excellent. Under the systems of discipline in southern prisons, the authorities have to shave those people who do not want to be shaved, give haircuts to those people who do not want haircuts, and put clothing on people who do not want to be clothed. By enforcing such a system, tension is created.

Initially, I was impressed by Boggo Road. Because I did not believe that it was too bad, I was surprised to learn that it was to be demolished and removed. Following the findings of the Kennedy inquiry about the upgrading of the window system, general buildings and lack of security in the old division, I accept that Boggo Road should be removed. Anyone who has visited the women's section at that gaol would be amazed to think that it will be removed. It is a new building that is beautifully carpeted. I was amazed that it contained 34 women prisoners during my visit 18 months ago. Some of those women had young babies who were looked after by other prisoners in motel-type accommodation. I am sure that many of those women will become institutionalised because they will find it difficult to cope once they are released.

It would be almost impossible to remove the remaining sections of the gaol and leave the women's section there. The 17 acres on which the prison sits and the 34 acres of railway land could be used as a site for a shopping complex.

There will be a difficulty with the removal of Boggo Road. My immediate reaction was to wonder what would happen to those people on remand at the gaol who need easy access to the courts and their legal advisers. If those prisoners are relocated at Parkinson or Wacol, what will happen to them?

This aspect was considered by the Kennedy committee of review. Sites such as Trittons, Queensland House and others would not be suitable for remand centres. Although it would be better to have people on remand held close to our courts system, it is not practicable and they will have to be taken to Wacol. I have no qualms about that.

When the debate about the Parkinson prison took place, the members for Wolston and Ipswich said, "We do not mind if the prison comes to our electorates." I congratulate them on their offers. After all, an unusual benefit accrues from having a prison in one's electorate. Because of the additional staff that would work at the prison and the need for additional goods and services, the economy of that electorate would be improved. Wacol already has many of those services.

Initially, when Wacol prison was constructed no-one wanted to live in the area. Magnificent modern homes have now been built right up to the boundary of the Wacol prison. Now that the prison has been built, no-one is particularly bothered by it. I live very close to Boggo Road. I assume that initially there was a strong public reaction to the construction of that prison, but now people have no qualms about living close to it, either.

A magnificent prison has been constructed at Woodford. The Liberals are starting to talk about it. I remind them that Mr White was the Minister for Corrective Services

when that prison was built. At that time Beaudesert was one of the sites that were considered for the new prison.

I can remember Mr White promising faithfully that there was never supposed to be any maximum security or medium security prison at Woodford. Of course, once Woodford was built, that changed. However, Woodford is a very pleasant set-up. I remember visiting it and being shown the complete new arts section and the people who were doing art. I also saw the manual arts section. They are a credit to all of the authorities there.

In comparison with southern prisons, Etna Creek is also another magnificent set-up. I suppose that, because of its climate, Queensland is fortunate that it does not have to erect the substantial type of buildings that are erected in Victoria. However, there is no doubt that Etna Creek embodies a very modern and a very efficient system. It has a farm section and a piggeries section. It must be realised that if a corrective services program is to be conducted within prisons, the prisoners have to be given certain latitudes. At a place such as Etna Creek it is necessary to allow a person to go out with a tractor at 7 o'clock in the morning and tell him to return at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, which gives him virtually eight hours in which to work on the farm with the tractor. He has to be trusted, because that is the sort of place that Etna Creek is. Trusted prisoners are allowed to go down to the piggeries. The trusted prisoners who work on the vegetable farms and the small-crop farms have to be given their equipment and told to go to those areas and do their work.

The department trusts those people and provides what would be regarded as correct corrective services. However, some prisoners will take advantage of that trust and escapes from prisons will occur. At times the Government might ask itself whether it is being too easy on the prisoners, and at times the Opposition may get stuck into the Government and say, "Look at the types of escapes that have occurred." However, those escapes will always occur when experiments are conducted and correct correctional services are attempted.

Upon walking into the old tower section at Stuart Creek prison at Townsville, one sees a necessary and obvious need for its complete renovation. However, the farm section at Stuart is a credit to the Government.

I want to relate my impressions of prisons in Victoria. At Jika Jika, which is at Pentridge prison, the authorities decided to be ultra, ultra strict in the building of that section. It is a massive concrete building with massive doors and massive electrical systems. One has to stand at a door, wait for the door to open, walk through and press buttons on a control panel in order to go into the next section. It is a completely depressing type of prison. It is quite obvious that even though millions and millions of dollars have been spent on Jika Jika, the authorities have not been successful in providing the maximum security that they want. Jika Jika has become a failure.

Pentridge prison is one of the oldest and most disgraceful prisons that could ever be seen. It was built in approximately 1875. People who visit the restored and refurbished sections of the prison at Port Arthur see the old cross-section in the middle of it. That is exactly the same design as that at Pentridge, and Pentridge is still being used as a prison. Except for the little church, it is exactly the same building and the same design as Port Arthur's prison. It has exactly the same cone-shaped exercise yards. Pentridge is an extremely depressing prison. Anyone who says that Queensland prisons have not been completely upgraded has not seen the type of facilities that exist elsewhere.

In South Australia a new prison was built at Yatala. I cite this new prison because it illustrates that even when a new prison is built, the building will never be designed in the way that is needed. There will always be criticisms. As soon as the three new prisons are built in Queensland, criticisms will be levelled. I know that the same thing happens with high schools. One can work in a high school and make suggestions about the design pattern for the next school, but when it is built, failures will still be seen.

There is no doubt that there will be failures and criticisms in relation to the new prisons that will be built. It happened at Yatala in South Australia, where a brand-new prison was built and the authorities who had taken part in the design stood back and said, "We have made mistakes. That is not what we wanted." I can remember seeing a massive new manual arts section at that prison. It was a massive complex with a great deal of machinery. However, the authorities did not take stock of what the union required in relation to the number of people who would be needed to supervise the manual arts facilities. Because of that, that facility sat idle for nearly two years. Unfortunately, the same thing will probably occur in Queensland.

The Risdon gaol in Tasmania is possibly the only goal with which people are satisfied. However, when Queensland compares itself with Tasmania, it must be remembered that Tasmania is extremely centralised and extremely small. Tasmania can put all of its prisoners in the one prison. The parole services can be housed within the prison. Members of the parole board can quite easily visit all of the prisoners and interview them. That system is much different from Queensland's.

When the Opposition criticises Queensland's prison system, it should remember that there is only one State whose prison system can compare with that of Queensland, and that State is Tasmania.

The two prisons about which we in Queensland could be or have been slightly embarrassed are Boggo Road and Stuart prisons. However, with Boggo Road prison being removed and Stuart prison being completely upgraded, the Government can be extremely proud of the services that it is about to provide.

I want to talk about the new prisons and the facilities that will be provided in them. I refer to the internal and perimeter security of the new prisons. It will be the most sophisticated available. It will not only minimise escapes; it will also allow increased program opportunities for prisoners.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr LINGARD: Before the dinner recess, I was saying that Queensland's building program for prisons has put this State well in front of any other State. Quite obviously, after three new prisons are built and Boggo Road is replaced, Queensland will be well in front of the building program of any other State. The building program has given Queensland's architects and designers a chance to create new window designs, new shower and toilet recesses that will eliminate all communal showers, individual living areas, and a perimeter fence consisting of two very special security fences. Therefore, I believe that Queenslanders will be very proud of the building program taking place in the prisons system and of the maximum security prison at Wacol or Centenary, and the medium and minimum security complex at Borallon.

One of the most significant aspects of the commission's report is that it recognises the needs of Aborigines and Islanders. I believe that anyone who visited Stuart Prison would initially react with shock when he saw the dormitory sections of the Aboriginal and Islander's complex. I sound a note of warning against making all prison accommodation individual cells, as though that is the answer to every problem.

Recently, I was at the Alice Springs prison and saw what happened when the prison officials tried to put the Aborigines into individual cells. It does not work. The permanent walls at the prison in Alice Springs had to be knocked down and wire mesh had to be put up to make the individual cells.

It is difficult to explain the Aboriginal and Islander style of life. For two years I lived in the Torres Strait islands, but I find it difficult to give the Committee an illustration of the difference between European and indigenous cultures. Possibly the best example I could give is a picnic I went on with two children, one aged 3 and one aged 2. On a picnic, the Torres Strait Islander children all tend to go away from the adults and play together down by the creek, looking after each other. However, European children of the same age tend to stay around their parents or the parents guard their children very jealously. Aboriginal and Islander children tend to play together, work

with each other and sit with each other. It is a particular aspect of their culture. They need to be together, but not necessarily in a complete communal or dormitory arrangement. The point I make is that Aborigines and Islanders certainly do not need to be placed in cells. I am sure that the Muirhead investigation will find that as soon as Aborigines and Islanders are put into individual cells, the system will not work. It may be all right for Europeans to say that those people should be placed into individual cells and live as Europeans would in a prison system, but Aborigines and Islanders simply cannot do that.

It is pleasing to see that the commission's report places special emphasis on representation on the boards by Aborigines and Islanders, and that Aboriginal and Islander representation will also form part of the boards of review. More especially, I am pleased to note the recommendation for removal of the dormitory arrangements at Stuart prison, and the proposal to build at Townsville special accommodation specifically for Aborigines and Islanders instead of individual cells.

In conclusion, I emphasise that the Queensland Government should be extremely proud of its prison system and of the building program that has been implemented in Queensland. I welcome the beginning of an era in which the Queensland Government will be able to take pride from its achievements in the field of Corrective Services. It must be remembered that the system is fraught with human frailty. The Government should not expect a completely perfect system because there will always be problems, especially as this Government is prepared to experiment and implement reforms.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (7.34 p.m.): When Government members speak to the Estimates of a particularly important area of Government such as Corrective Services, it is surprising how they convey the impression that everything in the garden is rosy. The remarks of the Minister and some of the comments of previous speakers certainly left a lot to be desired.

I wish to correct some of the impressions conveyed by previous speakers, particularly those conveyed by the honourable member for Toowong. I nearly described the honourable member as an alderman, because he so often refers to matters affecting the Brisbane City Council.

The honourable member said he was glad to note from comments made by the Labor Party's spokesman that the Opposition supported the recent review. For the benefit of the honourable member, I point out that the Opposition's spokesman said that the Labor Party supported the review, but not all the findings in the report. I emphasise that the Labor Party certainly does not support privatisation of prisons, and that there is no way in the world that it would. I think it is important to correct those suggestions made by the honourable member for Toowong.

Mr FitzGerald: What about the taxis that bring the tourists there? You don't mind that, do you?

Mr DAVIS: There is nothing wrong with taxis.

Over a period of three administrations the Corrective Services portfolio has proved to be the graveyard of a couple of Ministers.

Mr FitzGerald: It has really only been a stepping-stone.

Mr DAVIS: I do not think so. In fact, in the case of the present Minister for Water Resources, I would say that it was a backward step.

Mr Lingard: A step sideways.

Mr DAVIS: That might be a better term, and it probably could also be applied to the Minister for Environment, Mr Muntz. I would rate those two Ministers as failures.

A question-mark must also be placed over the administration of the present Minister for Corrective Services, Mr Cooper. I do not want to be carried away by the spectacle that he made of himself in the media.

Mr Cooper: Oh! I engineered all those escapes!

Mr DAVIS: I certainly hope that the Minister will implement some of the recommendations that have been made.

Mr Cooper: All of them!

Mr DAVIS: I am pleased that the Minister has placed on record his intention to implement those recommendations, 100 per cent.

Mr Cooper: Absolutely!

Mr DAVIS: For a period of approximately 20 years, I have been a member of this Parliament, off and on. The one advantage of having been a member of this Parliament for so long is that, if one has a good memory, it is possible to recall proposals for reform presented to Parliament by both National Party and Liberal Party Ministers. In the early seventies, I was the Opposition's spokesman on prisons.

Mr Milliner: And a good one, too.

Mr DAVIS: I do not want to blow my own trumpet, but if the honourable member for Everton wants to say that, I simply confirm that his statement is correct.

Speaking from my experience as the Opposition spokesman, I can inform the Committee that there is a difference in the way that the prison system is being administered now. When I was the Opposition's spokesman, the Minister for Corrective Services was Mr John Herbert. He was renowned as a very hard, tough Minister but, to be fair, he did not place restrictions on the Opposition. As Opposition spokesman I was able to visit every prison and welfare organisation throughout the State. In addition, I represented my party, along with two others, on the all-party Select Committee on Punishment of Crimes of Violence. With that committee I visited penal institutions throughout the State. The Opposition was not restricted. At the time the Comptroller-General was Stewie Kerr. He was one of the old-time comptrollers-general and he was aware of the benefits to be gained from a politician visiting his prisons. He was pleased and proud to show politicians the improvements in those institutions.

My good friend Kev Hooper, who is now deceased, was also a member of the committee at that time. When we visited Boggo Road, Numinbah Valley and Palen Creek we noticed how clean and hygienic the prisons were. There was a smell of detergent as we walked in. I think they had been polishing the prisons up for two days before our visit. There were always complaints about the food from prisoners, but Stewie had a practice of showing us the freezer in which were stored the best possible steaks. We would have our dinner at the prison and he would say, "How could you complain about that? How could anyone complain about that?" I reckon that as soon as we left, the stew was brought out again.

During the period I was the Opposition spokesman, although there were not as many escapes as the present Minister is experiencing, there was an occasional lapse in security. I remember one case in particular.

Mr Lingard: They told me you were surprised to see a cow being milked.

Mr DAVIS: The honourable member for Fassifern will appreciate this story.

I received a call from a journalist on the *Telegraph* in Brisbane who told me that a prisoner had climbed on to the top of the roof of the old B division at Boggo Road. The journalist told me that the prisoner would not come down until the Opposition spokesman came up and discussed matters with him. The journalist asked me if I was willing to go up. I said, "Of course, I will go up." However, five minutes later I received a call from the Prisons Department stating that it would not allow Mr Davis to endanger his life. I was very, very disappointed. As honourable members know, I laugh danger in the face. That would have been another challenge for me and another way of assisting the welfare of prisoners. Naturally, since those days some of the conditions in that

section of the prison have been improved. It was revolting to see prisoners having to bathe and shower in the open.

Mr Comben: They still do.

Mr DAVIS: Is that right?

Mr Comben: In No. 1—in division 2.

Mr DAVIS: At that time the punishment cells contained a small light, but a cute little punishment was used whereby the prisoner in the punishment cell was made to clean out the cell with a block of wood. When I asked what the block of wood was used for I was told that it was a pretend scrubbing brush. Immediately the warders could not hear the prisoner scraping on the floor, they came in and gave him extra punishment.

Earlier last week the famous early-release case was raised by one of my colleagues. The Minister himself and the Premier were involved in that case.

Mr Cooper: You have never made representations on behalf of a prisoner?

Mr DAVIS: Yes. I am glad that the Minister has asked me that question. I have made representations to the Minister or, in the days when Stewie Kerr was Comptroller-General, I made representation to him based purely on when that prisoner was eligible for parole. I have never taken the role—which I believe to be unparliamentary—of being judge or jury and trying to have prisoners released early.

Mr Cooper: Nobody did.

Mr DAVIS: Obviously somebody did, because in answer to a question from Mr Milliner that day, the Minister did not name the member of Parliament, but——

Mr Cooper: Too many to name.

Mr DAVIS: This refers to the matter mentioned in the appendix to the Kennedy report. That day the Minister stated that the person involved went to a judge. The judge turned out to be a magistrate. This is absolutely amazing.

Mr Cooper: Wrong.

Mr DAVIS: That day the Minister said it was a judge.

Mr Cooper: The Comptroller-General.

Mr DAVIS: Yes, the Comptroller-General.

Putting myself in the same situation, the scenario was as follows: a person comes to my office; my secretary then rings the Minister's office; my secretary does not tell me; someone from the Minister's office contacts the Comptroller-General; he contacts the magistrate; and the magistrate then releases the prisoner. I am amazed that that could occur.

Mr Cooper: There is nothing wrong with that for an opinion.

Mr DAVIS: For an opinion? In other words, the Comptroller-General has so much power that he can circumvent——

Mr Cooper: Not at all; a courtesy.

Mr DAVIS: It is a courtesy, and he can circumvent what the court says.

Mr Cooper: That is wrong.

Mr DAVIS: It is the greatest rort that I have ever seen, and the Minister knows that it is.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr DAVIS: It is, and the Minister did not know himself because his office did not tell him.

Mr Cooper: You are saying it.

Mr DAVIS: This is right. The Premier did not know, either—and these great brains are running this State! The Premier did not know that someone in his office had rung the office of the Minister for Corrective Services, the corrective services officers did not know what was going on and yet someone got out of gaol early. Rex Jackson was gaoled for that same thing.

Mr Cooper: You are something!

Mr DAVIS: At least I can say that I have never tried to play the roles of judge and jury.

I am pleased that the Kennedy report dealt with the Parole Board. I have mentioned this aspect time and time again. The Parole Board is an essential part of the system. Any criminologist or anybody else who knows anything about the penal system knows that, if prisoners have no incentive to get out of gaol early, it would be intolerable. Lack of incentive leads to uncontrollable masses.

The Parole Board should operate in a similar fashion to those in the United States. In America, when a person has served nearly half his sentence he is eligible to appear personally before the parole board or be represented by a legal person. There is no doubt that the majority of people who are on the Parole Board in Queensland do not have a clue about what is going on. To whom do they listen when a prisoner's case is presented? The Parole Board hears only the prisoner's name; his record is presented by the Comptroller-General, who presents only what his officers have told him. I think it would be a step in the right direction if prisoners appeared personally or had legal representation.

The honourable member for Aspley, Mrs Nelson, referred to finding a solution to the problem of violent offenders. She mentioned the letter that all honourable members received from that mad person who wants various things to happen to certain people.

Mr FitzGerald: Say it—execution by sword.

Mr DAVIS: I remember that when I first entered this place the former member for South Coast received a great amount of publicity—it was his greatest claim to fame—by saying that sex offenders should be castrated or that there should be amputation.

I can remember what occurred during the hearings of the all-party committee that inquired into crime and punishment. The Premier was a member of that committee. What I am about to relate will give honourable members an idea of the mentality of some people in the community. One solicitor who appeared before us said that he believed that any person who committed a violent crime should be flogged at 6 o'clock in the evening so that it could appear on prime-time television. He also said that on the following day he should be executed just before the 6 o'clock news. The members of the committee were novices at this sort of thing; he was the first witness to appear before us and we made sure that we had no more who were as stupid as he was. When we asked him why he emphasised that the lash should be used, he said that the cat-o'-nine-tails does not mark as well as the lash. That is the sort of belief held by some of the red necks in the National Party.

I turn now to the Government Printing Office. There is presently a nice little rort going on there. There has been a reorganisation of the production staff, who have been told to show restraint. A Mr David Alman was employed as a personnel officer. About four months ago his position was renamed "Personnel Manager" and reclassified to a salary of \$35,000 per year. His position has again been renamed, this time to "Human Resources Manager" and he has been reclassified to a I-14 on about \$43,000 per year.

Mr Cooper: That is still not as much as you.

Mr DAVIS: What is the Minister talking about? I am a member of Parliament. I believe that certain classifications should apply to certain work. I do not believe that renaming a position calls for a reclassification. If the Minister is asking if I am worth more money than he is, I would suggest that I am.

I am not being critical only of the Minister's department. This sort of thing has been going on in a fair number of departments throughout the public service. A loud and clear message goes to the general public that wages have been restricted. What is happening is that the Government opposes wage rises for the rank-and-file, but its friends in upper management get reclassifications. In many cases that is done to look after friends of the Government.

Apart from that, I believe that the Minister is trying to do a good job—that is about all the praise I will give him at this stage. If the Minister supports and introduces all of the recommendations of the Kennedy report, as he has stated earlier—

Mr Cooper: The recommendations will be implemented.

Mr DAVIS: The Minister says that the recommendations will be implemented. I hope that is the case. If the Minister does that, he will go down in history as a progressive Minister. If he does not, he will join his two predecessors, and that will make them the Three Stooges who have fouled up this system over the last few years.

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (7.52 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to take part in this Estimates debate. I am deeply concerned about matters pertaining to those aspects of corrective services which have caused much suffering to prisoners under the present scheme. I thank the Minister and his committee, and particularly the Kennedy committee of review, for the efforts that have been made by each and every one of them to bring about what I consider to be some of the most far-reaching changes in corrective services that have ever been seen in this country.

