

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 9 AUGUST 1989

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Mr SPEAKER (Hon. K. R. Lingard, Fassifern) read prayers and took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Proposed Port Livistona Resort and Marina Complex on South Stradbroke Island

From **Mr Ahern** (4 757 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will request Cabinet to withdraw endorsement of the proposed Port Livistona resort and marina complex on South Stradbroke Island and proclaim the area an environmental park.

Capital Punishment

From **Mrs Gamin** (455 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will not allow capital punishment but legislate so that those convicted of brutal and vicious murders are never released.

Aerial Ambulance Service in Wide Bay/Burnett Region

From **Mr Campbell** (104 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure the continuation and support of the 24-hour aerial ambulance service in the Wide Bay/Burnett region.

Infrastructure Agreement between QEC and Fitzroy Shire Council

From **Mr Vaughan** (350 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take action to urgently arrange for a revised infrastructure agreement between QEC and the Fitzroy Shire Council.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Raine Island Corporation for the year ended 30 June 1988

Registrar of Co-operative and other Societies for the year ended 30 June 1988

Registrar of Commercial Acts on the Administration of the Credit Societies Act 1986 for the year ended 30 June 1988.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Proclamations under—

Fauna Conservation Act and Another Act Amendment Act 1989

Forestry Act 1959-1987

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984

Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act Amendment Act 1989

Queensland University of Technology Act 1988

Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Act 1989

Orders in Council under—

Explosives Act 1952-1981

Gas Act 1965-1988
Mines Regulation Act 1964-1989
Fauna Conservation Act 1974-1989
Forestry Act 1959-1987
Land Act 1962-1988
National Parks and Wildlife Act 1975-1984
Recreation Areas Management Act 1988
Credit Act 1987
Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971-1988
Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958-1974
The Supreme Court Act of 1921
Liquor Act 1912-1988
Building Societies Act 1985-1987
Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act 1931-1981
State Securities Registration Act 1925-1981
Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950-1989
City of Brisbane Town Planning Act 1964-1988
Grammar Schools Act 1975-1984 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1989
University of Queensland Act 1965-1987 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1989
Association (Natural Disaster Relief) Act 1976

Regulations under—

Gas Act 1965-1988
Mining (Fossicking) Act 1985
Rural Lands Protection Act 1985-1988
Fauna Conservation Act 1974-1989
Recreation Areas Management Act 1988
Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act 1962-1989
Elections Act 1983-1985
Mortgage Brokers Act 1987
Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958-1974
Partnership (Limited Liability) Act 1988
Land Sales Act 1984-1985
Status of Children Act 1978-1988
Crown Proceedings Act 1980
Peace and Good Behaviour Act 1982
Public Trustee Act 1978-1988
Residential Tenancies Act 1975
Funeral Benefit Business Act 1982
Associations Incorporation Act 1981-1988
Corrective Services Act 1988
Art Unions and Amusements Act 1976-1988
Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971-1988

Bills of Sale and Other Instruments Act 1955-1986
 Building Societies Act 1985-1987
 The Cash Orders Regulations Acts, 1946 to 1959
 Collections Act 1966-1988
 Co-operative and Other Societies Act 1967-1986
 Credit Societies Act 1986
 Friendly Societies Act 1913-1986
 Invasion of Privacy Act 1971-1988
 Justices of the Peace Act 1975
 Liquor Act 1912-1988
 Mortgages (Secondary Market) Act 1984-1985
 Motor Vehicles Securities Act 1986
 Recording of Evidence Act 1962-1988
 Business Names Act 1962-1979
 Local Government (Queen Street Mall) Act 1981-1987
 Local Government Act 1936-1988
 Racing and Betting Act 1980-1988
 Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Act 1989

By-laws under—

Recreation Areas Management Act 1988
 Education (Senior Secondary School Studies) Act 1988

Statutes under—

University of Queensland Act 1965-1987
 Griffith University Act 1971-1987
 James Cook University of North Queensland Act 1970-1987
 Queensland University of Technology Act 1988

Rules under—

Coroners Act 1958-1988

Ordinances under—

City of Brisbane Act 1924-1987

Reports—

Annual Report of the Director of Prosecutions for the year ended 31 December 1988
 Interim Report by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal pursuant to the Judges Salaries and Pensions Act 1967-1989
 Mediator of the Retail Shop Leases Act for the year ended 30 June 1989
 Retail Shop Lease Tribunal for the year ended 30 June 1989
 Willows Paceway for the year ended 30 June 1988
 Board of Teacher Education for the year ended 31 December 1988
 Brisbane Girls' Grammar School for the year ended 31 December 1988
 Brisbane College of Advanced Education for the year ended 31 December 1988
 Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education for the year ended 31 December 1988
 Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education for the year ended 31 December 1988

Gold Coast College of Advanced Education for the year ended 31 December 1988

Ipswich Girls' Grammar School for the year ended 31 December 1988

Rockhampton Grammar School for the year ended 31 December 1988

Toowoomba Grammar School for the year ended 31 December 1988

Townsville Grammar School for the year ended 31 December 1988

University of Queensland for the year ended 31 December 1988.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Malpractices and Corruption within Trade Union Movement

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Premier and Treasurer and Minister for State Development and the Arts) (2.41 p.m.), by leave: At the outset, I apologise for the length of this statement, but it relates to a matter of utmost gravity.