I will refer particularly to the Probation and Parole Service. In 1959, legislation was enacted to enable the courts to release offenders on probation and to enable the Parole Board to release prisoners on parole. Community service orders were first introduced in 1981, and the fine-option order program commenced in 1984. As a sentencing option, supervision in the community has become popular and accepted by the courts. In fact, it has become one of the major instruments of social control in the community. Although it may not always be appreciated by all members of the community, I make the point that I have seen it in operation in another State. I was employed as the bursar for the deaf and blind children's centre at North Rocks in Sydney. Much work was carried out on the campus by prisoners who were released from both Silverwater and Parramatta gaols. Our organisation could not afford to pay for that labour, so the prisoners gave their time voluntarily—probably under some duress from the person concerned with the running of those gaols. However, our organisation greatly appreciated the efforts of those prisoners.

A statistical review of corrections in Queensland indicates that prison sentences are now representing a smaller proportion of all people sentenced for correction—

Mr Prest: Have you got a brief to read?

Mr GATELY: It seems that the pest-exterminator forgot to put out the toad baits tonight. However, I will not continue with that.

That review indicated that prison sentences are now representing a smaller proportion of all those sentenced to corrections than was the case in 1981, the year community service was introduced. In 1981, 1 780—or 25 per cent of those placed by the courts under control of the department responsible for corrections—were supervised in the community by the Queensland Probation and Parole Service. In 1987, that figure had increased to 8 658—or 56 per cent of the corrections population.

I seek leave to table and have incorporated in *Hansard* Table 1 of the appendix in the document titled *A Statistical Review of Corrections in Queensland*.

In addition to that, the case load size of the Probation and Parole Service at 30 June increased from 3 183 in 1981 to 6 381 in 1987. That figure represents 74 per cent of those Queensland offenders who were being supervised by corrective services.

I have just asked for tabling and incorporation of Table 1. I now wish to include Table 2, which represents a percentage of Queensland offenders under supervision as at 30 June.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! Is leave granted?

Mr Prest: No. They are in the report.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable member for Currumbin accept that?

Mr GATELY: I will table them.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Mr Hynd: Are there any inherent dangers in the early-release programs?

Mr GATELY: The babbling mob on the Opposition side of the Chamber probably will not appreciate the fact, but some inherent dangers do exist in early-release programs. They create an avenue for bribery and corruption in the wrong areas. I am certain that Opposition members will remember Rex Jackson very well. He came from New South Wales, which was controlled by the most corrupt Government——

Mr Prest interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much cross-fire in the Chamber.

Mr GATELY: Rex Jackson held a position in a State that was controlled by the most corrupt Government that ever existed; a State that would not dare to hold the type of inquiry that this Government has put into place. Why has not New South Wales initiated an inquiry previously? When Greiner was elected in March this year, he initiated the inquiry in New South Wales. That inquiry will reveal what is occurring.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr GATELY: You do not like hearing about areas in which you are vulnerable.

When Mr Jackson was taken before the court——

Mr Prest interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chamber will come to order. The honourable member for Currumbin will address the Chair.

Mr GATELY: I am trying to do that, but I am being denied the right because of the rabble on the other side of the Chamber. Labor Party members cannot stand investigation. That is why Mr Wran got out of the job before he was caught up in it.

The inherent dangers are that even Ministers of the Crown in New South Wales have been locked up for bribery and corruption connected with the early-release program.

Mr Hamill: In Queensland, they are still loose.

Mr GATELY: I do not want to hear about the ones who get loose. One cannot calculate on the largest calculator or computer the number of people who have escaped from gaol in New South Wales.

Mr Ardill: Those blokes have not been in yet.

Mr GATELY: With due respect, the rabble on the other side of the Chamber look like a couple of blokes who have just got out of Boggo Road.

Community supervision is now provided in 25 centres throughout Queensland. A recent review of offenders under supervision revealed that more than 80 per cent of them were under the age of 25. It is despicable that young people are being put in the position of having to go to gaol. It is a credit to this Government that it is removing so many young people from that danger. I say "danger" because many young offenders who are sent to gaol are raped by homosexuals. I think that is despicable.

Mr Comben interjected.

Mr GATELY: It was the rabble on the Opposition side who said, "Give the prisoners condoms." I heard the Minister say in this Chamber, "Under no circumstances will prisoners be given condoms—no way." Those prisoners are committing a criminal offence. The Labor rabble ought to be ashamed of themselves for even daring to suggest that prisoners should be given such aids—and AIDS is what they get. The Government will not allow prisoners to have the little item that might be regarded as the saviour when it comes to AIDS. As I have already said, some people talk about AIDS and condoms, and ride to power on the strength of that.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr GATELY: That is nonsense.

The concept that offenders who are under supervision have been let off is not true. Conditions of release to community supervision are clearly stated by the courts and the Parole Board; but, of course, our Labor friends do not understand that. They do not accept the decision of the arbiter in these matters. They want to guide, direct and control everything. If the decision of the arbiter does not go their way, they say that there is something crooked about it.

The liberty of those admitted to supervision is dependent on continued compliance with the conditions of the court order. One of the requirements that may be imposed on an offender at the discretion of the sentencing judge or magistrate is the payment of restitution by the offender to the victim. Members of the Opposition would not want to know about offenders having to pay compensation to their victims. They think it is a great joke that offenders commit crimes and do not have to pay. They come squealing to the Minister and ask him to let them off. That is their attitude.

Mr COMBEN: I rise to a point of order. The member for Currumbin is waving at the Opposition benches and saying that members of the Opposition in some way enjoy seeing offenders getting away with not having to pay for their crimes. As a member of the Opposition, I find those comments totally offensive. That is not the viewpoint of the Opposition at all. On behalf of myself and the Opposition, I ask that those comments be withdrawn.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Windsor claims that there is an imputation that the Opposition supports that type of conduct and asks for a withdrawal.

Mr GATELY: I will withdraw it.

The collection of restitution is regarded as an integral part of a probation officer's duty because it provides an opportunity for offenders to acknowledge their responsibility to right any harm that they have caused to the community. During the 1987-88 financial year, the courts made 1 470 orders requiring offenders to recompense victims of crime.

Mr Prest interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Port Curtis should not interject from other than his usual seat.

Mr GATELY: \$279,650 was collected by probation officers and distributed as directed by the courts.

In the past, parole has been criticised. However, it does represent a worthwhile attempt at reintegrating into the community those prisoners who have served long periods of imprisonment. Some members of the Opposition do not understand these things. It is important that they listen. If they do that, they might learn something.

Release from prison brings about changes in the way an offender is expected to behave. Prison is a highly structured environment. Release into the community after a long period of imprisonment often leaves the former prisoner disoriented and confused. He would probably relate very well to my friend the member for Port Curtis.

Many released prisoners are unable to handle the stress of modern living. Work techniques change and social skills often have to be relearned. Simple things such as shopping, catching a bus, ordering meals and buying a newspaper are new experiences to many long-term prisoners.

Married prisoners are confronted by the effects of their long absence from the family. Wives and children have grown away from the prisoner, and relationships often have to be re-established. Old associates fail to recognise the problem and place pressure on the newly released prisoner to resume his old ways. There are very convincing statistics that show that people who are sent to gaol finish up back in there, as unfortunate as that may be.

The period following release is critical. That is the time when the offender can succumb to pressures to commit further offences. Parole, although giving no guarantee for success, can provide some protection for the community by assisting the prisoner to face his new environment.

Irrespective of what has been said about parole, it has succeeded in Queensland. At a national conference on parole organised by the Australian Institute of Criminology, Tasmania and Queensland were the only two States which acknowledged that parole was functioning satisfactorily. That conference was attended by members of the judiciary, academics, research personnel, lawyers, police officers, parole board members, parole administrators and other interested parties. The member for Port Curtis would have done himself a great service if he had attended that conference instead of shooting off at the mouth about matters he does not understand.

The fact that the Queensland parole system underwent detailed scrutiny by a group such as that without attracting any substantive criticism seems to indicate the kind of reputation that the Queensland system enjoys in this country. The results of parole in Queensland are such that the community should feel encouraged by the responsible attitude adopted by members of the Queensland Parole Board and officers of the Queensland Probation and Parole Service.

The Queensland Probation and Parole Service is also responsible for the operation of community service orders and fine-option order schemes. A community service order is a sentencing option for adult offenders convicted of an offence punishable by a term of imprisonment. The court may order an offender to perform unpaid community service for charitable, non-profitable, church, youth or service organisations and individuals in need. That type of penalty possesses a number of worthy characteristics.

Mention was made in the newspapers of a Labor Party shindig, conference or consensus——

Mr Clauson: Soiree.

Mr GATELY: Yes.

The Labor Party was going to miraculously have these sentencing options included in its policy. That is a compliment to the Minister and his department. One could definitely say that the Labor Party was doing the old kid's style copy-cat.

Mr Prest: What was that?

Mr GATELY: The honourable member for Port Curtis cannot even understand that, so I cannot help him.

A community service order punishes the offender by requiring him to give up his leisure-time to work on community projects; it enables offenders to make a tangible repayment to the community for their offences—

Mr DAVIS: Mr Temporary Chairman, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the state of the Committee.

Quorum formed.

Mr GATELY: I will not forget what Mr Davis has just done.

A community service order enables offenders to make a tangible repayment to the community for their offences. To many offenders, the community service order has been a source of rehabilitation. Worthwhile social contacts are often formed under the scheme. Employment is sometimes found, work habits are often re-established for long-term unemployed persons and positive attitudes are developed through assisting volunteer organisations and needy individuals.

The concept of repaying the community by way of work was seen as a way of avoiding the sending of fine-defaulters to prison. Particular concern was held for those offenders who were fined but who, because of their economic situation, could not pay their fine and were obliged to go to prison. Earlier I referred to the problem of young persons being placed in prison and of hardened criminals taking advantage of their innocence. There is no way that any prisoner who enters a corrective services institution should be subjected to rape by homosexuals. I object strongly to that type of behaviour. I can guarantee that the Kennedy report will make sure that those things will be properly kept under control.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr GATELY: We will have the member for Port Curtis put in the prison for a little while, and we will send a pack of them over to deal with him.

Allowing the offender to work in the community rather than paying a fine enables him to continue normal employment; family relationships are not disrupted; and the offender is not exposed to the negative influences of the prison environment.

Community corrections provide many benefits to the community. Since the introduction of the community service order and fine-option schemes, over a million hours of work have been undertaken on 1 619 worthwhile Queensland projects. When one considers that it costs in excess of \$20,000 per year to keep an offender in prison, the \$750 per year to keep offenders supervised in the community seems a worthwhile investment.

The matter that is of greatest significance in the early release scheme and other schemes that allow people to go out and work in the community is that the family is not disrupted and the children of the family are not disadvantaged. One matter that is not fully taken into account by Opposition members is the devastation to the minds of those children and the ongoing problems that are caused if their father is not able to be at home with the family. The whole family, including the wife, suffers if there is not any money coming into the house. Of course, one would not expect Labor members to think about that problem. The Federal Treasurer in Canberra has, over the last five years, increased taxation by 80 per cent; inflation has increased prices by 50 per cent; wages have increased by 50 per cent—and people cannot understand why they cannot keep pace with all their costs of living!

Real benefits will be gained from the schemes proposed by the Minister. I commend him and his department for all the work that they have done.

Ms WARNER (South Brisbane) (8.12 p.m.): The Kennedy report has been hailed as a great victory. So it is a great victory—it is a great victory that, finally, honourable members have revealed before them a fairly comprehensive understanding of what has been going on in Brisbane gaols. However, it is not yet a victory for the Government.

In fact, it is an indictment of the last 30 years of inactivity by the Queensland Government; of the last 30 years of inhumanity that has occurred in the gaols; and of the last 30 years of neglect by the Government of the Queensland prison system. That is what is revealed by the Kennedy report.

Opposition members have responsibly and collectively called for improvements and reforms. On numerous occasions we have brought to the attention of the Government what has actually been going on in the gaols and the brutality that has occurred in them. The riots have been visible for everyone to see. In fact, I think that I had been elected for about one month when Boggo Road gaol, which is in my electorate, caught fire. I visited the gaol and on my return to this Chamber I explained to honourable members what I had seen. I said that an inquiry needed to be conducted into the violence and the bashings that I saw that night in November 1983. However, nothing was done. I do not remember any Government member at that time taking up that position and saying, "There needs to be an inquiry." Finally, after five years, during which time many fires have occurred at the gaol, an inquiry was conducted. The Government finally found out what had been causing the problem. The Government now knows what has been causing the problem.

Mr Milliner: Ms Warner—

Ms WARNER: I am not going to be diverted too much because I have a lot to get through.

Mr Milliner: They said it was the best system in the world.

Ms WARNER: Yes. I understand that previous Ministers have said that international communities have been beating their way to the doors of the Queensland gaols to see what good was going on there. Here we have it! Now we know exactly what is happening.

This is a very serious issue. If the Government had listened to what it was told, the prison system would not be in the mess that it is in today. Because of the difficulties that have been experienced during the past 10, 15 or 30 years, now would be an ideal time for the Government to reassess its attitude to corrective services with a view to making the necessary changes to improve the provision of those services in both the short and long terms.

I understand that the Minister has taken on board a number of the issues about which the Opposition has been talking for a long time. One of those issues relates to the gaoling of fine-defaulters. In 1985-86, 26 per cent of Queensland's gaol population comprised fine-defaulters. In January 1988, 129 of the 332 receptions were fine-defaulters. During that very same period in Victoria, only 28 of 153 receptions were fine-defaulters. The 212 receptions in New South Wales gaols during that same period yielded no fine-defaulters at all. What is happening in New South Wales and Victoria that is not happening in Queensland? Why does Queensland have such unbalanced statistics?

I hope that the legislation which the Minister intends to introduce into the House tomorrow will address the problem of overcrowding that exists in our gaols, which is causing enormous problems and for so long has been caused by Queensland's antiquated legislation. It is high time that legislation such as the Victorian Penalties and Sentences Act of 1985 was introduced in Queensland. That legislation ensures that imprisonment is not a first resort but a last resort. Appropriate alternatives to imprisonment—such as fines, attendance centres, community service orders, youth attendance orders and the cancellation of drivers' licences for certain offences—should be developed.

Most societies recognise that prisons do not have the imagined deterrent effect on the prevalence of crime. In many cases it has been amply demonstrated that prisons create and promote criminality. Young offenders who enter gaol become embittered and hardened by their experiences and are lured into the belief that crime is the preferable norm.

The Kennedy report and the submissions that have been received from prisoners speak strongly in favour of separate facilities and alternative correctional methods for

young first offenders and traffic offenders away from the hardened criminal element with a view to preventing the development of criminal and anti-social tendencies in those offenders. Does the new legislation intend to pursue that aim as a long-term objective? Will that aspect be considered in the construction of new prisons? I hope that it will be done in a co-ordinated manner. Very serious planning for the development of those alternatives is necessary. The use of those options will begin to clear our gaols. Not only will petty criminals be kept away from hardened criminals but those alternatives will also substantially reduce the overcrowding in our prisons, which places an incredible burden on prisoners and prison officers. On numerous occasions those feelings, frustrations and anger at the lack of staffing amongst prison officers and the overcrowding and inhumane conditions in our gaols have led to quite violent and dangerous riots that have been suppressed with quite hideous brutality, which I have witnessed.

The Minister will recall that the Kennedy inquiry was set up at the beginning of this year during a period of turmoil. At great risk to themselves a number of prisoners have written very detailed accounts of their experiences in the notorious 2 Division at Boggo Road. I have read those accounts and I hope that by now the Minister has read them, too. They tell of shootings, bashings, gassings, overcrowding, starvation rations, verbal and racist attacks, reigns of terror and the despoiling of food with maggots and gas.

The Minister should not shake his head in such a provocative manner. He should have read those accounts, which I made sure the Kennedy committee was given. They were also referred to on the *7.30 Report*.

One of those letters was written by Gary Gray, who is a very articulate writer.

Mr Cooper: What was he in there for?

Ms WARNER: I think he was in gaol for drug-related offences. I cannot remember the details.

Gary Gray said—

“Prisoners were removed from cells and made to run the gauntlet; i.e. prisoners were made to run between two lines of officers. As they passed through this corridor, they were beaten savagely with batons.”

That gauntlet-running is not a feature that is unique to Boggo Road gaol; it is prevalent in gaols throughout the world. It is commonly used as a form of harassment and brutality and is the sort of treatment that one would expect to find in Third World concentration camps, not in gaols within our so-called civilised society. Ample evidence exists to show that that is occurring. Although the statement to which I have referred was made by only one person, it is corroborated by many others who have written to the Minister at great risk to themselves.

I turn now to the events of Saturday, 13 February 1988, for which a number of eye-witness accounts are available. Gary Gray stated—

“2 Division were in the yards that morning. The guards had tried to keep a number of Aboriginal prisoners in their cells. At about 8.30 a.m. a scuffle broke out between some guards and the prisoner they were escorting. About 10 guards were bashing this prisoner. Prisoners tried to run to help but the gates to the office area were locked. Guards ran away and prisoners returned to their yards. Guards returned armed with shot guns and pistols. At least 12 shots were fired. I saw an unarmed prisoner running for cover get shot in the leg by a guard. The shot was deliberate. Another guard aimed at another prisoner and said . . .”

It is unrepeatable, but he said words to the effect of, “Get back or I will kill you.”

Gary Gray’s statement continues—

“This is the second time a prisoner has been shot in the last three months. The first time a number of shots were fired into a cell where three prisoners had been secured after a failed escape bid.”

Neville Lea Couper states—

“I saw several officers pounding a lone prisoner in the chiefs office enclosure. Suddenly there were shot guns on the gate compound being fired . . . I watched officer Ryan turn to his left and fire on Spider and hit him in the leg . . . shots were fired in every direction spasmodically but everyone had the sense to retreat to the yards.”

The story continues, and that very same officer is mentioned by Laurence Leslie McArty, who states—

“One inmate was hit by pellets from a shot gun blast by officer Ryan. The inmate Lyle was hit with pellets in the leg.”

About 120 prisoners saw that atrocity take place in the gaol, with little provocation but a lot of corroboration about what was going on. I understand that, because the Minister failed to act at the time, the Prison Officer Ryan referred to is the very same Prison Officer Ryan who is still causing trouble within the gaol system. The Minister set up a police inquiry. He did not believe the prisoners' stories. All the prison officers corroborated each other's story. Because of that the police felt there was no case to be answered, and Ryan remained in the capacity of a custodian within the gaol.

The Minister has had ample opportunity to deal with the individual situations as they have emerged. However, he has not had the political will to do so. I am concerned that he will not have the political will to carry out these much-needed reforms—with the exception of privatisation, I might add—to the prison system.

Mr Cooper: The legislation will come up shortly. Will you support it?

Ms WARNER: We will discuss it then. What I am saying is that the Minister requires an enormous political will to make sure that the reforms that are outlined in the document to which I have referred are actually carried out. If that is to happen, the Minister has to clean up the people who are in positions of authority at the gaol at the moment. It is Ryan, the person against whom the Minister failed to take any action earlier this year, who is actually involved in the case—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! The Chamber will come to order. There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Ms WARNER: As I was about to say, Ryan was actually involved in the bashing of Kiripatea. I understand that an inquiry is being conducted. I hope that this time some justice will be done.

It is interesting to note that when I went to the Parliamentary Library to obtain a press clipping about the case of Kiripatea there was some difficulty in finding it. There was a reason for that. Can honourable members imagine what section it was under in the library? Remember that this is the case of a bashing involving a man being kicked in the penis, as a result of which it was ruptured and bleeding, and, as he was beaten on the ground by four officers, he also sustained a fractured elbow. In the Parliamentary Library this matter was filed under “Custodial care”. I think that that in itself says a lot. The staff in the library has obviously been encouraged to accept that bashings come under the section “Custodial care”, because that is what happens to people in custodial care in Brisbane gaols. That in itself is an indictment.

I say to the Minister that I hope he has the political will—I know he has the desire—to do something. I hope he understands the weight of the forces that are against him within the system over which he presides; a system that was built up by his colleagues over a number of years, albeit not under his jurisdiction and responsibility; but nevertheless an entrenched system of institutionalised violence that has bedevilled the administration of this State's prison system for such a long time. That is the problem that the Minister is dealing with. I believe that he is sincere when he says that he is trying to do something about it. I hope he knows the enormity of the task. I hope he is aware that there would be a significant section in the gaol which would have a great deal to

lose if the system was ever cleaned up. Of course, I am speaking of the corruption that exists in the gaol. The evidence of that corruption is quite substantial. I am sure that the Minister is aware that it exists.

I again want to stress to the Minister that what is happening in the prison system is that a consistent and determined group of officers have persistently resisted reforms. First of all, the Minister has to clean out those who are already involved in the corruption, the bashings and the violence. A person who abuses the trusted position of a minder by attacking, humiliating and harassing other people is better suited to the role of prisoner, with ongoing attempts to rehabilitate him for his violent behaviour, rather than the role of prison officer. Outside in the general community such a beast would be gaoled for his behaviour. How can the social order be allowed to be twisted in such a way that a crime on the streets is not one in the prison provided that it is carried out by someone who is paid within the system? I think I have said enough about the matter of cleaning out those people who are very obviously sadists at the gaol.

In the few minutes that I have available I want to ask the Minister why, with his progressive ideas and with the Kennedy report under his belt—and I know there are people in the Brisbane gaol who have been resisting the Kennedy inquiry—at this point in time he suddenly does this immediate backflip and enlists the support of the military? Is it because civil authority has collapsed—everything has been tried—that the cavalry is called for? What is this cavalier who now runs the prison system—this Colonel Blimp—going to do?

Mr Cooper: Break it down.

Ms WARNER: Well, what is he going to do? He does not have the trust of anybody within the system. He is causing enormous conflict because he receives a salary of \$70,000 a year, which is higher than that of anybody else within the system. He has his own secretary and a car with personalised number plates. He has new office furniture and he is under a three-year contract for what I thought was an emergency situation. Hopefully, the need for a military dictatorship would be well over before three years.

Obviously, the Minister is not very confident that the inquiry's recommendations will be accepted. How can what could be described as "Cooper's coup" possibly succeed? It is a military response to a civilian problem. By the introduction of a pseudo-military dictatorship to oversee the gaol, the Minister has indicated that he has lost control of the situation. Under a form of military discipline, how on earth can the recommendations of the inquiry be achieved? What hope is there for humane and essential reforms, for the education and training of prisoners, for the screening and training of supportive staff and for justice-based changes to the parole and remission system, or for development of alternatives to prison sentences for minor offences, for action on prisoners' needs for employment and activity inside the gaol, for lifting of restrictions placed on prisoners' mail or overcoming corruption which is endemic throughout the system? What hope is there that the much-needed reforms advocated by both prisoners and fair-minded people in the system, including Mr Kennedy and the Minister, will be implemented if the prisons will be under the control of a person in a position of high authority who knows nothing about prisons? The new director of the prison system is a person who knows nothing about civil jurisdictions, which is part of the Corrective Services portfolio. By making bizarre statements such as, "Call me 'Brigadier' or 'sir' ", the person I refer to is alienating people that he will have to work co-operatively with. I think that he will probably live to regret this offensive approach to his colleagues. The selection of such a person seems to me to be incompatible with other actions taken by the Minister in respect of prison reform.

I commend the Minister for the liberal attitude he has adopted in the face of considerable odds, and for his open-mindedness. I am very concerned that the Minister may be lured into evil practices by those who exercise a greater political will and have greater vested interests in keeping the prison system in Queensland operating in the way that it has been operating over the last 30 years.

I wish the Minister well in accomplishing his stated objectives. I hope that he will be able to carry out the recommendations of the report and his stated aims. If the Minister proceeds in that direction, I assure him of support from a loyal Opposition.

Hon. T. R. COOPER (Roma—Minister for Corrective Services and Administrative Services) (8.33 p.m.): I thank all honourable members who have contributed to the debate.

Mr Comben: What about Mick?

Mr COOPER: Mr Veivers will be all right; he can speak tomorrow. I will sum up the comments made by speakers today and I will adopt the same course tomorrow. Hopefully the honourable member for Windsor will return to the Chamber tomorrow to hear the honourable member for Southport speak. I know that most honourable members hang on his every word.

In the case of most honourable members, but not in all cases, the debate this evening has been conducted in a most constructive manner. The tenor of the debate has been very caring and I believe that most honourable members have made a genuine effort to bring forward constructive thoughts about and support for what the Government is trying to do and for what will be accomplished by the Department of Corrective Services and Administrative Services. As a result of the debate on these Estimates so far, I am aware that people in the community are supportive of the Government's actions. I hope that society will benefit from the action I propose to take.

I will address the comments made by each speaker in turn. I commend the Opposition's spokesman for Corrective Services and Administrative Services, the honourable member for Everton. I am certainly encouraged by the support offered by the honourable member—particularly in the field of Corrective Services—and also in respect of the proposed legislative reforms that will be introduced to the Parliament tomorrow.

The honourable member expressed concern about the level of funding for the corrective services commission that will soon be appointed. I assure the honourable member that the \$9m referred to represents the funds for a full year. I inform the honourable member also that the Government has provided \$5m for a half year that is made up of \$4m for the establishment of the commission and \$1m for additional staff.

Although it is true, as the member pointed out, that \$120,000 has been provided in funds for the staff training college, there will be a further \$450,000 for staff training in the new prisons budget and \$300,000—a sixfold increase—for security and riot equipment. I welcome also the member for Everton's support for the current fire services review and assure him that it will be followed through in the same efficient and vigorous manner as the Kennedy review.

I remind all Opposition members and everyone else in the Chamber that although a special advisory committee has been set up, it does not preclude anyone from lodging a submission about fire services. I commend the review to honourable members because I believe that Dr Leivesley is an acceptable consultant right across the political spectrum as well as in the business world. I am sure that, because of her high degree of credibility, people will warm to Dr Leivesley and will contribute to the success of the review.

I point out to the member for Everton that the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board received an increase in the Budget of 7.54 per cent this year, which takes the previous amount of \$27.1m to an amount of \$29.1m. I fear that one or two Opposition members quoted figures for the wrong years and I point out that the increase of 7.54 per cent represents an increase of \$2m.

The staff at Hamilton Fire Station has not been reduced and remains at one officer and three firemen. An additional six fire officers will commence duty on 31 October. The closure of Expo will return another 12 men stationed there to other metropolitan fire brigade stations.

All of the matters to which I have adverted will be dealt with from November till April next year when the fire services review is undertaken. The Government is examining

the feasibility of a five-year strategic plan. I do not labour under the misapprehension that all previous mistakes can be corrected overnight, but if a five-year strategic plan can be devised, fire services in Queensland will benefit because the Government will fully implement the recommendations made during the review, which is also the case with the Kennedy commission of inquiry.

The honourable member for Aspley also made a very constructive contribution to the debate. She raised the issue of ensuring that violent criminals are not prematurely released into a prison environment that would enable them to escape and once again become a menace to society. I have spoken at length with the honourable member for Aspley on this issue and know exactly what she is referring to.

This is a two-way matter. On the one hand, the violent must be secured because society is entitled to feel secure; on the other hand, at the present time there are some people in gaol who perhaps should not be there but should be out of prison serving other forms of sentence.

I assure the honourable member that an essential element of the new legislative proposals will be the careful classification of all prisoners. Firstly, the prisoners will be classified and, secondly, each individual will be given a case management program. From the very day that a prisoner goes into prison, he will know his program, his entitlements to parole and what is required of him whilst he is in prison. The program will lead up to parole and release from prison and, even after he is released from gaol, the program will continue. It will not simply be a case of a prisoner being released, spending a couple of days out in society, running out of money, returning to crime and going back into gaol. That is the program that my department intends to implement. I hope that through that classification, the possibility of such premature actions will be eliminated and at the same time young and minor offenders will be segregated from hardened or violent criminals within the prison system. The problem occurs not only in Queensland but also in prisons all over the world. This Government will come to grips with the problem and, through the opening of the new gaols next year, will ensure that segregation can be introduced. The matter has a very high priority.

In regard to the honourable member for Aspley's comments on the sentencing policies of the judiciary, no doubt such issues will be raised during the deliberations of the special justice committee formed by the Kennedy committee under the Justice Department to investigate sentencing options. That committee has met for some time and, hopefully, it will report in the first half of next year. Legislation might be introduced in the latter half of 1989 dealing with sentencing and penalty options.

The honourable member for Aspley's comments on management and educational aspects of corrective services are very timely. It is vital that those programs be implemented, whether they are work skills, education or TAFE programs. The prisoners will not be sitting around doing nothing. They will be properly and fully occupied. These programs and work skills are directed towards bettering the type of person in prisons, and not necessarily the department, so that when that person is released, he will be able to contribute something to society and not be a burden on it as he is at present.

In addition, there are important elements contained in this new thrust that will help to manage Queensland's prisons more effectively and build in rehabilitation programs that are aimed at making better people rather than better criminals. I thank the honourable member for Aspley for her constructive comments regarding the fire services review that is being conducted by Dr Sally Leivesley. I was not aware that Dr Sally Leivesley was well known to the honourable member, but no doubt over the next six months they will be in close contact.

The honourable member for Archerfield adopted a rather negative attitude and became enmeshed in a confusing scenario of hypothetical situations. He used to make fairly reasonable contributions in this Chamber and this was not his best performance. He can do better and at other times he probably will. He is not a vindictive person and I know that he has a very keen interest in the prison system. I found that out during my discussions with him. Tonight, he was rather disappointing.

Mr Wells: He is a fine member.

Mr COOPER: I realise that the honourable member for Murrumba would have his own opinion.

Mr Borbidge: It's just the company he keeps.

Mr COOPER: Yes. I was giving the honourable member a wrap-up, but the honourable member for Murrumba's comment has detracted from what I said, which is a pity.

This Government is introducing legislation as a result of the Kennedy review and I hope that the honourable member for Archerfield faithfully follows ALP policy on corrective services and that he will fully support the Bills. I do not see anything in the Bills that the honourable member will be able to oppose, but that is entirely up to him.

In regard to his comments on drug counselling, each major prison now has a drug counsellor appointed to it and even prior to this the Health Department, through its alcohol and drug dependency service, has regularly visited the prisons.

On the question of the 16-hour shifts at the Brisbane Prison, I agree that in the long term this is not satisfactory. Arrangements have been made for 38 extra staff to be appointed at the gaol and this situation will be addressed within the next eight weeks. However, it takes two to tango and if this Government is trying to introduce a better roster system at the gaol or at any of the other gaols, it must receive co-operation from the unions concerned. My department has had discussions with the unions, but there has to be give and take on both sides in order to achieve the best system. The honourable member claimed that there was a high staff turn-over. Contrary to his claim, the turn-over rate is at the same level as the average turn-over amongst staff in the public service generally.

The honourable member for Gympie, who is the chairman of my committee, referred in his speech to State Stores. This is a relatively low profile section of the Government and in many ways it can be regarded as the unsung hero and protector of the public purse. State Stores possibly could be referred to as the "sleeping giant" because it deals with contracts that are worth approximately \$800m. State Stores needs to be brought more into the public eye. It is certainly the protector of the public purse and plays an extremely important role in the business of Government. The efforts of the officers of the State Stores provide for an extremely efficient purchasing operation and the honourable member has correctly identified the true importance and significance of the State Stores Board.

The honourable member referred to fire services. I acknowledge his previous representations in this area, particularly regarding the question of domestic fire levies, which is rather simple. The Government will not change the plan; however, the commercial fire levy is certainly under review, because the commercial property sector invites the highest level of fire services costs. As far as the property levy is concerned, that is bedded in, and the fine tuning that has occurred over the last four years will continue. This Government does not want to rip anybody off; it is simply looking for enough funds gathered in a fair way to provide the best, most efficient and cost-effective service to the community which are within the ability and the willingness of the community to pay.

I acknowledge the comments made by the chairman of my committee. He is a sound and astute representative of the people of Gympie and has made a very good contribution in this Chamber.

The member for Toowong raised the valid point about the proposed establishment of a corrective services commission in Queensland at a time when a commission structure has clearly failed in New South Wales. However, the similarity between the two bodies is in name only. The New South Wales commission consists of five people, three of whom are full-time executives. The Queensland corrective services commission will consist of nine members, seven of whom will be drawn directly from the community,

unions, the church and other groups. It will be a truly community-based organisation without the top-heavy bureaucracy that weighed down the New South Wales body.

The typically knocking member for Toowong has failed to grasp the elements of privatisation mentioned in the Kennedy review. To explain it more fully to him during the debate on the legislation will be my pleasure. It is sufficient to say at this time that we are looking at a system of training, accreditation and selective contract management which will be unique in the prison system in Australia. That uniqueness is not readily accepted by the unfortunate rabble who describe themselves as the Queensland Liberal Party. I wish to elaborate a little on that point. I think it is extremely unfortunate that somebody such as the member for Toowong, who represents such a prestigious area, can make such a small contribution in a constructive sense. He always has to be so knocking and damaging. To me, that is extremely unfortunate. He has far more ability than his contribution suggests. Perhaps he is not man enough to rise above that and deliver something of a more constructive nature. I am not talking about privatisation in the true sense at all when I use that terms in relation to the prison system. The commission will always retain control of staff. It will recruit, train and accredit staff. The commission will simply use elements of private enterprise that perhaps can make a contribution to improve on certain areas of the existing system.

The honourable member for Toowong's contribution on fire services demonstrated his lack of information. He was certainly way out in his estimate of the budget of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board. He was totally wrong to suggest that there would be cuts in staff numbers of between 50 and 60. In fact, the establishment remains at 770. There have been retirements but, with the addition of 12 Expo fire-fighters and six new staff members due to commence duty on 31 October, the establishment strength will be spot on. His comments on fire services were totally facetious and added nothing to this important debate. No fire stations on the coastal strip of the Gold Coast are closed at night. One hinterland station is partially staffed by auxiliary men. This year six extra fire-fighters have been assigned to the Gold Coast board. In the next two months in Brisbane every station in the metropolitan area will have a modern appliance with the latest high-pressure technology.

As if his ignorance was not already widespread enough, the member for Toowong's comments on the consolidation of legislation were again wrong. This is not the responsibility of the Government Printing Office; it is the responsibility of individual departments. The Government Printing Office has an efficient database of legislation and subordinate legislation that enable rapid production of consolidated legislation where necessary. In Queensland, thanks to the efficiency of all of the staff at Goprint, Acts of Parliament, after being assented to by the Governor, are available in a much shorter time span than is the case in other States.

The member for Fassifern has a depth of knowledge on corrective services through his experience on various ministerial committees. His contribution to this debate certainly reflects that background. As are other members of the Government, he is strongly critical of the nineteenth century hang-over in corrective services as evidenced in certain gaols throughout the nation, including Boggo Road. I share his views about the eventual demolition of Boggo Road and the benefits that will be achieved for corrective services as a whole when three new prisons are commissioned throughout the State next year.

Mr Davis: They should leave the old part of Boggo Road there.

Mr COOPER: I would not disagree with the honourable member.

Mr Austin: Mr Davis can go out there and break rocks when he retires.

Mr COOPER: Hard labour is out and breaking rocks is back in.

I would dearly love to think that the honourable member for Brisbane Central might still be around in three years' time when Boggo Road is knocked down. At that time we might even have a big party for charity. We could call the celebration "Back

to Boggo Road". The honourable member will know exactly where to go when that little bun-fight is held.

I turn now to the comments of the honourable member for Fassifern on the prison at Townsville. I am pleased to advise him that tenders for the first stage of the redevelopment of the gaol will be called this week-end. The redevelopment will incorporate a 72-bed remand and protection unit.

Another interesting aspect raised by the honourable member was the necessity to provide special accommodation for Aborigines and Islanders. There is a clear case to approach the question of Aboriginal and Islander corrective service accommodation with some sensitivity—in fact, it needs to be approached with a lot of sensitivity. No doubt more will be said on this issue at the conclusion of the national investigation into Aboriginal deaths in custody. Certainly the corrective services commission will include an Aboriginal or Islander member and representation will also be provided on community correction boards, which will replace parole boards.

I do not have much to say on the contribution of the member for Brisbane Central. He spoke for 20 minutes but I have only a few lines in reply. He is not a bad bloke; I have nothing nasty to say. How could I? All I can say is that his contribution reflected his somewhat basic but witty approach to political debate. We in this place are used to his wit. Long may he stick around.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr COOPER: That is a pity.

Mr Davis: I am open to offers.

Mr COOPER: I can assure him that the Kennedy review recommendations——

Mr Casey: Mr Cooper——

Mr COOPER: Just a minute; I have not finished.

Mr Casey: You do Administrative Services, too, don't you?

Mr COOPER: Yes. Does he want a job?

Mr Casey: No, he wants a car. Talk to Austin about it.

Mr COOPER: By crikey, cronyism is dead!

I assure the honourable member for Brisbane Central that the Kennedy review recommendations will be introduced. Those recommendations include the adoption of a number of points on parole and gaol visits, which were raised by him. I advise him to stick around for the introduction of the legislation and to read it. He will find big changes to parole issues.

Mr Davis: What about the Printing Office?

Mr COOPER: What about it?

Mr Milliner: What about the management?

Mr COOPER: I will not comment. Opposition members are downgrading those people. The people at the Government Printing Office have done an unbelievably good job. Honourable members opposite should visit that office and see the absolute efficiency and the dedication of the staff. It would make their hearts warm to see the dedication of the entire staff. Sid Hampson has done a fantastic job all round, including man management.

The member for Currumbin, as a member of my parliamentary committee, has assisted me in my portfolio as Minister for Corrective Services and Administrative Services and has positively identified many of the constructive aspects of Government operation in that field. In addition, his clear-cut approach to the parole and probation

elements of the portfolio, together with the Home Detention Program, has offered an insight into the new approach to be pursued through the recommendations of the Kennedy report and the associated legislation which I will introduce into the House tomorrow. I commend the honourable member for his strong and forceful contribution.

The member for South Brisbane has a genuine interest in and concern for the operation of corrective services in Queensland. During her brief period as Opposition spokesperson, she underlined that interest with some positive contributions to parliamentary debate. She carried through those efforts in a verbal submission to the Kennedy review. I commend her for that.

However, her references to Boggo Road gaol being operated along the lines of a World War II concentration camp represent an extraordinary deviation from reality. Although there are no doubt assaults by prisoner on prisoner, prisoner on prison officer and, on occasions, prison officer on prisoner, comparison with Belsen and Dachau is a long way out. In addition, unfortunately, she appears to have no faith in the police investigatory process. Whether she likes it or not, in the normal processes of law, innocence and guilt apply in that form as well as on the streets. If she was in trouble, the first people she would scream for would be the boys in blue.

However, I can assure her that the establishment of a police liaison unit within Boggo Road gaol will eliminate many of the delays now experienced with police investigations into allegations of criminal activity within the prison. That is a recommendation of the Kennedy review. It is part of a budgetary submission to establish that police liaison unit so that we can fight crime within gaols as well as crime outside gaols. It is an essential part of the review. I assure the honourable member that I have both the political will and the desire and intention to introduce legislation into the House tomorrow to give full effect to the Kennedy review recommendations.

As to the Kiripatea investigation—I understand that it, along with allegations of bashings of the two other prisoners who were involved in the same escape incident, will come to finality soon.

The honourable member for South Brisbane mentioned also that a prison should be used as a place of last resort. Government members have no problem with that. We have recognised that fact. It is one thing to continually talk about it; it is another to do it. I am thankful that action is being taken in that direction.

The honourable member mentioned that prisons are universities of crime. The Government is also well aware of that. That is one of the reasons why it wants to keep as many people out of gaol as it can on productive and sensible programs so that they can repay their debt to society in a productive way and so that society is the beneficiary.

At 8.57 p.m.,

Under Standing Order No. 307 and the Sessional Order, progress was reported.

MR SPEAKER'S RULING

Motion of Dissent

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (8.58 p.m.): At the outset, I move—

“That the ruling of Mr Speaker given on Thursday, 20 October, that my question without notice was out of order and in contravention of an accurate interpretation of the Standing Orders, be dissented from.”

On 20 October, I attempted to ask a question without notice of the Premier concerning his corporate responsibility as a Cabinet Minister for decisions outside his direct portfolio responsibilities prior to elevation to the Premiership in December 1987. My question made particular reference to Mr Ahern's corporate responsibility for Cabinet decisions on the recommendations of the Lucas and Sturgess inquiries; the controversial appointment of the Chief Justice in 1981 and other judicial appointments; and other

Government appointments such as that of Sir Edward Lyons to the Mortgage Secondary Market Board.

Those are questions that the Premier of this State seeks to run away from. They are questions that he seeks to avoid. The Opposition believes that it is very much in the public interest that he be forced out into the open to give an account where he has been for the last eight years—for the last 20 years—so that the public may judge whether they should have any confidence or trust in him in terms of the administration of this State. The Opposition believes firmly that his inability and his unwillingness to answer such questions in question-time or elsewhere simply underlines the fact that for eight years as a Cabinet Minister and for a total of 20 years as a member of this place the Premier—and a number of other Ministers—sat still and kept quiet while cronyism and corruption were flourishing in this State. That is a matter which we believe it is legitimate for the Opposition to pursue in question-time and generally in this place.

My question sought, in the interests of the future public administration of this State, an assurance from the Premier that the same rule of corporate responsibility would apply to his present Cabinet. Mr Speaker ruled my question out of order on the grounds that I sought information on matters of past history for the purposes of argument and that it represented only a slight variation of an earlier question. I gave notice that I would move a motion of dissent from that ruling, and I now propose to expound on my reasons for so doing.

Government members interjected.

Mr GOSS: Listen to the rabble down at the back of the Chamber. They are pathetic.

I do not wish to be overcritical of the Speaker, who has doubtless been concerned at the way in which question-time has degenerated, because of the increasing tendency by the Premier and lesser lights in his Ministry to avoid questions as to where they have been for the past several years while cronyism and corruption have flourished and become a problem.

Nevertheless, the ruling has been made. I make it plain and place it on record that members of the Opposition cannot and will not accept any interpretation of the Standing Orders which unreasonably restricts our proper role in this place. If honourable members have to spend an hour every night in this place debating dissent motions, then so be it. If that is the way the Government wants it, that is the way that it will get it.

I turn specifically to the reference on page 334 of the 20th edition of *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice* to the inadmissibility of questions. I trust you can hear me, Mr Acting Speaker? I know you would be concerned to hear all of what I have to say.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Chamber will come to order.

Mr GOSS: According to Erskine May, questions which “seek information on matters of past history for the purposes of argument” must be examined carefully in the context of other references in Erskine May on the general subject of what questions may be asked of Ministers of the Crown.

I refer in particular to page 336 of Erskine May, which deals specifically with the subject of questions to Ministers. It states—

“Questions addressed to Ministers should relate to the public affairs with which they are connected, to proceedings pending in Parliament, or to matters of administration for which they are responsible.”

Erskine May's position on this matter has been adopted almost to the word in Standing Order No. 67A of the Standing Rules and Orders of the Queensland Parliament. I draw the attention of honourable members to that Standing Order.

The critical phrase in both Erskine May and Queensland's Standing Orders in terms of Mr Speaker's ruling against my question is that a Minister can be asked questions

on any matter relating to "the public affairs with which he is connected". This does not relate only to those matters pertaining to a particular Minister's portfolio. It is a much wider reference than that, and in the case of Cabinet Ministers must surely include all decisions of the Cabinet to which they were a party or, to use Erskine May's term, with which they were "connected".

On the separate point of how far back into the past Ministers may be probed, I repeat Erskine May's point that a Minister may be questioned on "public affairs with which he is connected". In the Opposition's view, that clearly includes the past, the present or the future. There is no reference to a cut-off point in time. I believe that Erskine May is quite clear on this point. It does not matter if the Cabinet decision in question was made last month, last year or 20 years before. If a Minister of the present administration was connected with a decision of a previous Ministry, then the Opposition is empowered both under parliamentary precedent and the present Standing Orders to ask any question it likes of that Minister. Erskine May's reference to the inadmissibility of questions on matters of past history must be seen in this context.

Erskine May's "past history" refers to that period in political history prior to the election to public office of the member of Parliament in question. On this basis, Mr Speaker would be perfectly entitled to rule out of order any question of Mr Ahern relating to the administration of this State prior to Mr Ahern's election to Parliament on 16 March 1968, that is, back at the time when he came off dad's farm into this place, and where he has been a professional politician ever since. That would legitimately be a subject that was out of order.

Mr Speaker would not, however, be entitled to rule out of order on grounds of past history any questions relating to a matter post-dating the Premier's election to Parliament, and certainly not—and this is the area on which the Opposition seeks to concentrate—the period subsequent to the Premier's elevation to the Ministry on 29 July 1980.

The particular matters to which I referred in my question last week all post-dated Mr Ahern's election to Parliament, and, with the exception of the Lucas inquiry in 1977, all post-dated Mr Ahern's elevation to the Ministry. Mr Ahern was a member of Cabinet in 1981 at the time of the appointment of Sir Edward Lyons to the TAB and later when Lyons was appointed to the Mortgage Secondary Market Board. Mr Ahern was also a member of Cabinet at the time of the controversy surrounding the appointment of the Chief Justice in 1981. He was also a member of Cabinet in 1984 at the time of the establishment of the Sturgess inquiry and later a member of the same Cabinet that supposedly read and acted upon the Sturgess report. Honourable members are still waiting to see the results of that so-called action.

As all honourable members are aware, Mr Ahern was a prominent Cabinet Minister in 1987 at the time of the *Four Corners* program on police corruption in Queensland and was a member of the Cabinet which flip-flopped its way through the decision-making process which led eventually to the appointment of Mr Fitzgerald.

For the purposes of Erskine May, all of these matters are "public affairs" with which Mr Ahern, as a long-standing Minister of the National Party Cabinet, was "officially connected". It is entirely proper, therefore, for the Opposition to probe his role—or, perhaps more accurately, his lack of a role—in relation to each of these matters. After all, in referring to his previous ministerial career, Mr Ahern said in Parliament on 20 October—

"I had a responsibility in a corporate sense for decisions that were obviously taken at that time and I do accept that responsibility."

I believe that that should have resulted in Mr Speaker's allowing my question.

The Opposition also raises the question of advising the Parliament and the public in relation to the overall responsibility and direction of the administration of this State. A further point the Opposition makes is that my question was not repetitive but rather moved from the general in the previous questions to the particular in the subsequent question that was ruled out of order. Therefore the Opposition maintains its contention.

Today reference was made to the Fitzgerald inquiry. Mr Harper was allowed by you, Mr Acting Speaker, to answer a question on his statement actually before the Fitzgerald inquiry. Mr Harper and other Ministers of this Cabinet are apparently not going to appear before the Fitzgerald inquiry. They have each supplied a statutory declaration to the inquiry, yet they answer questions in this place.

One needs to look at the double standards. If people such as Mr Harper, Mr Glasson and Mr Gunn do not appear before the Fitzgerald inquiry and give evidence and answer questions from the witness-box, that inquiry will fail the public and it will fail this Parliament. It is proper for those people to be questioned before the inquiry and to be questioned in this place.

Time expired.

Mr WARBURTON (Sandgate) (9.08 p.m.): In seconding the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, I point out that the more I examine the reasons why Mr Speaker ruled out of order the Leader of the Opposition's question about the Premier's acceptance of ministerial responsibility, the more concerned I become about the ramifications of that ruling.

Mr Speaker has applied the loosest of interpretations to his ruling that questions seeking information on matters of past history for the purposes of argument are inadmissible. That provision, applied as Mr Speaker would have it applied, would ensure that nine out of 10 questions asked of Ministers in this House would be completely out of order. I ask National Party back-benchers to consider those circumstances. For example, if Mr Speaker was to be consistent, the member for Merthyr, Mr Lane, would never have been allowed to ask Mr Harper the question that he asked today.

It is a fact that Mr Lane sought information of past history. Of course he did! He wanted Mr Harper's advice about what had occurred in Cabinet some years ago. If Mr Speaker's loose interpretation, as I have described it, applied, it would be reasonable to suggest that Mr Lane wanted that information for the purposes of argument. It was evident from Mr Lane's question that his version of what happened in Cabinet when he was pushing for the appointment of Judge Pratt to head the present inquiry into corruption is different from that of Mr Harper, who made very serious allegations against Mr Lane.

As honourable members know, Mr Harper has submitted a statutory declaration to the Fitzgerald inquiry, but for some reason or other Mr Harper has not been exposed, as the Leader of the Opposition said tonight, nor it appears will he be exposed to any form of cross-examination.

When I look at a series of questions that I asked of numerous Ministers during my time as a member of this House, I find that there were few questions that did not seek a response to something that had already occurred and about which I was sufficiently concerned to pursue what one might call an argument with the Minister if the answer that I received showed that the Minister had been negligent or incompetent.

There is one thing for certain: not one of my questions about the public funds scandal, when the Callaghans and others were gaoled in 1986, would have hit the deck if Mr Speaker had applied the ruling that he applied to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition.

I turn to the first part of the ruling on which Mr Speaker hangs his hat, that is, "the seeking of information on matters of past history". Shortly I shall refer to the interpretation of the word "history". Is Mr Speaker suggesting that, as a member of the Queensland Parliament, I am not entitled to ask questions about matters relative to crime and corruption—which at long last are being addressed—that were pursued by my late colleague Kevin Hooper in 1982 and 1983? What could be Mr Speaker's reaction if, for example, today I had asked the Minister for Justice, who is sitting in the Chamber, if he was aware that a lawyer, Mr Herbert, told the court in May 1982 that a police watchhouse-keeper had told him that someone higher up had instructed the watchhouse-keeper that his client, who at the time was Lorrelle Saunders, was not to be granted bail

in any circumstances, and that Mr Herbert said that "higher up" meant that it could have been the Assistant Commissioner of Police or the Commissioner of Police who said that.

Would I be entitled to ask that question, or would Mr Speaker say, "Sorry, that is too historical. The honourable member cannot ask that question."? Surely what I have done is probe into what Mr Speaker regards as history. And what if I supplemented my question by asking the Minister for Justice if he was aware that the magistrate at that time, Mr Mitchell, allowed Saunders bail on her own undertaking, but when she came before the District Court in May 1983—12 months later, after spending eight months in custody—her application for bail was refused by none other than Judge Pratt? What would be Mr Speaker's reaction to such a question? Surely I would be probing into history. As a member of this House, and in the light of the evidence that is emanating from the Fitzgerald inquiry do I not have a right to explore those matters when I think that an injustice has occurred? Would Mr Speaker's attitude to that question be, "That is historical. The honourable member is trying to prosecute an argument, so he cannot do that in the House."?

What happened on the occasion in question is that Mr Speaker has misinterpreted the Erskine May decree that questions that seek information on matters of past history for the purposes of argument are inadmissible. That is the problem with which honourable members are confronted—Mr Speaker's misinterpretation.

Mr Speaker has failed to distinguish between historical and contemporary matters. A matter is not historical merely because it happened last week or last year. Historical matters are those that are incapable of explanation by a Minister or of remedy by a Minister. For example, an historical matter would be this State's treatment of the kanakas many, many years ago. It would be wrong to question a Minister about that particular historical event, just as it would be wrong to expect the Minister to try to remedy what many honourable members feel was an injustice.

The basic difference is that contemporary matters—even though they may have occurred some years ago—can be accounted for by present-day Ministers. That is where the Speaker's misinterpretation has occurred. Furthermore, contemporary matters may be remedied by airing them in Parliament or, alternatively, by Government action. More importantly, contemporary matters are capable of being explained by present-day Ministers even though the subject-matter of any question may relate to a Minister's role in a previous ministry.

This is the proposition that I put to the House tonight. Unfortunately this is where the Speaker has got it wrong. He looked at the wording of that provision which appears in the "Miscellaneous" section of *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice* and said, "That is what 'historic' means and that is the way I am going to implement the provision in this House." The Speaker is wrong and he should be big enough to admit it. There is a basic difference between "historic" and "contemporary". On this occasion, that is where the Speaker has got it wrong.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation on the right-hand side of the Chamber.

Mr WARBURTON: In 1986 the Government came under public fire when it tried to hide behind the sub judice provisions when it was questioned about that public funds scandal. Rightly or wrongly, this ruling by the Speaker coincides with the Ahern Government's efforts to hide under the Fitzgerald trouser cuffs, which is very unfortunate indeed.

Fitzgerald inquiry evidence is being discussed openly. It is even being re-enacted by the media of this State. It can be discussed in every other Parliament in Australia. It can be discussed in the House of Commons. It can be discussed in the USA and in the Parliament of Papua New Guinea, but the one place where it is not allowed to be discussed—where the censorship laws apply—is evidently in this Parliament. This is a sad day for the Speaker. It is a sad day for this Parliament that his ruling coincides with

the efforts of this Government to hide from the probing of the Opposition in relation to the Fitzgerald inquiry.

I want to make the point that that information is not being suppressed solely in this Parliament. Even the District Court is running scared. Today I wanted to confirm a report that appeared in a newspaper on 26 May 1983 in which it was stated that Judge Pratt refused Lorrelle Saunders' bail application. That information is on public record, yet the inquiry was told by the Deputy Sheriff of the District Court that the Registrar's advice was that all queries had to be passed through the under secretary of the department.

Time expired.

Hon. B. D. AUSTIN (Nicklin—Leader of the House) (9.19 p.m.): The Government opposes the motion which was moved by the Leader of the Opposition and seconded by the honourable member for Sandgate. It is not often that I congratulate members of the Opposition, but I must congratulate the honourable member for Sandgate and former Leader of the Opposition on getting away with the gross abuse of the rules, Standing Orders and privileges of this Parliament in the speech that he has just delivered. It was a very closely worded speech in which he did not dwell on the subject-matter at all and simply used examples. I congratulate him on the way in which he was able to manipulate the Standing Orders of this Parliament in that manner, which is what this debate is all about. This debate is about Opposition members trying to manipulate the Standing Orders of this Parliament to suit themselves. It is a deliberate waste of time to have this debate tonight.

When this debate was called on by the Leader of the Opposition I had some difficulty determining whether the debate had been called on by the childish behaviour of the Leader of the Opposition or the childlike behaviour of the Leader of the Opposition. All honourable members are aware that he has a very thin skin. Some honourable members no doubt would have seen me consulting the Oxford dictionary to determine the differences between "childish" and "childlike". For the information of honourable members I believe that it is worth while reading into *Hansard* the definitions of those two words. "Childish" is defined as—

"1. Of, belonging to, or proper to a child or to childhood. 2. Not befitting mature age; puerile, silly."

Mr De Lacy: What has this got to do with the debate?

Mr AUSTIN: I am coming to that.

The definition of "childlike" is—

- "1. Belonging to or becoming a child . . .
2. Like a child . . . like those of a child."

Because of those definitions I believe that I would be safe in saying that the Leader of the Opposition is both childish and childlike in moving this motion tonight.

This debate is the result of another Labor Party pose. Just about everything that the honourable member does in this House is a pose for the cameras. As I sit here opposite him when he makes a speech in this Parliament or asks a question, I have to—

Mr Goss: Is that your best shot?

Mr AUSTIN: I have got a bit here, but I will leave it for another day. I do not have time. I have about 20 minutes' worth.

When the Leader of the Opposition asks a question, where does he look? He looks straight up into the press gallery, waiting to see whether the press are taking in what he says. This is an example of the outrage of the poor downtrodden Leader of the Opposition, who is condemned to not having his own way. He tries to condemn the Speaker but he cannot apply the rules to himself.

Tonight on television the Leader of the Opposition stated, "We shall not be silenced." It is all right if members of the Opposition shout at the Speaker when he is on his feet in this Parliament. That is a blatant disregard for the rules of this Parliament. The Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the seconder of the motion, namely, the honourable member for Sandgate, are for ever disregarding the authority of the Speaker in this House. When asking questions, they are happy if the rules are applied to the answers. Some of the questions that are asked by members of the Opposition are short stories. They are not questions. Members of the Opposition ask short stories without notice and expect Ministers to answer them. They do not have enough brains to read the questions without looking at them beforehand. They all stand there and read them. If they did not insist on referring to bits of paper there would be some validity in their asking questions.

Mr Goss: What has this got to do with it?

Mr AUSTIN: It has got to do with Opposition members complaining about the rulings of the Speaker, together with their gross abuse of the rules that apply in this House.

No doubt all honourable members are tired of the same boring attempts by Opposition members to pretend that they are the Fitzgerald inquiry, with their current leader posing as some sort of a prosecutor in this Chamber—which he does every other day in this place.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The Chamber will come to order. There is far too much cross-fire in the Chamber. For the information of honourable members, I remind them that it makes it almost impossible for the Hansard reporters to record the speech of the person on his feet.

Mr AUSTIN: Thank you for your protection, Mr Acting Speaker. Thank you indeed.

Mr Speaker properly read out the guide-lines for question-time listed in *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice*. They are the standard and long-standing guide-lines properly referred to under Standing Order 333. The Speaker rightly ruled out the Leader of the Opposition's second question, which was basically the same as the first, within those guide-lines.

If the verbal garbage and the posing is left aside, the Leader of the Opposition asked—

"Does the Premier accept any share of responsibility for Cabinet decisions made during that period?"

His second question was—

"Does he accept his share of responsibility as a Cabinet Minister for Cabinet's administration of such matters as were beyond his direct period of ministerial responsibility?"

The Speaker was quite right in his ruling; the question was out of order. According to *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice* it was out of order on two grounds: firstly, it was seeking information on matters of past history for the purposes of argument, and secondly, because it was a question that was multiplied with slight variations on the same points.

The rules are clear. The Opposition is out of order again. As I said, it is another big pose, just like the constant shouting of Opposition members. They are supposed to be great champions of the Westminster system of truth and justice. The honourable member for Murrumba—or wherever he is from—said that this place is not a court. Of course it is not a court. If he stopped trying to turn it into a court it would be a better Parliament. The courts are in another place, not here. The honourable member for Murrumba does not have the power to cross-examine. He has never practised law in his life.

Look at the disgraceful conduct of the Opposition last Thursday. Within minutes of Parliament's meeting, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was warned for shouting constant interjections. Shortly after that the Opposition Leader was warned for constant interjections. Some great standards they set! They perform stunts and pose, every time looking up to the media in the press gallery.

Under Standing Order 141, tedious repetition in speeches is ruled out of order. Listening to the Leader of the Opposition in this place, we all wish that that rule applied to question-time as well.

The Opposition is trying to turn this Parliament into a kangaroo court. So much for the Opposition and its support for the Fitzgerald inquiry! It keeps talking about the integrity of the Fitzgerald inquiry and tries to turn this place into a kangaroo court. Mr Speaker must think that the Opposition members have so little trust in Mr Fitzgerald that he needs their help. They must not have confidence in him. They must think he needs their help all the time because they are consistently raising the matter. They are considered to be a joke.

Mr Acting Speaker, just listen to this——

Mr Goss interjected.

Mr AUSTIN: The Opposition Leader is being thin-skinned, childish and childlike again. His skin is so thin that he cannot stand it.

Just listen to this. Of the 34 days that Parliament has sat this year, we have been spared the antics of these Mickey Mouse prosecutors, Mr Goss and Mr Burns, on only 11 occasions. Every other day this dynamic duo have decided that Mr Fitzgerald needs their intervention, and that is what he has got from them. The Leader of the Opposition has asked 28 questions related to the Fitzgerald inquiry and spoken four times on the subject in the Matters of Public Interest debate. To prop his leader up, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has asked half as many questions on the same subject.

An Opposition member: It is an important matter.

Mr AUSTIN: Of course it is an important matter. But the people of Queensland are important, too. As I said today, I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition would have been interested in promoting policies in this House that might help those he calls his worker friends, but all we hear about from him is the Fitzgerald inquiry. There is no way in the world that that will help the community out there.

Mr Goss: You are a bit touchy on this one.

Mr AUSTIN: I am not touchy at all. I am not the one who moved a motion of dissent from the Speaker's ruling; he is. He should sit down and cop it sweet, the little Mr Thin Skin—sit down and cop it sweet. They are all begging to be thrown——

Mr Goss: You are trying to hide behind Fitzgerald.

Mr AUSTIN: I would even venture to say that before the Fitzgerald inquiry finishes, as a political stunt, one of the members of the Opposition will have himself thrown out of the House just to draw attention to the Opposition's disgraceful antics in this place.

The behaviour of Opposition members on this motion and their criticism of the Speaker are not justified. The Government has absolute confidence in Mr Speaker. It opposes the motion.

Hon. W. D. LICKISS (Moggill) (9.27 p.m.): Some peculiar statements are made in this House about the fact that the Parliament is not a court; that the courts are elsewhere. I always thought that the Parliament was the highest court in the land.

Mr Austin: It is not a kangaroo court.

Mr LICKISS: It is still the highest court in the land.

What we are dealing with tonight is one particular issue, that is, that on Thursday, 20 October, the Speaker of this Parliament gave a decision from which the Leader of the Opposition dissented. The issue concerns only what was said in relation to that issue, not what else happened to another member in asking another question of what someone else said about something else. It is a question of what happened on that particular issue.

On that particular day the Speaker of the House prefaced his remarks in relation to question-time by drawing the attention of the House to the fact that he intended to exercise a measure of control over the asking of questions in this place. He gave due warning when he said—

“... I wish to make some observations regarding question-time. The basic authorities which outline the guide-lines for the asking and answering of questions are Standing Orders and *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice*, 20th edition, pages 337 to 345. I recommend a perusal of the relevant sections by all honourable members.”

The Speaker then made further statements.

Standing Order 67A deals with questions to Ministers. In terms of direction about what can and cannot be done under our Standing Orders, that Standing Order is pretty light on. Standing Order 67A states—

“Immediately prior to the time appointed for the House to proceed to the Orders of the Day, Questions may be put to a Minister relating to public affairs with which he is officially connected, to proceedings pending in the Legislative Assembly, or to any matter of administration for which he is responsible.”

The section that I have quoted is the effective part of that Standing Order.

It would be well known by honourable members that when Standing Orders are not specific or precise, Standing Order 333 states that House of Commons rules are to be adopted so far as they are applicable. Standing Order 333 reads as follows—

“In all cases not specially provided for by these Standing Rules and Orders, or by Sessional or other Orders, resort shall be had to the Rules, Forms, and Usages of the Commons House of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland for the time being, which shall be followed and observed so far as the same can apply to the proceedings of the House.”

The onus is placed upon the Speaker to decide. This Parliament elected the Speaker to the chair. What honourable members are doing this evening is deciding an issue about the office of the Chair and whether or not the Speaker of this Parliament acted wisely or correctly in making his decision on 20 October.

If honourable members consider the provisions contained in *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice* at the pages to which attention has been drawn, particularly in relation to paragraph 12 on page 344 under the heading, “*Miscellaneous*”, they will note the following statement—

“12. *Miscellaneous*. Questions are also inadmissible which seek the solution of hypothetical propositions;⁸ raise questions of policy too large to be dealt with in an answer to a question; seek information on matters of past history for the purposes of argument;⁹ are multiplied with slight variations on the same point;¹⁰ or are trivial, vague or meaningless.”

If honourable members also peruse other matters that were drawn to the Parliament's attention, they will note that other restrictions apply to questions and that it is the responsibility of each honourable member to be aware of those restrictions.

I believe that in some statements that he has made, the Speaker may have appeared to have shown bias. Quite frankly, though, I would hate to think that a member of this Parliament would criticise the office of the Chair, because that would be a reflection on and an imputation of improper motives upon the Chair. Honourable members should bear in mind that this Parliament is responsible for the election of the Speaker and that all honourable members have a responsibility to uphold the authority of the Chair.

I feel confident that when honourable members sit in judgment on the matters raised by the honourable Leader of the Opposition in his motion of dissent from the ruling made by the Chair, no-one will say that the Speaker acted other than in accordance with the bona fides that one would expect of him as Speaker of this Parliament. I believe also that honourable members would recognise that the Speaker has to exercise his judgment and that he exercised that judgment without fear or favour. I also believe that in terms of the statement made to the House as a prelude to question-time on that morning, the Speaker acted correctly. The Liberal Party supports the Speaker.

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer) (9.33 p.m.): I join in the debate tonight with some reluctance because honourable members have to debate a motion of dissent from the Speaker's ruling that was brought about by—

Mr Hamill: Oh, sit down.

Mr FITZGERALD: The honourable member has told me to sit down.

I repeat that I join in this debate tonight to express my regret that the House has to spend one hour of its valuable time when it could be dealing with legislation that is presently before it. To my mind, the ruling made by Mr Speaker is quite clear and well laid out. Research into the events of the day in question will prove that what I am saying is correct.

I believe that this motion is a publicity stunt engaged in by the Leader of the Opposition, who should have been embarrassed, when he read the unrevised proofs of *Hansard*, by the motion that has been moved. I would have thought that the Leader of the Opposition would have realised from his perusal of *Hansard* that he was in error and would have approached the Speaker to have the motion withdrawn. If he had done so, that would have been the end of the matter.

In his speech in moving the motion, the Leader of the Opposition threatened honourable members that if he is not given his way, every sitting night he will have us spend one hour debating the Speaker's ruling if necessary. If that statement does not constitute a threat to the Speaker and contempt for the Chair, I do not know what does.

I acknowledge that it is the right of the Leader of the Opposition to move a motion of dissent from any ruling, but it is a disgrace that the Leader of the Opposition has acted so petulantly in moving this motion of dissent. However, I suppose this action befits the Leader of the Opposition because of the type of person he is. And he can take that comment any way he likes.

On Thursday, 20 October, the Premier made a ministerial statement, as all honourable members would remember. Each morning, the Leader of the Opposition prepares the questions he will ask in the House. As the Leader of the House pointed out earlier, a number of times the Leader of the Opposition has delved into matters that are the subject of the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry. I can understand the Leader of the Opposition's interest in those matters. The Leader of the Opposition must have been rather upset and peeved that the Premier had gazumped him with a ministerial statement that he had prepared relating to the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry and Government support for that inquiry.

Mr Warburton: I do not think your facts are right.

Mr FITZGERALD: I understood that that took place on the 20th.

Mr Warburton: You might have understood that, but I don't think you are right.

Mr FITZGERALD: The honourable member can check *Hansard*.

Mr Warburton: You have it there; you read it out.

Mr FITZGERALD: The honourable member can check his copy of *Hansard*. He will find that on 20 October the Premier made a ministerial statement to the House on the Government's support for the Fitzgerald inquiry.

When the time came for questions without notice, the Speaker made a statement and cited *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice*, which has been referred to by previous speakers. Mr Speaker referred to the 20th edition at pages 337 to 345. After that statement had been made, I left the Chamber and made a photocopy of the pages in *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice* that the Speaker had mentioned so that I could study the provisions and refer to the issues that had been raised.

The first question asked by the Leader of the Opposition was directed to the Premier without notice. The question related to the standards and procedures of Cabinet responsibility adopted by this Government. The second question was rather lengthy. It takes up 13 lines in the unrevised proofs. A question that takes up 13 lines can fairly be considered to be a reasonably lengthy question. I must point out that the question was never finished because the Speaker ruled it out of order. I believe that that 13-line question could have been ruled out of order on the length of the question alone. I know that members ask lengthy questions and the Speaker has the right to say that they are too long and therefore out of order. That is the end of the story.

When the Leader of the Opposition was challenged and told it was out of order he stated—

“. . . the question relates to requiring any specific answer in relation to those historical matters but simply to the standards of Cabinet responsibility that apply now.”

His first question related to this Government, so therefore he was asking the same question in a different way.

Mr Goss: You did not hear the rest of it.

Mr FITZGERALD: Yes, the Leader of Opposition selectively quoted part of the Premier's answer. He did not quote the whole lot. I am referring to what I consider to be the pertinent part. This was another question about the same matter. The Leader of the Opposition was gazed upon by the Premier, because the Premier had guessed the question that the Leader of the Opposition was going to ask. The Premier straightened the matter out and the Leader of the Opposition was rather peeved and upset. The Leader of the Opposition then gave notice to the Speaker that he would dissent from his ruling.

I support the statement made by the Leader of the House. The Leader of the Opposition has been using this forum to delve into questions, which he has a right to do. This House will always stand by the right of any member to ask a question in the correct forum. The honourable member was rather peeved because the Premier had already made a statement on the matter that he wanted to question the Premier on, and he had hoped that the Premier would not be prepared. The Speaker gave a ruling on the form of questions to be asked.

On occasions I have been told that a question of mine was not in order and had to be rephrased. That happens to a number of honourable members because *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice* sets out how a question shall be asked. If an honourable member does not ask a question in the correct form, the Speaker will disallow the question. The Leader of the Opposition's question was disallowed and he proceeded to make persistent interjections. *Hansard* records that he was warned under Standing Order 123A. This was part of the turn that he was putting on in the hope that he would bring discredit upon the House, the Government and the Speaker. He was hoping to get publicity from the press gallery.

The Speaker is, however, a very patient man. I believe that he has been too damned patient with some of the persistent interjections made whilst the Premier has been answering questions. Not only do the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition interject—and I do not mind interjections—but also they keep on interjecting and pointing with their fingers. The Speaker was extremely lenient with the Leader of the Opposition when he warned him under Standing Order 123A. The Speaker is very independent. He is calm and calculating. He knows how to control the House

and he was controlling it with all the authority vested in him by the members of this House. That is the reason why the Government supports him in his actions.

It is despicable that the Leader of the Opposition should waste the time of the House tonight with this motion. It is only a publicity stunt on his part, especially if he intends to regularly waste one hour of this House by dissenting from the Speaker's rulings. It is merely an excuse for his inadequacies and a knee-jerk reaction. He felt aggrieved and could not handle the situation. It was childish and a little boy's reaction.

The Speaker referred to the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly. Standing Order 333 states—

“333. In all cases not specially provided for by these Standing Rules and Orders, or by Sessional or other Orders, resort shall be had to the Rules, Forms, and Usages of the Commons House of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland for the time being, which shall be followed and observed so far as the same can apply to the proceedings of the House.”

Page 334 of *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice*, under the section “Speaker's control of questions”, states—

“The Speaker is the final authority as to the admissibility of questions.”

That is a blunt and final statement. In addition on page 342, section 9 states—

“9. Questions already answered, or to which an answer has been refused, or on secret matters. Questions are not in order which renew or repeat in substance questions already answered³ or to which an answer has been refused or which fall within a class of question which a Minister has refused to answer.”

The Minister can refuse to answer a question. *Erskine May* continues—

“ . . . he may be asked the same question again after an interval of three months;”

Those are the rules that this Parliament is run by. The Leader of the Opposition can get all the publicity he likes and say that a Minister will not answer his question, but those are the rules of this House.

I support Mr Speaker in his ruling. He is correct in his ruling and the Leader of the Opposition has shown himself up for exactly what he is.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (9.43 p.m.): Honourable members should not be surprised that the Leader of the Opposition is once again dissenting from a decision of the elected authority in this place—the Speaker.

Every day this House witnesses the Leader of the Opposition's pathetic attempts to subvert the legitimate inquiry being conducted at the other end of George Street into corruption in the Queensland police force. His feeble attempts to establish his own inquiry—which in themselves are seen as a vote of no confidence by the Leader of the Opposition in the Fitzgerald inquiry—are viewed by the people of Queensland in stark contrast to the whole-hearted support given by this Government to this landmark inquiry into corruption, not only in Queensland but also throughout the nation.

Once again, during this debate, the Government is proud to uphold the authority of the elected Speaker in this place. I am sure that all honourable members would agree that he handles his duties and the onerous responsibilities that honourable members have placed on his shoulders with considerable skill and dignity. It is unfortunate that the Leader of the Opposition has once again moved to distance himself from supporting the elected authority. As he attempts to subvert the Fitzgerald inquiry, so too is he attempting to supplant the authority of Mr Speaker in this House.

One can only hazard a guess as to this unfortunate aberration in the behaviour of the Leader of the Opposition. As a student of psychology, one could venture the opinion that his fixation about challenging those in positions of legitimate authority is based on an unfulfilled need in his own character to achieve a position of authority himself. To date his two claims to fame are membership of the Labor Lawyers Association—what

a pre-eminent meeting of legal minds that must be!—and Leader of the Queensland parliamentary Labor Party which, in the job preference list, rates only slightly higher than that of captain on the last voyage of the SS Titanic.

The Government totally supports the considered ruling of Mr Speaker. We in the Government view the Opposition's motion of dissent from Mr Speaker's ruling as clear evidence of its disregard for the institution of the Parliament and the frivolous and cavalier manner with which its members treat the important role of this House.

This debate this evening is occurring at the expense of the Parliament's consideration of significant legislation, legislation that members of the Opposition have been calling for. In fact, members of the Opposition have criticised the Government for not bringing forward legislation such as the Foreign Ownership of Land Register Bill; the Consumer Affairs Act Amendment Bill; the Enterprise Zones Bill; the Public Accounts Committee Bill; the Criminal Code, Evidence Act and other Acts Amendment Bill; the Drugs Misuse Act Amendment Bill and the Payroll Tax Act Amendment Bill. Instead of debating that legislation, this debate is wasting an hour of the Parliament's valuable time.

What we have is the petulant outburst of the Leader of the Opposition, who says, "If I don't get my own way, I'll do as I did when I was a little boy and take my bat and ball and go home. If I don't get my own way, I'll waste an hour of the Parliament's time every night of the week." He says, "To hell with the people of Queensland! I thumb my nose at them. We'll do it my way or we won't do it at all."

The significant legislative proposals that are on the parliamentary Notice Paper will greatly enhance the quality of life for all Queenslanders—for consumers, business people and families. When the Parliament should be giving careful consideration to that legislation, in a most frivolous and cavalier manner the Leader of the Opposition is misusing the time of this House to prosecute his own baseless claim to authority.

I wish to divert the attention of honourable members to the points made by Mr Speaker last Thursday on the conduct of question-time. One important point that needs to be made is that question-time is not a time for debate. That point seems to have been missed not only by the members of the Opposition but also more particularly by the Leader of the Opposition himself. Time and time again the Leader of the Opposition has asked a question—I will get back to the form of the questions that are asked—and, when the Premier or a Minister stands to answer, he wishes to promote a debate and interjects continually. Once again, that shows his personal disregard for question-time and the conduct of the business of the House.

The point that should be made is that questions should be short and to the point. Honourable members have only to turn to *Hansard* to look at the form of the questions. The Leader of the House and the Government Whip have made the point that Opposition members are asking very long and very detailed questions without notice, many of them with subparts and parts within other parts, and expecting Ministers to give a considered, point-by-point response. What a ludicrous claim by Opposition members!

In his explanation and ruling on question-time Mr Speaker also made the point that questions should not contain unnecessary detail or arguments. How often we have seen the Leader of the Opposition stand in this place and almost read out a press statement before asking the actual question. That is another total abuse of question-time. The Leader of the Opposition always prefaces his own questions with his personal opinions, a practice which is ruled out by Erskine May. The Leader of the Opposition makes his own inferences or imputations and quite often he uses unnecessary, derogatory epithets and rhetorical, controversial, ironic or offensive expressions. His questions contravene all of the guide-lines that Mr Speaker read to the House. One can well understand why the Leader of the Opposition balked at the ruling on question-time laid down by Mr Speaker—it ruled out basically all of the questions that the Leader of the Opposition has asked in this place over the last year.

Mr Speaker went on to say—

"Questions that are also inadmissible are those which seek the solution of hypothetical propositions . . ."

We saw such a question asked in the House this morning. It was the classic Opposition question: "What would the Government do if X, Y and Z happened down the track?"

Mr Speaker said that questions that seek information on matters of past history for the purposes of argument or that are multiplied with slight variations on the same point are inadmissible. My point is that the description laid down by Mr Speaker in his ruling last Thursday is almost a characterisation of nearly all of the questions asked by the Leader of the Opposition in this place since he assumed that office. No wonder he reacted as he did.

I shall now pass to some of the points raised by the Leader of the Opposition. This Government, unlike the Opposition and, in particular, the Leader of the Opposition, is committed to the operation of only one inquiry into corruption in Queensland. It is not seeking the establishment of the Goss inquiry to be chaired by that frustrated Labor lawyer, Wayne Goss. It would appear that in recent times the Opposition is preoccupied with slandering the Premier with guilt by association. There has been no stronger supporter of the Fitzgerald inquiry in this place within this Government than the Premier.

The member for Sandgate recounted at some length, but with absolutely no relevance to the debate, the question that he asked in the House this morning. He wasted 10 minutes of the time of the House in doing so. The member for Sandgate obviously sees himself as some form of junior counsel assisting "commissioner" Goss.

I have much pleasure in supporting Mr Speaker's ruling.

Mr BRADY (Rockhampton) (9.52 p.m.): On 20 October, the day that brought about this debate, Mr Speaker came into the House and made a statement on rules. I have great pleasure in drawing attention to some aspects of Mr Speaker's statement on the rules which, in its usual fashion, the Government has seen fit to ignore. In his ruling Mr Speaker said—

"Question-time is not a time for debate but a time for seeking information.

. . .

Likewise, answers should be relevant to the questions asked and should not be unduly lengthy."

This evening, the Government has made great play on Erskine May and has drawn attention to what Erskine May has said in relation to questions. Of course, frequently in this place, Speakers have drawn the attention of members of the House to the form of questions. Erskine May also speaks authoritatively in relation to answers. At page 345 of *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice* we find—

"An answer should be confined to the points contained in the question, with such explanation only as renders the answer intelligible . . ."

In this place we have a Government that gives answers which are not confined to the question at all and which by no means are intelligible or intelligent. We have a Government which continually comes into this place and flaunts its ability because it has the numbers and therefore the power. Question-time in this place is ruled by a Government which states that anything goes.

I also draw the attention of the House to Standing Order 70, which in part states—

"An Answer shall be relevant to the Question."

I suggest that that is one of the rules of this place that is most often flouted. It is a matter of great regret that over many years this House has failed dismally to have the courage to enforce that Standing Order.

In the courts, the judges whom we most admire are those who expand the common law; who take the existing rules and say, "Within those rules, we will enable the law to be expanded so that there will be more freedom in the land and more freedom in the courts." To date, no Speaker in this place has had the ability to be able to enforce that Standing Order.

Time and time again, we are told that the Ministers are the sole judges of whether an answer shall be relevant. If the Government really meant what it says about being a Government of excellence—a Government aiming for excellence—it would speak with the Labor Party and the Liberal Party and really bring about reforms to question-time. It would say, "Let's sit down and work out how we will make this particular Standing Order work." However, on no occasion has this Government ever had the desire to do that. On no occasion has any Speaker in this place even gently chided a Minister and said, "Excuse me, Mr Minister, but is your answer relevant?", or even tried to draw the attention of the Minister to the issue of relevance which is in the Standing Orders and which is referred to in *Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice*. We as a Parliament have failed to do that. This Government, which has been in power for 31 years, must take the blame for the failure.

Ministers stand there and smirk when they give unintelligible and unintelligent answers which are not at all relevant to the questions that are asked. This Government, which sets out to paint itself as a Government of excellence, in fact is treating this place as a joke.

Tonight, the member for Mansfield and the member for Lockyer have said that Opposition members are wasting the time of the Parliament because we spend one hour debating a motion of dissent. Government members come here every day, day after day, and waste an hour in this place during question-time. With this Government, every question-time is a waste of time. Government members have the hypocrisy to suggest that one motion of dissent is a waste of time, yet they are members of a Government which daily is contemptuous of the rights of the members of this Parliament.

Furthermore, what do we get from the Liberal Party? What do we get from the member for Moggill? We get the usual business from the Liberal Party—excessive bowing. Anything can go on in this Chamber—no-one can dare to dissent from or to criticise. When has the Liberal Party ever stood up for anything anywhere, at any time, with any courage? The Liberal Party in this place allows Government Ministers to ride roughshod over the rights not of the Opposition but of the people of Queensland. The people of Queensland demand relevant answers to questions and they look to the Opposition to pursue those answers.

When Government members say to us that we have wasted one hour, let them look to their own consciences for the hour after hour that they waste in this Parliament on the irrelevancies and the nonsense that are served up as answers and the questions without notice that they ask of their own Ministers for which the answers are already prepared. As honourable members saw today, the Health Minister, who had an answer prepared to a question without notice, could not even find it. She could not even find the right folder.

Government Ministers are the people who are contemptuous of the Parliament, not the Opposition. Government Ministers are the people who have betrayed the people of Queensland by the way that they have allowed question-time to be conducted.

When will this Parliament get a Speaker who will make an attempt to enforce Standing Order 70 and to enforce the requirement of relevant answers? It can be done. The Opposition stands ready to sit down with the Government and the Liberal Party and to work out a fair way of trying to get question-time to work better. However, it will not work unless the Government carries out its basic role, which is to give information to the Parliament. The Government sees its basic role in this place at question-time as being to prevent information being given to the Parliament, except such information as it chooses to give. It is a Government of secrecy—a Government that hides information from the people of Queensland.

The Opposition rejects the idea that it cannot move motions of dissent. When the Government stops betraying the trust of the people of Queensland at question-time, the Opposition will stop moving motions of dissent.

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

AYES, 23

Ardill
Braddy
Burns
Casey
Comben
D'Arcy
De Lacy
Eaton
Gibbs, R. J.
Goss
Hamill
Hayward
McElligott
Mackenroth
McLean
Milliner
Vaughan
Warburton
Warner
Wells
Yewdale

Tellers:
Davis
Prest

Scott

NOES, 50

Ahern
Alison
Austin
Beard
Berghofer
Booth
Borbidge
Burreket
Chapman
Clauson
Cooper
Elliott
Fraser
Gamin
Gately
Gibbs, I. J.
Gilmore
Glasson
Gunn
Harper
Harvey
Hinton
Hobbs
Hynd
Innes
Katter
Knox
Lee
Lickiss
Lingard
Littleproud
McCauley
McKechnie
McPhie
Menzel
Muntz
Neal
Newton
Perrett
Randell
Schuntner
Sherlock
Sherrin
Simpson
Slack
Stoneman
Tenni
Veivers
Tellers:
FitzGerald
Stephan

PAIR:

Lester

Resolved in the negative.

ART UNIONS AND AMUSEMENTS ACT

Motion for Disallowance of Regulations

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (10.05 p.m.): I move—

“That the regulations tabled by the Minister for Justice in this House on 30 August under the Art Unions and Amusements Act dealing with the permit fee applying for in-line machines be disallowed.”

This debate is about the Queensland Government's knowledge of illegal gambling over a period of 14 years—from 1974 to 1988. It is about the Queensland Government's complicity in illegal gambling over a period of 14 years. It is about the Queensland Government's failure to act—its refusal to act—against illegal gambling over a period of 14 years.

Tonight honourable members are debating the disallowance of a regulation under the Art Unions and Amusements Act tabled in this House on 30 August this year by the Minister for Justice. The regulation deals with the permit fee applying to in-line machines. Notification of the amendment of this and other regulations under the Art Unions and Amusements Act was published in the *Queensland Government Gazette* of 23 June 1988.

That notice is headed—

“His Excellency the Governor, acting by and with the advice of the Executive Council and in pursuance of the provisions of the Art Unions and Amusements Act 1976-1984, hereby makes the following regulation.”

It further states—

“The Art Union and Amusements Regulations 1976, as amended, are further amended on and from the first day of July, 1988, by omitting the second schedule and substituting the following schedule.”

Under the category "Entertainment machines", the permit fee for in-line machines is amended to substitute the new fee of \$56.90 per calendar month or part of a calendar month for each machine for which the application for permit is made. The permit fee was increased from its previous level of \$53.10 per month per machine.

The Labor Opposition objects in the strongest terms to the regulation now before the House, which seeks to give the sanction of the Parliament of Queensland to this new higher permit fee for in-line machines. It does so on two grounds: firstly, to restore some semblance of honesty to the Justice Department's administration of this particular area; and, secondly, out of a sense of fairness to Queensland clubs.

The temerity of the Ahern Government and its Minister for Justice in seeking the approval of Parliament for this fee increase is staggering, because it is precisely this permit fee that provides the very proof of the National Party State Government's knowledge over a period of 14 years of the illegal gambling purposes for which these in-line machines were used.

It is the very size of this permit fee that demonstrates the Government's knowledge of the illegal use of in-line machines, also known as pin-ball pokies, or poor man's pokies. The amount of the fee is 10 times that applying to other entertainment machines, such as pin-ball machines and video-game machines. The only difference between these in-line machines and the other entertainment machines is that these in-line machines were built for gambling, and used for gambling in defiance of the law. The Government knows that and has known it all along. The machines were not a form of entertainment or amusement; they were purely and simply a gambling machine, a form of poker machine, which was tolerated by members of this Government notwithstanding the fact that they and the Premier professed year after year to be opposed to poker machines or coin-operated gambling machines in Queensland.

The observation that I made in this House on 7 March 1984 on the amount of the permit fee applying to in-line machines is as valid today as it was 4½ years ago. The Minister for Justice and the Queensland Government cannot claim that this is something new or that they were not aware of it—that it is something that has only recently been brought to their knowledge by the Fitzgerald inquiry—because this matter has been raised time and time again. I myself raised it more than 4½ years ago.

In a speech in a Matters of Public Interest debate, I said—

"These are gambling machines, and the Government knows that they are special machines. Why else would a licence fee 10 times higher than the \$50 fee for other amusement machines be charged? The fee charged for these machines is \$500 compared with \$50 for the others. The Government knows the purpose to which they are put."

The figures that I quoted at the time were yearly amounts. The only thing that has changed since 1984 is that the permit fee has increased. The permit fee for in-line machines increased to \$637.20 a year—10 times the fee applying to other entertainment machines.

The regulation before the Parliament tonight seeks to increase the permit for in-line gambling machines to \$682.80 a year—10 times the fee applying to other entertainment machines. I ask the Minister and Government members the simple and straightforward question: why is the permit fee for in-line gambling machines set at and collected at 10 times the amount for the other machines? The reason is equally straightforward and simple, that is, the in-line permit fee is 10 times higher because the machine is used for gambling; and the Government knows that.

For more than a decade there has been a hypocritical covering-up, a smearing of anybody who dared to raise a voice of criticism, and a stifling of debate, just as the Government has done in so many other areas. The Government would only be implicating itself in this illegal activity—in effect, making an admission—because by making such an admission it would be acknowledging that the gambling that occurred on those machines has occurred under its own laws and with its knowledge.

Despite its lack of explanation, the Queensland Government is implicated in the illegal gambling. Of course, that is highlighted by evidence that has been given before the Fitzgerald inquiry. It is inconceivable that the Government did not know that these machines were being used for that purpose. I trust that in the course of its deliberations and in its report the Fitzgerald inquiry will identify this Government's involvement and acceptance of that illegal activity over many years. It is obvious that the Government knew the real purpose to which those machines were put, and it is nonsense to suggest otherwise. National Party Justice Ministers—and before them, Liberal Party Justice Ministers—have known all along what is going on and have turned a blind eye to it. The very root of corruption and cronyism in this State has been a succession of Governments and Ministers who were prepared to turn a blind eye to what they knew was happening.

Let me look at how far back the Government has known about this issue. On 7 March 1984, in response to a question by the Labor member for Mackay, Mr Casey—who will second this motion tonight—the then Minister for Justice, Mr Harper, provided the following information to the Parliament—

“On 3 April 1974 the joint Government parties approved of permits being issued under the provisions of the Art Union Regulation Act 1964-1974 for the conduct of in-line machines subject to the following conditions which are contained in the records of my department—

- (a) No betting on the result of the machine is permitted;
- (b) No prizes are to be given; and
- (c) Machines may only be installed in clubs.”

Permit fees for in-line machines first appeared as part of the regulations under the Art Unions and Amusements Act of 1976, which was administered by the Minister for Justice at the time, Mr Bill Knox. The permit fee for in-line machines was set at \$16 a month, or \$192 a year, compared with \$2 a month, or \$24 a year, for other entertainment machines. From the initial Liberal Ministers through to the present Minister one sees that very same discrepancy between in-line machines and the others. When introducing the legislation, Mr Knox gave no explanation as to why the fee for in-line machines was set at that level.

In an article in the *Sunday Sun* on 18 August 1974—14 years ago—details of the operation of those in-line machines for gambling were presented publicly. I am in possession of prominent newspaper articles that appeared in the Brisbane press at that time, which demonstrate quite clearly what was going on. An article in the *Sunday Sun* stated—

“The State Government is turning a blind eye to the illegal use of gambling machines in Queensland sporting clubs.”

That article referred to a report from the royal commission into organised crime in New South Wales, which was conducted by Mr Justice Moffitt.

All of this evidence has been before the Government for 14 years, yet the use of in-line machines is continuing. If cash prizes were not being offered as at August 1974, they were very soon a feature of the operation of in-line machines in clubs.

An article in the *Courier-Mail* on 11 January 1975 referred to the confiscation of three in-line machines from the Queensland Soccer Club at Perry Park. At that time an unnamed club-manager said—

“We have been making cash payments for a long time now, but we will have to be more careful now.”

That practice continued with the knowledge of this Government. That article made reference to how the Northern Suburbs Rugby League Club, of which I understand Mr Knox was a patron, operated several in-line machines on that basis. The next day, the

then Premier, Mr Bjelke-Petersen, was reported as having “jumped on cash payouts on club pinball machines”. A *Sunday Sun* newspaper article stated—

“After consultations with the Justice Minister, Mr Knox, he (the Premier) told State Government yesterday the cash payouts would be stamped out.”

Yet what did the Premier and Mr Knox do? Nothing! That practice continued, except that the annual permit fee went up in July 1976—the following year—to \$16 a month, or eight times the fees applicable to other machines. That permit fee was increased under Mr Bill Lickiss as Justice Minister, under Mr Doumany—another Liberal—under Mr Harper and, more recently, under the present Minister, Mr Clauson.

None of those Ministers can pretend that he did not know why that permit fee for in-line machines was so high compared with the permit fee for other entertainment machines. All of the Ministers for Justice knew what those machines were being used for. If they claim otherwise, they classify themselves not only as ministerial dunces but also as Ministers without any semblance of credibility. I repeat and emphasise that the Ministers knew what was going on—each and every one of them. If they did not read it in the newspapers or listen when they were told about it in this Parliament, common sense must have told them what those machines were being used for. Here in Queensland it is always possible that Ministers might come forward with outrageous claims that they did not know that the machines were being used for that purpose.

The Government's track record reveals that that is what they might try to claim. Firstly, gambling casinos were operating under neon lights in Fortitude Valley but this Government said they did not exist. Next, there were the massage parlours around town which this Government said were not operating as brothels. Thirdly, I suppose we might now expect an attempt by the Ministers to say that they did not know that those in-line machines were being used for gambling.

Incredible claims of that sort are no longer accepted by the Parliament or the public. People have woken up to this Government. Outlandish statements that attempt to portray black as white will no longer wash with Queenslanders. It is an absurd proposition to suggest that Ministers individually or the Government as a whole had not twigged on to the reason for the higher permit fee for in-line machines. I suppose that it is the same as an insurance company charging an insurance premium for a Lamborghini or Maserati and then claiming that it thought that it was collecting a premium for a Mini Moke.

In March 1984, when he was Minister for Justice, Mr Harper was queried in this House on the size of the permit fee for in-line machines. What did the Minister's predecessor say in answer to a question from the member for Windsor, Mr Comben, who asked Mr Harper to justify the fee being 10 times that being charged for other machines? Mr Harper came up with the pathetic excuse that it was a matter of percentage increases, but he did go on to say that he was not satisfied with the situation and would pursue it. His reply in *Hansard* of 10 April 1984 was—

“I am not satisfied with what has happened. I give the honourable member and the House generally an assurance that it, amongst a number of other issues relating to this matter, has been and will continue to be pursued by me.”

Yet once again nothing happened.

At that time the current Deputy Premier, Mr Gunn, in his capacity as Minister Assisting the Treasurer, was also queried about the huge discrepancies. He also promised to look into the matter, but once again nothing happened.

The situation could not have been made more clear than in the speech I made in this House in March 1984, when I detailed corruption and/or incompetence at high levels within the Justice Department. Yet once again nothing happened. I could refer to other serious matters, but because of the time constraints I am unable to canvass them in detail. I refer to matters such as the assurance by Mr Harper that he would approach this question seriously and an answer by Mr Hinze in which he claimed to forget a

complaint by the Southport RSL Club concerning the widespread practice involving these machines.

Mr Hinze was asked why he did not refer the matter to Mr Harper to take any other action. He replied that he could not remember. On 27 March 1984 I asked a similar question of Mr Hinze. By this time his amnesia had partially lifted and he was able to say that he had not taken the matter any further, but offered no explanation.

The cost to Queensland has been enormous—in corruption. The cost to clubs has been enormous because they have been led up the financial garden path by this Government, which now capriciously and callously tells them to stop using these machines as in-line gambling machines and to use them as amusement machines. Yet the Government continues to charge the higher fee at a time when clubs in this State are in financial trouble. This Government is doing nothing and has no ideas—nothing at all—to offer the clubs to get them out of the parlous situation to which this Government has contributed by its incompetence.

Mr CASEY (Mackay) (10.25 p.m.): In seconding the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, I point out, as he has already mentioned, that for some time I have had some considerable interest in the operations of the in-line machines in Queensland and the way in which things have been going. I do not want to raise your ire, Mr Acting Speaker, but one unfortunate aspect about this debate is that every morning we can pick up the *Courier-Mail* and read on the front page and on a full page inside the paper all of the details about what has happened the previous day at the Fitzgerald inquiry—many of which touch on political consequences and political actions in Queensland—yet within this House, which is the highest Chamber in the land, we are not able to make mention of some of those particular matters, directly or indirectly, or about what is happening in the inquiry.

However, every man and his dog in Queensland now knows that police corruption has been rife in this State for many, many years, that is, if he did not know that it existed before. The last 15 months of newspaper, radio and television reports about the Fitzgerald inquiry were not needed to tell us that. I believe it is a fact that the general public in Queensland could not care less about SP bookies, though most people recognise that prostitutes have been in society since men and women were made differently. The crime in relation to SP bookies and prostitution is that the Government is not receiving a rake-off. That is not so with the in-line machines. The Government is receiving a rake-off from them and, as the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, has been for some 14 years, at a very exorbitant rate. That is the reason why this matter is being highlighted in the House this evening.

The use of in-line machines has been permitted by the Government. From time to time the Government has introduced amendments to the legislation, and they have been considered at Governor in Council level. That is another tragedy about the whole matter: that the office of the Governor has been allowed to be brought in to cover up the Government's work in setting fees for the illegal gambling that has been conducted on in-line machines in this State. That has been occurring right from when the Act was consolidated in 1976, and even for a period of two years before that when in-line machines were introduced. However, on a regular basis since 1976 this Government has been charging very high fees for in-line machines. As Mr Goss has so rightly pointed out, the legislation covering those fees was introduced into the Parliament by the then Liberal Attorney-General, now Sir William Knox.

When a comparison is made of the permit fees that are charged for billiard tables and in-line machines, the difference is enormous. Clubs install billiard tables so that they can make money from them. Perhaps people will stay on and drink in a club that has a billiard table. They are a very attractive proposition for clubs, hotels and publicans. In most hotels or clubs that have billiard tables, somebody is playing on them all the time. Under the new scheme, the permit fee for a billiard table will be \$8.60 a month, whereas previously it was \$4.40 a month. The permit fees for in-line machines are \$60 a calendar month.

As far as this Government is concerned, right down through the years, the in-line machines have been Queensland's poker machines. They are poker machines that the Government has been able to manipulate and pick up a financial reward from. Unfortunately, the in-line machines are uncontrolled, and that is the problem. A few weeks ago in this House I said that the beauty of poker machines is that they can be controlled. They are electronic devices. They can be computerised. They pay back a percentage figure. There is no way in which they can be rorted if proper legislation is introduced to control them. As I said, that is the case with proper poker machines, as they are known.

However, when in-line machines are used as poker machines, a cash pay-out is provided in exactly the same way as happens with a poker machine; but no set percentage has to be paid back. There is no overall control of those machines. There is no record of how much the machine has paid out, other than the record that is kept by the operator or the owner of the machine. They have been providing cash payments from the first day that the legislation began to operate.

It went further than that, though, because the scuttle-butt in all the clubs and other places in which the machines were installed was that they were being used to provide cash kick-backs for the owners and operators. The main feature associated with these machines is that they were providing a cash flow for the clubs and they were helping the clubs to balance their books. The point I make is that these machines were legal. Everybody had a written permit to operate them and the police could not take any action against the owners or operators unless a complaint had been made. The Justice Department permitted their use and the Justice Department knew that they existed all along. The Justice Department was also happy about what was happening, as long as the permits fees continued to be paid. Of course, the racketeers were also happy because they were raking profits off the top.

I remember the attitude that the former Premier displayed in this House. I remember the attitude adopted by Ministers of the Government towards the Labor Party's policy on poker machines. The former Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, criticised the Labor Party's policy, yet enabled people to frequent casinos on the Gold Coast and in Townsville. Honourable members would acknowledge that casinos are the only places in which people can operate true poker machines and, of course, a percentage rake-off is given to the Government.

I remember well the attitude adopted by the former Premier to points I made about poker machines. A former Minister for Transport levelled insults and inuendo at members of the Labor Party while his acknowledged friend, the stood-down Commissioner of Police, Sir Terence Lewis, allegedly received \$25,000 from the manufacturer, owner and operator of these in-line machines and told this Government that uncontrolled in-line machines were okay, but not poker machines. Honourable members are yet to be informed of the full extent of involvement by the former Minister for Transport but, hopefully, the Fitzgerald inquiry will properly determine that matter. The very same Sir Terence Lewis was used to investigate me and other members of the Labor Party in an endeavour to assist another acknowledged friend, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, a former Premier of this State.

It is becoming pretty obvious to the general public that the Fitzgerald inquiry will never get to the bottom of corruption in Queensland because it is so vast, deep and so extensive. The police were unable to take action against in-line machines because their widespread use had been legalised by the Department of Justice. The blind eye was turned not by one but by five Ministers for Justice—three Liberal Ministers for Justice and two National Party Ministers for Justice. The blind eye was turned also by the former Premier and by the Commissioner for Police who was appointed by that Premier to enforce legislation that had been passed in relation to illegal gambling and who also furnished reports on gambling machines for which he was paid by both parties—the Government and the manufacturers. It is not bad when payments are being put in both pockets.

Treasury was also a beneficiary of this scheme because the money was being used by the Government for some of its actions. Of course, when the balloon went up, everybody ran for cover. The Government told the clubs that no more cash payments were to be made because the Ahern Government would be nice and clean on all these matters—or so the story goes. However, that action was positive proof of the illegal action that this Government and the previous Government had allowed to take place over the past 12 to 14 years of in-line machine operation. All Ministers of the present Government who served under the Bjelke-Petersen Government are guilty because, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, they must have known about it. Those Ministers maintain that they did not know anything about it, but I do not believe them. I believe that they did know about this arrangement and that, if they did have some objection to the practice, they should have raised their objections in Cabinet and should also have taken the proper course adopted by Cabinet Ministers under the Westminster system of government. They should have resigned if they were not prepared to tolerate the illegal actions of the Government.

Only today, honourable members observed a former Minister and a current Minister clash in this Parliament over events that had occurred in Cabinet. Their so-called adherence to the doctrine of Cabinet solidarity does not exist because Ministers are making statements at the Fitzgerald inquiry and in the newspapers and they are bagging one another.

For a long period, the operation of in-line machines has constituted a widespread crime that has been perpetrated by everybody who allowed these practices to take place. The only way that people of Queensland will rid this State of graft, corruption and the racketeers who pervade the corridors of Government is to throw out the National Party Government and elect a Labor Government.

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.35 p.m.): A great deal of hypocrisy has been engaged in tonight. If the practice outlined by the member for Mackay has continued for so long, no-one can tell me that the parliamentary members of the Labor Party who have represented electorates throughout the period referred to were not associated with clubs—RSL clubs, bowls clubs and others—in which in-line machines had been placed. The reality is that this issue cuts all ways. If the practice was widely known as members of the Labor Party have claimed, members of the Opposition would also have known about it.

The first time the issue was raised was in 1984, but it was put to bed for another four years.

Mr Palaszczuk: Where were you?

Mr INNES: In common with everybody else, I was in the State of Queensland. I did not hear a word from the honourable member, although an extensive debate associated with the introduction of in-line machines took place in this State in determining whether or not they would become authorised. There was no secrecy about the matter.

Sir William Knox: They were all in favour of it. They all voted for it.

Mr INNES: Everybody in Parliament was responsible for passing the legislation.

The honourable member for Mackay, Mr Casey, did not tell the world when he received moneys from interests associated with the poker machine lobby for the purposes of conducting an election campaign.

Mr CASEY: I rise to a point of order. I find the remarks made by the member most offensive. The matter is public knowledge and public information has been laid on the table of this Parliament by me on previous occasions. The member would know very well that any moneys that were donated to the party through me were passed on to the party. I find the remarks made by the honourable member offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Mackay asks for the remarks to be withdrawn.

Mr INNES: I withdraw the remarks. I think I have made my point.

The reality is that the facts were eventually revealed, but they were not disclosed at first instance; nor did Mr Lamont, who races round this State, reveal to his former party colleagues or to any other members of Parliament when he was racing round the State producing a publication on behalf of the Registered Clubs Association that he had been acting as a consultant for the poker machine lobby at that time.

I will return to the matter at hand. I do not know whether my position is typical, characteristic or shows some naivety on my part, but perhaps one comes across different activities during different phases of one's life. I was aware that there were machines known as in-line machines in some of the clubs in my electorate and that there was something known as "free goes". I have never played one of these machines, but apparently all that the machine registers is free goes; it does not pay out money. One does not put money in the machine, win a number and get money out; it is not a poker machine. The player wins free goes or credits. It has now become clear that those credits were cashed in at the bar of the club, as I understand the exercise. It was not a question of loading the machinery or concocting percentage pay-outs like poker machines.

The Leader of the Opposition cannot suggest that there was no-one in his parliamentary team who was not a member of a club or did not regularly attend clubs where these machines were in operation and either did not suspect or was not given an intimation from some source that this was going on. There might even be members of the Labor Party who are on the boards of clubs which showed revenue from in-line machines in their accounts.

When these machines were introduced everyone agreed that they were more attractive than other forms of machines. They have been described as a poor man's pin-ball machine. They were a transfer of the pin-ball machine into the clubs and were a slightly different and more attractive game. The machines attracted a higher licence fee from the word go; there is no question about that. From 1974 to 1984 these machines operated without so much as a bleat coming from any Labor member of Parliament or any other member of Parliament. I have never received any complaints from anybody about the operation of an in-line machine and I suspect that no Labor member of Parliament has ever received a complaint from anybody. Perhaps that is the reason why there were no bleats.

Mr Goss: I have; numerous.

Mr INNES: The Leader of the Opposition must have gone looking for complaints.

Mr Goss: You should have been here in 1984. I detailed them all. I tabled statutory declarations. You were asleep.

Mr INNES: I have certainly never received any.

Mr Yewdale: Do a bit of research tomorrow and you will find it.

Mr INNES: Has the honourable member for Rockhampton North ever received one?

Mr Yewdale: No.

Mr INNES: Are there any in-line machines in the clubs in the honourable member's electorate?

Mr Yewdale: Yes.

Mr INNES: Yes, of course there are.

Now that we are all speaking with the wisdom of hindsight, I suspect the reason why there were no complaints is that the machine itself is totally clean. The playing of

the machine does not involve the payment of money by the machine, and the clubs control the pay-outs. The problem with poker machines, as I understand it, is that the people operating the machines can fix them and load the odds. That is quite different from playing a machine when the odds or the pay-outs are totally controlled by the club itself. If the club does anything wrong, it is diddling itself.

I understand that there were a few dramatic instances in a couple of the clubs around the State. However, in my electorate there were a couple of machines in the corner of the occasional football club or four or five in the corner of the RSL, but there was not the spectacle of banks of gambling machines which can be found in clubs with full-blown poker machines. For whatever reason—a wink or a nod or whatever—there was a lack of complaint. It is very different from gambling on poker machines. The machines themselves control nothing in the way of pay-outs. They cannot be fixed or rigged, and apparently the people who supplied them did not receive any complaints about their having welshed on any deal or not providing the service for whatever price was agreed on for the supply of the machines.

Mr Davis: The clubs really liked them.

Mr INNES: Yes, apparently the clubs liked them, and it is clear that some of them made big money. I have attended meetings of combined clubs where it has been revealed that some of the clubs made in excess of \$10,000 from these machines.

Mr McElligott: So the Government charges them more fees.

Mr INNES: Certainly the Government has to levy fees. It is now understood that the sole purpose of this exercise and the only bait was the ability of the clubs to pay out on the machines. I understand that the machines are no longer being used because the pay-outs are illegal and threats have come from the Justice Department.

Mr Goss: They are still paying the higher fees.

Mr INNES: That is why the Liberal Party will support the Labor Party's motion; it is clear that the fee is totally unjustified. I was not quite sure which way the Leader of the Opposition ended up arguing. Is he arguing for legalising the machines in the end? Initially the fee will be got rid of until they are legalised, but was the Leader of the Opposition's argument in favour of legalising in-line machines?

Mr Goss: They are legal at the moment. The question is the use.

Mr INNES: Was the Leader of the Opposition's argument in favour of legalising the use of them?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member for Brouse wishes to interview the Minister for Racing, he should do it outside the Chamber.

Mr INNES: I was left in some uncertainty as to what the Leader of the Opposition's position was at the end of his argument. The Liberal Party supports the removal of the high fee because in reality there is no financial attraction in having the machines unless there is a pay-out.

Mr Goss: It should be one or the other.

Mr INNES: Yes, it should be one or the other. I was not sure if the Leader of the Opposition's argument in the end was that he was advocating the legalisation of the pay-out on in-line machines.

In any event, the Liberal Party agrees, and it has a motion on the business paper stating that an urgent inquiry must be made into the financial welfare of dozens of clubs. The Liberal Party believes this inquiry should be carried out by an all-party committee and that the question of amusement machines is only one aspect that has to be looked at. The Liberal Party calls for some proportion of the increased licence fees imposed on registered clubs to be put into a pool. This is the same as hotels, where the increase or

excess is put into a pool to pay out uneconomic hotels. The Liberal Party believes the fees from registered clubs should go into a pool in order that some financial assistance can be given back to the registered club industry itself. The Liberal Party believes that an all-party committee should make the decision as to the precise form the inquiry should take.

Time expired.

Mr PALASZCZUK (Archerfield) (10.45 p.m.): It is unfortunate that corruption has to reach crisis proportions before this Government is stirred into action. When almost every fabric of Queensland society is under close scrutiny by inquiries, so far the only real victims have been the licensed clubs of this State. In itself, that is a monument to the National Party Government's amazing flexibility and its fine definition of Christian standards.

I will spend most of the time allotted to me in speaking up for the licensed clubs and detailing to the House the hardships that they are now experiencing as a result of this Government's attitude. We have just seen a number of excellent sporting performances by our young sportsmen and sportswomen at the recent Seoul Olympics. Like the rest of Australians, we have basked in the reflected glory of these champions—probably none has done more so than the Premier. Unfortunately, if the State Government does not change its direction, we may not see any more champions produced in Queensland. I say that because of the parlous state that licensed sporting clubs find themselves in.

Because this Government finally decided to enforce its own laws on in-line machines, many of the State's oldest and finest clubs find themselves in dire financial trouble. They are all in this trouble simply because they trusted the Government to do the right thing. That is the only silly thing they did.

Previously, they were technically breaking the law. I say "technically", because for 18 years the Government evidenced no interest in enforcing the legislation; rather, it preferred to make money from the in-line machine industry by charging a registration fee which just recently jumped to a little less than \$700 a year for every machine that a club has in operation. In fact, the Government thought it was on such a good wicket that it milked even more money from the clubs by charging a \$6 application fee every three months when the clubs made progress payments on the registration fees.

The Government did this when, without warning and after 18 years of "nudge, nudge; wink, wink; just you leave that to us", it decided to enforce the letter of the law on in-line machines. I will not argue that the law should not be enforced, because it should. However, I will argue with the way in which the Government went about its task. Licensed club secretaries went to bed one night secure in the knowledge that their clubs could service their debts from the income from in-line machines. They awoke the next morning with their world in tatters.

What happened before the crack-down? When the clubs were making a nice little profit from the operation of in-line machines, what did they do with the money? They used it to upgrade their club's facilities and premises and to finance a number of worthwhile activities in the general community. More importantly, they put the money into junior sport—they put their money where this Government puts only its mouth.

The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has stated that the reason for the enforcement of the law was corruption within the in-line machine industry. If that is so, this Government should not only be mentioned at the Fitzgerald inquiry for condoning corruption but also be indicted on a charge of receiving corrupt payments. Whilst the idea of seeing sanctimonious hypocrites in the dock has a certain ironic charm, it would not save the licensed clubs in the State.

Without the financial assistance from the clubs and the in-line machines over the last 18 years, many a fine sporting career would not have got off the ground. That is the tragedy of what is presently happening. With no warning, the Government has pulled the rug out from under the clubs and has left many a hard-working committee sitting like a shag on a rock. When the clubs asked, "What are we supposed to do now? How

are we to service our debts?", what did the Government do? It simply said, "It is not our problem. Sort out your own finances." When the clubs said, "Where do we find the money for junior sport?", they received the same reply from the Government.

Mr FitzGerald: The Government gives a subsidy to junior sport of between 20 and 25 per cent.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Yes. Does the honourable member know how it does that? To add insult to injury, in the recent Budget the Government pushed up licence fees. There is no doubt about it, when the National Party gives someone a good kick, he stays kicked.

The sad part in all of this is that the Government has neglected the needs of our youth. There has not been one word about increasing assistance to junior sport. Yet, if, to beat boredom, these kids who are victims of clubs going to the wall turn from their sporting pursuits to vandalism and petty crime, I guarantee that we will hear plenty from Government members, who will all climb onto their high moral horses and bemoan the break-down of values in our society.

For months I have been calling on the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General to hold an all-party inquiry into the club industry so that the problems can be sorted out. So far he has not seen fit to reply.

Mr White interjected.

Mr PALASZCZUK: I thank the honourable member for Redcliffe for the interjection. It will do the member for Sherwood no good to try to climb onto this bandwagon, because in this world there is no payment for second place.

What I want to hear from the Government is whether any assistance is to be offered to Queensland's licensed clubs. Will the Government help to clean up the debris of this formerly vigorous segment of the community or will it leave financially strapped and possibly homeless the many members of the club committees who guaranteed club debts?

I have spoken previously in this Chamber on ways to alleviate the crisis in club financing and on how much-needed support can be given to the thousands of young sportsmen and sportswomen in this State, but the Government will not listen. In Queensland, a person can bet on horse-racing, trotting and dog-racing for six days of the week. Bingo can be played at any suburban hall from morning till night. Keno, blackjack, roulette and video machines can be played legally at either Townsville or the Gold Coast. Another alternative, if it is preferred, is to slip into Fortitude Valley, even to this day, and play the same games illegally. In this State, where people can buy casket tickets and instant casket tickets and play lotto or football pools, the only way a person cannot gamble is by putting his money into a machine and pulling a handle. What blatant hypocrisy! National Party members would rather see millions of dollars go over the border every week than use those same dollars to help Queenslanders.

Mr Davis: Those machines could be used at Jupiter's casino.

Mr PALASZCZUK: Exactly right. It is about the only true poker machine around the place.

As I have said in this Chamber many times previously, every week we see hundreds of buses joining what I have termed the pokie armada, heading for the Tweed pokie palaces to make further deposits in Kermit's coffers. The New South Wales Government is laughing all the way to the bank.

If the National Party members are fair dinkum about standing up for Queensland and doing the right thing by our rising sports stars, they have the remedy in their hands. That is not the be-all and the end-all, but it is something that the licensed clubs have been after. On numerous occasions, I have told this Chamber how that can be done and how we can keep any possible corruption associated with poker machines out of this State. However, all I have heard in response is the yahooing of the people from the

fundamental Right. Just how much money do the New South Wales clubs pay into the National Party slush funds? That can be the only reason why this Government does not even look at the proposal.

On 29 September this year, I outlined to the House how poker machines and their operators could be kept honest and how corruption could be strangled out at birth. That is what we should be looking for—a solution to the financial crisis that the Government has created. We cannot use in-line machines; they have been outlawed. We cannot change the law to legalise them; that would mean the Government admitting that it was wrong. And that it will never do. What does that leave us with? Well, I suppose that the Government could pick up the entire cost of junior sport in this State. The Government could even cover the cost of community services that the clubs used to provide. But that would mean using Commonwealth grant money for the purpose intended by the Federal Government, not sticking it into hollow logs or self-promotion by Ministers. Honourable members know what chance there is of that happening—none.

It is about time that this National Party Government gave some lead to the licensed clubs in Queensland by telling the worried committees exactly what it intends to do to get those clubs out of the terrible mess that they are in at present.

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.55 p.m.), in reply: The Opposition's motion is to the effect that the regulations tabled in this House on 30 August under the Art Unions and Amusements Act dealing with the permit fees for in-line machines should be disallowed.

Recapitulating, that increase in the fees under the Act was gazetted on 25 June 1988, when application fees for entertainment machines were set at \$5.70 per machine, plus a permit fee of \$5.70 per month or part of a month. However, the permit fee for an entertainment machine—that is, an in-line machine—was set at \$56.90 per month. We have heard that that leads to some discrepancy. We have heard all sorts of wondrous stories as to why that discrepancy occurs. I reject those stories entirely.

When the in-line machines were introduced back in 1974, they were looked upon as an adult entertainment machine—nothing more and nothing less. They were looked upon as machines that would operate in areas in which adults with money in their pockets would entertain themselves with the machines.

I find it interesting that the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party, in his speech this evening, turned around and said that he supports the policy of the ALP. Now that the machines have been taken out of the clubs, because the clubs panicked as a result of the clamp-down which the Fitzgerald inquiry artificially, seemingly, put on them, the Liberal Party wants to vote with the Opposition on this matter. However, in 1974, when the Liberal Party introduced this piece of legislation, it set the fees at that level.

I find it very interesting that on this occasion, when Liberal Party members have disagreed with what the Opposition Leader has said, they turn around and want to vote with the Opposition. They say that, because the machines are not making any money, they should not attract a higher fee. Quite frankly, I do not follow their logic.

I have never condoned the use of those machines for gambling. I take absolute and extreme exception to the Leader of the Opposition stating that I have had complicity in this matter. I find it offensive and dishonest for him to say that I have had complicity in corruption with gambling machines. It is an absolute and utter disgrace, and an abuse of his rights in this House.

I turn now to the member for Mackay. When the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party attacked him about the money that he received from the poker-machine lobby, he took offence. Now he says that, because he came clean and put the information on the table of this House at the time, he is free and above board. What a fallacy! What a nonsense! He stands condemned, just like anybody else whom he tries to condemn,

because he took a secret commission. He took \$30,000 and, at the end of the day when they pulled his trousers down, he rolled over and came clean. What a hypocrite!

I will inform the House what occurred in my department. My department heard the bleatings of Opposition members about those machines. It heard the accusations that they made about the machines. On every occasion, as far as I am aware, when they made those complaints in this place, my officers investigated the complaints. And what did they find? Nothing. Not a thing. Because the clubs did not want to own up. The clubs knew that they had secrecy on their side. They knew that they did not have to come clean with the investigators. They knew that they were not going to give the information to the inspectors. Now the Opposition is trying to accuse this Government of hiding the matter. The Government did not hide it; it was the clubs that hid it from the Government.

I will deal with some more discrepancies in licensing fees. Billiard-tables were mentioned by the honourable member for Mackay. The application fee for a billiard-table is \$34.10, and it costs \$8.60 per month to run a billiard-table. Once again, that is higher than the application fee of \$5.70 for an ordinary machine and \$6.90 per month to run one.

Members of the Opposition know that billiard-tables are run in adult entertainment centres and that they are for the entertainment of the affluent—not children or anybody else. That being the case, there is a sliding scale of fees. One does not have to be an accountant to realise that in-line machines and billiard-tables attract a higher fee because they are played by adults.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr CLAUSEN: They are not the same at all.

More money comes in from in-line machines than comes in from billiard-tables, and more money comes in from billiard-tables than from children's entertainment machines. It is quite simple. The Opposition does not want to know about it.

Quite frankly, if in-line machines were recognised officially as gambling machines in Queensland, this State would have millions of dollars coming into its coffers. To suggest that that is why the Government wanted to cover up the matter is absolutely ridiculous. I think that the Leader of the House hit the nail right on the head when he described the Leader of the Opposition as childish and childlike.

At the time this matter was unveiled by the Fitzgerald inquiry, a circular was issued by my department. That was in addition to the investigations that my department had carried out from time to time in relation to complaints that had been received. I think on one occasion a show cause notice was issued but the club closed up because it did not want to be found out.

My officers also visited the clubs and explained to them that they were there to ensure that the licence conditions were observed. Then what happened? The clubs that had been cheating the system panicked. They pulled out the plug on the money-till and away it went. They were left with nothing.

Mr Palaszczuk: Your Government disowned all that.

Mr CLAUSEN: Now people like the member for Archerfield are bleating like stuck pigs that the clubs are suffering.

The member for Archerfield is now standing up for the clubs. If he is standing up for the clubs now, he must have known what was going on. He must have known that the clubs in his electorate were cheating on the machines. He must have condoned the use of the machines by the clubs to raise funds. He has admitted as much tonight in this Chamber. He knows that those clubs were cheating, and now he is trying to say that the clubs need a hand. What a hypocrite! What an absolute and utter hypocrite!

The member for Archerfield knew that these clubs are relying on these machines. He knew exactly what was happening. Tonight he had the hypocrisy to rise in his place and complain that this Government has done nothing to stamp out a practice that he in fact condoned. What a philistine!

Tonight the Leader of the Opposition moved a motion of dissent and a motion for the disallowance of regulations. He has lived up to his reputation as the ballerina of the Chamber. He has put on his ballet-shoes and donned his tutu, but there is no-one up in the gallery to listen to him. When he rose to speak, they all left. It is a damned crying shame that there is no-one in the gallery now to listen to my expose of the hypocrisy of the Opposition on this occasion.

Mr Mackenroth: We will copy your speech and send it to every club in Queensland.

Mr CLAUSON: That is good.

I will examine what is going on in the club industry today. Members of the Opposition are saying that this Government is uncaring about the plight of the clubs. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have many clubs in my electorate that I support.

Mr Hamill: Were they cheating?

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Ipswich wishes to interject, he must return to his usual place.

Mr CLAUSON: As soon as the plight of the clubs became known, my department moved in regard to the sale of lucky envelopes by increasing gross proceeds from \$200 to \$500 immediately when those lucky envelopes are sold within the club premises.

I hasten to add that a committee comprising myself, the Minister for Finance and officers of our departments is considering long-term solutions to the problem of the financial difficulties that clubs are experiencing. Members of the Opposition are not prepared to listen to the Government. They do not want to know about it. They know that the Government is trying to do something. They are not prepared to accept the fact that the Government is examining methods of providing long-term relief for the club industry.

One needs to look at areas in which clubs are able to raise funds. They are able to do it legally and they do not have to cheat on the system. If the Government had known that clubs were cheating on the system at the time that they were, the clubs would have been given a most serious warning. Where it was discovered that that was so, the clubs were warned, and where it could be proved that that was in fact the case, show-cause notices were issued.

In all the circumstances, I suggest that this House should not support the Opposition's motion.

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

AYES, 33		NOES, 42	
Ardill	Palaszczuk	Ahern	Katter
Beanland	Schuntner	Alison	Lingard
Beard	Sherlock	Austin	Littleproud
Braddy	Vaughan	Berghofer	McCauley
Burns	Warburton	Booth	McKechnie
Casey	Warner	Borbidge	McPhie
Comben	Wells	Burreket	Menzel
D'Arcy	White	Chapman	Muntz
De Lacy	Yewdale	Clauson	Neal
Eaton		Cooper	Newton
Gibbs, R. J.		Elliott	Perrett
Goss		Fraser	Randell
Hamill		Gamin	Sherrin
Hayward		Gately	Simpson
Innes		Gibbs, I. J.	Slack
Knox		Gilmore	Stoneman
Lee		Glasson	Tenni
Lickiss		Gunn	Veivers
McElligott		Harper	
Mackenroth	<i>Tellers:</i>	Harvey	<i>Tellers:</i>
McLean	Davis	Hinton	FitzGerald
Milliner	Prest	Hobbs	Stephan

Turning now to the proposals before the House—the first involves the excision of about 6.9 hectares from State forest 268, parishes of Berwick, Blackfriars, St Giles, and Waterview. The major portion of the land sought for excision is intended as a site for locating an accommodation lodge to service the needs of tourists visiting the rainforests of the Crystal Creek national park. At present, no such facility exists in the general area, and numerous representations have been received urging the Government to make available a site for that purpose.

A community-based committee has identified the most suitable location for such an undertaking to be part of State forest 268, parish of Blackfriars, situated adjacent to the Mount Spec Road and known locally as Windy Corner. The committee has sought to have that small area excised from the State forest for the purpose of the establishment of a rainforest lodge.

That section of State forest 268 is accessed by a road that was constructed by the Department of Forestry. To provide practical access to the nominated site, it is proposed to have a small section of that access excised from the State forest and opened as road. The lodge committee has also agreed to relocate on the proposed new State forest boundary the balance of the forestry road that is affected by this proposal. The excision of those areas will have no adverse effect on the management of the balance of the reserve. I am of the opinion that considerable benefit will accrue to the general public by the provision of that type of development and fully support its implementation.

The next proposal provides for the exclusion from State forest 571, parishes of Barrow and Nerang, of an area of about 3.91 hectares. To service the rapidly expanding population of Nerang, the Albert Shire Council undertook an investigation to locate a parcel of land in close proximity to the township for recreational purposes.

Initially, the council proposed to purchase former rifle-range R56 from the Commonwealth Government for that purpose. That area is entirely surrounded by State forest 571. Following negotiations with the council, it was proposed that a small section of the State forest in close proximity to Nerang be excised for addition to recreation reserve 1214, which has been developed by the council for recreational purposes.

To compensate for loss of land from the forest estate the council has agreed to proceed with the acquisition and subsequent surrender to the Crown for forestry purposes of that tract of land that is contained in the former rifle-range. The area that is proposed for excision is severed from the main body of the State forest by an existing forestry management road and carries little merchantable timber. The council has agreed to meet all costs in the matter.

The third proposal makes provision for the excision of two areas totalling 1.9802 hectares from the State forest near Samford. The major portion of the land to be dealt with has been almost totally severed from the balance of the State forest by Samford Road. Once excluded from the State forest, it is intended that that small parcel of land containing 1.337 hectares be included in the adjoining freehold portion 135, parish of Bunya, upon which a private recreational facility has been established. The excision of that area from the State forest will have no detrimental effect on the management of the balance of the reserve. The balance area sought for excision from State forest 1376 comprises a small parcel of land containing 0.6432 of a hectare.

The Pine Rivers Shire Council undertook an investigation to locate a parcel of land in close proximity to Samford for the siting of a reservoir to augment the area's water supply. The site most favoured is located on the eastern boundary of the State forest adjacent to Samford Road. That site ideally meets the council's requirements as to proximity and levels in regard to the gravitation main. The council has agreed to relocate an existing fireline which will be affected by the construction of that reservoir.

Following excision it is proposed to have such area set apart as a reserve for water supply purposes under the control of the council. The areas concerned carry very little commercial timber and their loss from the forest estate would have no detrimental effect on established sawmills drawing Crown log timber supplies from that region.

The fourth proposal seeks the excision from State forest 700, parishes of Curra and Gympie, of three small areas totalling 0.06068 of a hectare. Those areas, which are situated at Tamaree just north of Gympie, are sought by the Queensland Railways for curve-easing in connection with the electrification of the North Coast Railway Line. The affected areas will be logged of all commercial timber prior to any construction work being carried out. Following excision it is intended that those parcels of land be set apart as reserves for railway purposes under the control of the Commissioner for Railways as trustee. Management of those areas will not pass from Crown control.

The fifth proposal deals with the proposed excision from State forest 861, parishes of Bankton, Kirrama and Meunga, of an area of 0.4165 of a hectare. Whilst carrying out an investigation of certain parts of State forest 861 to determine their suitability for exotic plantation establishment, it came to notice that an adjacent land-holder's dwelling had been partly constructed on the reserve.

At the time of purchase, the present proprietor was given to understand by the former owner that his freehold property—then described as portion 25V, parish of Meunga—extended further than was the case. The proprietor has now sought to acquire the small area on which his dwelling is situated for addition to his freehold property. That area is of no value for forestry purposes and its excision from the forest estate will regularise the position that presently exists. The proprietor will be required to meet all costs in the matter.

The sixth proposal makes provision for the excision from State forest 755, parishes of Bartle Frere, Dirran, Glady and Palmerston of an area of about 1.1 hectares. Following an investigation in 1986, the Department of Forestry sought the concurrence of the Land Administration Commission to have the major portion of lease-held land, then described as portion 27, parish of Bartle Frere, made available for forestry purposes. During this investigation, it was determined that the lessee had inadvertently cleared a small section of the adjoining State forest and had managed the area as part of his special lease for some 15 years.

At the time the State forest boundary was defined by design only and subsequent establishment of the correct boundary has indicated that a concrete house slab has also been located on the State forest. The subject area has little value for forestry purposes and, following its exclusion from the forest estate, it will be made available for inclusion in the special lease to issue over the balance of portion 27. As such, the area will not pass from Crown control. The lessee will be required to bear all costs in this matter.

The seventh proposal seeks the excision from State forest 960, parish of Young, of an area of 12.77 hectares now designated as lot 270 on plan MCH 5160. This area forms part of a larger section of the State forest held under special lease tenure and has for a number of years been utilised for the growing of fruit trees. The lessee has made application to have this section of his leased land excluded from the forest estate for freeholding purposes.

No merchantable timber exists on the area and its excision will have little adverse effect on the management of the balance of the reserve. Its future use is considered to be for agricultural development and accordingly I am not opposed to its revocation from the State forest. The lessee is to be responsible for all costs in the matter, including survey.

The final proposal provides for the revocation from State forest 83, parishes of Cherwondah and Conloi, of areas totalling 371.7 hectares. These areas form part of a much larger parcel of State forest land which has been utilised over a long period for grazing purposes under special lease tenure. In each case the lessees involved have sought to have sections of their leased land excised from State forest for addition to their adjoining properties, one of which is freehold and the other a perpetual lease selection. No merchantable timber exists on one area, whilst the lessee is to compensate the Crown for the small quantity of commercial timber on the remaining area.

Excisions of these areas from the State forest will have little adverse effect on the management of the balance of the reserve. In each case the best future use of these areas is considered to be for agricultural development and accordingly I am not opposed to their revocation from the State forest. The lessees have agreed to meet all costs in these matters, including survey.

I strongly support all of these proposals and commend them for the approval of the House.

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (11.27 p.m.): The Opposition does not oppose the revocation proposals. Despite the fact that the Opposition agrees with them, I want to say a few things about them, in particular that proposal that deals with an area that will be converted for use as a tourist lodge site. That is one way in which the Government can help people gain access to the facilities or the attractions that exist in the State. That is a good move. The Government should do that in many other areas so that more people can more comfortably have access to the beauty spots of our State, as well as providing easier access for older people. Because of their physical ability, the young and the healthy who can join a bush-walking club can enjoy themselves. Too often only they are catered for. However, many elderly people who have spent their early days rearing a family and who have been tied up with other family commitments, receive a great deal of enjoyment from visiting such places. The Government is to be commended for spending a bit of money on providing that access for them.

Over the years I have been a great knocker of the Government because of its lack of funding to various national parks throughout Queensland. After all, the Government is the custodian of the State's assets. It is pleasing that the Government is doing something to allow the people of the State to have access to their assets.

The other excisions are of very small areas which will be used for various purposes. For instance, I refer to the recreation area at Nerang. It will be made available to the public. People who pay their way in society and who pay their rates deserve some of the benefits that accrue from Government decisions. I agree with that.

The Minister also mentioned the reservoir that will augment the Samford area's water supply and the land sought for the railway line near Gympie. The Government is playing a role in catering for the needs of the public. The land is not going into anyone's pocket.

I have a query about a couple of excisions which will involve their inclusion in special leases. I hope that at some future date the people who hold those leases will not be able to convert them into freehold tenure.

For a long time the Opposition has been requesting the Government to stop freeholding land because certain people can get the inside running by knowing somebody in the right place. Because of that they are able to change the tenure from State forest or a grazing lease to a special lease and then to freehold. That land belongs to the people of Queensland. It should always remain so, despite the fact that from time to time a suitable public use may be found for it. However, it should be designated leasehold only. In that way, whatever happens, the land will always come back to the people of Queensland.

On several occasions I have visited friends who have properties at Wandoan and I have looked at some of the surrounding country. The proposal relates to an area near Wandoan that consists of a special lease for grazing purposes of two blocks. The fact that it is in two blocks may be the reason why the Minister was not able to make the area proposed to be worked available for ballot. An area of 371.7 hectares is a sizeable piece of land, particularly in fertile country. Although I would not describe this land as the best land available in Queensland, areas of land around Wandoan contain very good agricultural soils. Bearing in mind the land shortage that has occurred in Queensland, I believe that a great opportunity could have been given to a young farmer to take his place on the land by virtue of the ballot system. I hope that the Government has made the right decision. As I said, the land is in two parcels and a certain amount of land

adjoins blocks in two different areas. At this stage, the Opposition has no opposition to the motion for revocation that has been moved by the Minister.

Hon. W. D. LICKISS (Moggill) (11.31 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports the reasons given by the Minister for the revocation of areas of declared State forest. The history of State forests reveals that areas of land have not always been set aside for the pure reasons of preserving forest areas. Over the years, throughout the systematic settlement of land in Queensland, it has often been necessary to ascribe a use to areas of land that were previously uncommitted. The popular method of land management in previous years was to set aside State forest reserves that became alienated Crown land. That was done because the land in question would not be subject to the provisions of the Land Act and would be out of the reach of people who wanted to apply for it for leasehold purposes other than those specified under the Land Act.

It is good that the Government is setting aside land in large areas for State forests primarily for the purpose of developing forests and also for placing land in reserve in the belief that future generations may wish to make a commitment to that land. People are inclined to believe that every single piece of land should be locked up and its future use should be determined. However, I believe that generations yet unborn are entitled to plan and make commitments to the use of land in this State. The land that would be available in the future is land that has been set aside in forestry areas and also to a limited extent—but only under very strict provisions—land that had been set aside for national park. Large tracts of Crown land are no longer being set aside to lie idle. The use of land is largely predetermined, but this action is one way that land can be set aside for a specific use and kept in reserve when the requirements referred to by the Minister become a reality. In such circumstances, the land that has been set aside can be put to better or higher use.

For those reasons, the Liberal Party supports the proposal made by the Minister. Members of the Liberal Party accept the reasons given by the Minister for the revocation of parts of the State forest. We believe that the Forestry Department has done a very good job in the maintenance of Queensland's State forests.

I reiterate that it is pleasing to note that land set aside as State forest can have an umbrella use assigned to it under certain circumstances as well as be available for private and recreational use by members of the public. The Brisbane forest park would be an example of the multiple use to which I refer. The Liberal Party supports the proposal.

Motion agreed to.

INCLUSION OF LAND WITHIN BRISBANE FOREST PARK

Hon. G. H. MUNTZ (Whitsunday—Minister for Environment, Conservation and Tourism) (11.35 p.m.): I move—

“(1) That this House agrees that the proposal by the Governor in Council, tabled in this House on 20 April 1988, to include within the Brisbane Forest Park, pursuant to the Brisbane Forest Park Act 1977-1981:—

- (a) all that parcel of land, being 891.167 hectares of State Forest 1355 and about 177 hectares of State Forest 809, as shown on Plan FP12, parish of Dundas, prepared by the Department of Geographic Information.
- (b) all that parcel of land, described as Reserve for Environmental Purposes R.3479, parish of Sahl, being Lot 17, parish of Sahl, as shown on Plan SL. 11108, prepared by the Department of Geographic Information and containing about 430 hectares.

be carried out.

(2) That Mr Speaker convey a copy of this Resolution to the Minister for submission to His Excellency the Governor in Council.”

It gives me great pleasure to be the Minister responsible for making Brisbane forest park not only bigger, but also better. The addition of nearly 1 500 extra hectares for

Brisbane forest park is not just a significant increase in the park's size; it provides an opportunity for further recreational development that will be well appreciated by the people of south-east Queensland and tourist visitors. It is also further confirmation of the success of the park.

There were many doubters and disbelievers in the early 1970s who said this style of management would never work. They thought it unlikely that two Government departments and a major local authority could co-operate to provide a full range of environmental-based recreation opportunities. However, the concept has worked. It has worked because the land-owners involved—the Forestry Department, National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Brisbane City Council—wanted to make it work. The achievements of Brisbane forest park in the last decade could not have been made without the whole-hearted support of these land-owners.

It is instructive for all honourable members to remember how Brisbane forest park became a reality. It started as an idea—an idea to make better recreational use of the huge public land-holdings to the north and west of Brisbane. The idea was that this magnificent land-holding should act as more than a green buffer to urban sprawl. It had the potential to be a major recreational resource. While it seemed like a good idea at the time, it certainly must now seem like a great idea to the park's estimated 1.6 million visitors. That idea first became a reality as the first park administration set up office in a single room of an inner-city building in 1978. That first handful of staff certainly faced a challenge. An area of approximately 25 000 mountainous hectares with very few recreational areas was located cheek by jowl with a capital city whose population was crying out for new facilities.

What a challenge! All at once there was a need for new picnic and barbecue areas, horse trails, camping areas, opportunities for Sunday drives, look-outs, organised recreational activities—the list goes on. Sensibly, those first staff assembled the needs according to priorities. The first priority was to build new recreational areas suitable for picnics and barbecues. The few existing areas, particularly those on Mount Glorious, were being literally loved to death by droves of visitors. The development of places such as Ironbark Gully, Lomandra and Bellbird Grove greatly eased this people pressure.

Priorities for the park these days centre on the Northbrook Parkway, the \$14m tourist drive that will link the northern end of the park at Mount Glorious with Lake Wivenhoe. When it is completed late next year, the Northbrook Parkway will give the people of south-east Queensland an unprecedented array of recreational opportunities. In one day, people will be able to combine the pleasures of bird-watching and bushwalking in the mountains, with boating activities on the lake.

It is in this context that the annexure of more land for Brisbane forest park is of great significance. The 1 500 extra hectares includes 1 068 hectares of State forest which flanks both sides of the Northbrook Parkway. This will allow park staff the opportunity to plan a full range of recreational opportunities in the Northbrook Valley. Planned developments include more picnic and barbecue areas, camping grounds, walking tracks and horse trails and a range of "Go Bush" style nature-based recreational activities.

A feature of much of this extra land is that it has been used extensively for grazing purposes in the past and, as a result, much of it is more open country than the rest of the park. Park-planners will take advantage of this openness, and I am sure that in the not-too-distant future recreation areas along the Northbrook Parkway will be well used by larger groups needing space for their activities.

The other area of land to be added to the park is 430 hectares of environmental park controlled by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. This is also fairly open country and is on the western side of the park. I am sure that as the park develops new recreation areas on its western side, Brisbane and particularly Ipswich people will appreciate this new section of the park. The park's former size of 25 000 hectares made it one of the largest recreational areas in south-east Queensland. With its increase in size to nearly 26 500 hectares with these two annexures, the Brisbane forest park is now

not only bigger than ever, but also one of Australia's premier parks will be even better than ever.

Mr EATON (Mourilyan) (11.39 p.m.): The Opposition has pleasure in approving and supporting the move by the Government to enlarge the Brisbane forest park area.

Some three or four years ago I was taken through the Brisbane forest park and the officers showed me all the things that were taking place there at that time. I imagine that the park has only improved since that time. It is good that the Government is adding to the area and, with the completion of the Wivenhoe Dam, it is a great opportunity to improve recreational facilities for all age groups in the community.

Because the Brisbane forest park is adjacent to the city of Brisbane, there is a great opportunity for people at the week-ends and in the summer-time to take advantage of these close facilities. The Government should engage in a little advertising to make people more aware of the facilities. I live in a beautiful spot in north Queensland. The locals become complacent about the area and get caught up in their usual habits during their days off. Often in north Queensland it is not until a tourist visits the area and raves about something that the local residents really take notice of it. It is taken for granted because it is right on their doorstep.

I would like to see the department make more money available, for a few more facilities such as toilets and barbecue areas in the Brisbane forest park. I spent a whole day visiting the area and stopped at a barbecue area for lunch adjacent to a freshwater stream. The only problem was that the toilet facilities were sparse. I thought at the time that families with young children visiting the area would appreciate those facilities being much closer. I mentioned it to the people involved, but even though they knew what the problems were and how to overcome them, they had to find the funds.

I do not know if the Government will implement its policy of user pays and levy a charge to enter these parks, but perhaps the Government could find a way to raise more funds. The Brisbane forest park has a diversity of rainforest, vine forest, eucalypt forests and semi-desolate areas. One might think that people would not be attracted to the area, but the people who visit the forest areas always appreciate the difference between these forests and the area that they come from. It is always interesting to see another type of forest and there is always something of interest.

I spent half a day visiting Daisy Hill, where there is a multi-use park. Previously, I had driven out that way and never knew that the park was there. I could probably be excused for that because I come from north Queensland, but I have mentioned it to members in this House and residents of Brisbane and they did not even know the park existed. The Government should embark on an advertising campaign to show that there are facilities in Brisbane for family entertainment at the week-end. For example, parents could take their children and friends out for a birthday party and have a most enjoyable day. It is great for honourable members to see the community making use of the facilities provided by this Government. If young people are not organised to burn up their energy, they will organise themselves. They will then be criticised about the terrible things they do. By making these facilities available the Government will encourage young people to participate in outdoor activities. The Government is failing if it does not provide these facilities.

Tonight the Opposition is pleased that the Government is including an area of State forest in the Brisbane forest park. If in the future the Minister can find the funds, this will be a great asset to Brisbane and south-east Queensland.

Hon. W. D. LICKISS (Moggill) (11.45 p.m.): The Liberal Party is delighted to see this treatment of the Brisbane forest park. It is well known in this place that the Brisbane forest park was originally a Liberal Party initiative. We submitted that this would be a regional scheme that would benefit not only Brisbane but also all the surrounding local authority areas.

When the park was first mooted it was to encompass an area in excess of 33 000 acres. Much of the Brisbane forest park came within the electorate of Mount Coot-tha,

which was then my electorate. I think it is fair to say that never in our wildest dreams did we think that the park would extend to cover the area now proposed. We are delighted by the way in which successive Ministers and Governments have expanded the concept of the Brisbane forest park. The way in which the park has been developed and the way in which it can be managed so that it can be user-friendly in a multidisciplinary way is a credit to those responsible.

I congratulate the Minister on what is another forward move in the further development of the Brisbane forest park. In years to come, generations yet unborn will be pleased that there was a move to preserve in its natural state land so very close to Brisbane. The only other place that I know of where an attempt has been made to retain natural terrain and vegetation close to a city is in Perth. The park over there is a wonderful asset to that city. People who have come over from Perth and who have visited the Brisbane forest park freely admit that this Queensland development has outshone their own. The Brisbane forest park is something of which we as Queenslanders can all be proud. I congratulate the Minister on this further extension and development of the park.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (11.47 p.m.): I support the motion before the House. As one of the Government metropolitan members who wish to see the greatest possible recreational facilities for the people of Brisbane, I take a keen personal interest in the development of the Brisbane forest park. I know that my parliamentary colleague the member for Mount Gravatt and I share a similar interest in the forest park on our side of town, that is, the Toohey forest park.

It certainly was a far-sighted move in December last year, when the Premier assumed control of the State, to place the Brisbane Forest Park Authority under the Environment, Conservation and Tourism portfolio. The grouping of the State's environmental, conservation, recreation and tourism bodies under one portfolio is certainly a logical step. I know that the time I spent on the Minister's tourism committee up till that time allowed me to understand that that was one of the key issues that he was keen to promote, that is, a closer association between Government responsibility for the environment, conservation, recreation and tourism.

The Brisbane forest park has a great track record and is known Australiawide for its high achievements, innovation and professionalism. We are certainly on the threshold of a very exciting and challenging time in the management of recreation and tourism in this State. Queensland is undoubtedly the most popular tourist destination in the nation; its tremendous natural resources and beauty spots cannot be matched anywhere else in the nation. It is certainly one of the few spots in the world to have such a concentration of natural resources and beauty spots.

Queensland has approximately 8 million hectares of State forests and national parks. That is a proud record that the Government is keen to promote. Many of the areas are suited to recreational use, which can be done without any damage to the environment. To illustrate this point, I direct the attention of honourable members to the success of the Brisbane forest park in managing its 1.6 million visitors each year. I trust that most honourable members have taken the opportunity to visit the park. I am sure they would agree that the standard of the facilities, the maintenance and the protection of resources are given the highest priority. If this concept and that of the Fraser Island Recreation Authority can be adopted in other places throughout the State, Queensland will once again demonstrate its unquestioned ability to take the initiative and develop the pioneering spirit that has led this nation in this field of endeavour.

The Brisbane forest park concept of multi-tenure recreation management is about, firstly, making the best use of publicly owned land, rather than locking it up and barring people from enjoying the natural beauty; secondly, co-ordinating the directions and development of recreation so as to avoid duplication and haphazard effort; and, thirdly, allowing recreation and tourism use to be professionally organised by an agency that has within it specialist knowledge and extensive practical experience.

The park concept also embodies the principle that lands must be conserved. The onus is therefore on the authority to ensure that sensible environmental management is adopted. The Brisbane forest park has adopted a user-friendly approach to its management. When they visit the park all honourable members will appreciate that it is not one of those places with a proliferation of signs saying what they can and cannot do. Through good design, high standards of maintenance and a high-profile public information program, the authority has managed to keep vandalism to a minimum and yet allowed maximum freedom of use for the public when they visit. That is in marked contrast to many similar areas that can be visited in other parts of this nation.

To date the Brisbane forest park has been enormously successful in its operations. Since its inception, an estimated 14 million visitors have enjoyed its facilities. The State Government has invested just below \$12m of tax-payers' funds in the development and management of facilities and services. In the past five years the authority has constructed six major recreation areas together with numerous walking tracks, improved visitor facilities and interpretive programs.

The Brisbane Forest Park Authority has an Australiawide reputation for its innovative and professional approach to recreation management and should be commended by all honourable members in this House. The authority has been successful in obtaining several grants and awards in recognition of its contribution to the profession.

The Queensland Government can be extremely proud of the Brisbane forest park. I know all honourable members share that pride. The concept is certainly unique in Australia and it has proved itself to be highly successful. The addition of some 1 500 hectares to the Brisbane forest park is not just a significant boost to its area; it is proof positive that the State Government is intent on developing this great concept even further.

It gives me great pleasure to support the motion before the House.

Hon. G. H. MUNTZ (Whitsunday—Minister for Environment, Conservation and Tourism) (11.52 p.m.), in reply: The Brisbane Forest Park Authority and the Fraser Island Recreation Authority are two of the success stories of the Queensland State Government. The Recreation Areas Management Bill, which I presented to the House last night, mirrors existing legislation that covers both Fraser Island and the Brisbane forest park. The board that now administers Fraser Island will be responsible for administering new recreation areas over such places as, I suggest, Moreton Island and the Toohey forest park.

I look forward to the co-operation and the support of all land-owners for the concept which the Government intends to establish for the people of Brisbane and the people in the major urban populated areas of Queensland. It will give families and young people the opportunity to take part in recreational pursuits in those very valuable areas because we will be combining the resources and the potential of national parks and forestry reserves and other Crown land or local authority held land. That can only be achieved with their co-operation and support.

This is a very positive measure. All honourable members have expressed their support for the addition to the Brisbane forest park and have acknowledged the success of that legislation. Of course, the Fraser Island legislation is another typical example of what can be achieved with co-operation in the furtherance and improvement of the management concept overall.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.55 p.m.