Today I rise to present to Parliament details of corruption, fraud, ballot-rigging, and stealing or misuse of members' funds in the trade union movement. I will detail a series of events which have occurred in several trade unions, some of which have direct links with the Australian Labor Party in this State. And I will outline to the House the action which this Government will take to ensure the guilty parties in these incidents will not go unpunished. I will indicate how we intend to prevent such activities occurring in the future and what moves we intend to make in terms of better protecting the interests of members in trade unions in Queensland in the future.

For years there has been a hand-in-hand arrangement between the trade union movement and the Labor Party in Queensland. Or perhaps that should be termed a hand-in-pocket relationship, because there is no doubt that a great amount of money is transferred from the pay packets of workers into the coffers of the Labor Party via the trade union movement. And there is also every possibility that a hefty slice of that pay packet bonanza has ended up in the hands of the advertising agency which has produced all of those glossy TV advertisements for Wayne Goss.

So I hope that, when the facts are laid out on illegal activities in the trade union movement, the Labor Party in this State will be as eager to demand inquiries, royal commissions and prosecutions as it has been with other matters in recent times. And I hope that it adopts this attitude even in the face of the possibility that such investigations could reach deep into the heart of the Labor Party and its many factional groups.

Let me put forward some of the information that has come together in recent months. On 28 July 1989 Mr Justice Pincus, sitting in the industrial division of the Federal Court in Brisbane, dismissed an application made on behalf of Colin Stanley Hardie. Mr Hardie held the position of Queensland branch assistant secretary and Queensland branch representative on the Federal council of the Federated Liquor and Allied Industries Employees Union. On 15 March 1989 Hardie was convicted by the Full Court of the Federal Court of five offences under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904, relating to the obtaining of a ballot-paper without lawful authority or excuse in connection with an election for office in a union in 1986.

The application before Mr Justice Pincus was one seeking leave to hold office under sections 229 and 230 of the Industrial Relations Act 1988. Mr Justice Pincus stated that, of the many people who gave evidence as to Hardie's character, some of the persons did not seem to have a very detailed knowledge of the applicant, an example given by His Honour being Mr C. Sciacca, a member of the House of Representatives for the ALP. His Honour said that the applicant's case was that he obtained the ballot-papers without lawful authority, but in order to preserve the election from fraudulent voting organised by employers. He concluded that he believed that Hardie did not have

possession of the papers for that reason but to use them for fraudulent voting in favour of himself and the State secretary, Mr Elton. His Honour said—

“I reject the applicant’s account of the circumstances.”

Further, His Honour considered the circumstances aggravated by the fact that Hardie had previously been elected to office with the assistance of votes he knew to be fraudulent, and in defiance of warnings from the Australian Electoral Commission. What is more, Hardie, in His Honour’s opinion, swore before the court a false account of the circumstances of the case.

Members will recall the so-called “joke” in the Fitzgerald inquiry. Well, apparently in trade union elections there is the “system”. Hardie gave evidence to the effect that ever since he was involved in the union, a “system” of election-rigging was widespread.

Hardie told of an election in 1982 in which he actually observed electoral rigging occurring, by which he acquired knowledge of the “system”. The “system” was used in Hardie’s favour in 1983, when he stood for the position of branch representative to the Federal council of the union. As His Honour put it, “He accepted nomination knowing that he was to be the beneficiary of . . . fraudulent votes.” Hardie gave evidence to the effect that he knew the “system” would help him. His Honour accepted further evidence which detailed fraudulent electoral practices in a 1985 election as well.

In regard to the 1986 election, Mr Justice Pincus concluded that, despite the efforts of the Australian Electoral Commission, there was extensive fraudulent voting. That is at page 7 of the Pincus judgment. He also concluded that another union official, Mr H. G. Linacre, prepared lists of employers with coloured highlighting, which were given to union officials. Honourable members would be aware of Mr Linacre’s membership of the Labor Party and his role as a delegate to national ALP conferences. His Honour’s account of this was that the highlighting of the employers, that is the hotels, was to identify to union officials where it would be easy to get ballot-papers. That appears at pages 13 and 14.

As regards Mr Elton, the State secretary—His Honour regarded it as incomprehensible that he acquiesced when he knew that a rort was occurring. I have heard that word before. That appears at page 15. Further, His Honour found that Mr Elton fraudulently altered the minutes of a branch meeting so as to make a position junior to his own an honorary one rather than a salaried one. That appears at pages 15 and 16.

His Honour considered that the legislation in such cases was designed to protect the public. That appears at page 20. The application was dismissed, and Hardie is unable to hold office within the union for a period of five years. His Honour stressed the importance of clean and honest elections in the union system.

Currently there is a brawl in the powerful Australian Workers Union involving Mr Errol Hodder—that power-broker and vice-president of the ALP who is also known to be the ventriloquist to Wayne Goss’s dummy. Mr Hodder was the union tough guy who in 1987 stood on a platform before a crowd of 2 000 members and introduced Wayne Goss as the next Premier of Queensland. This was, of course, at a time when the Labor Party leader in this State was the member for Sandgate.

Hodder goes down as one of the greats of the faceless men in the Labor movement, and so he should, bearing in mind that he lives in a \$400,000 luxury home in Sydney at union expense but is apparently still on the electoral roll in Queensland. He is currently embroiled in an unsavoury court action involving the AWU secretary, Mr Bill Ludwig. Hodder claims that Ludwig’s election was invalid and raises concerns about payments to creditors of the union. His Honour Mr Justice Spender said of Hodder—

“Mr Hodder is not being concerned for the welfare of his workers, his members, but with promoting an ulterior consideration.”

Honourable members know full well that the consideration is the welfare of ALP members of a certain faction which is closely aligned with Wayne Goss.

Then we have the Federated Clerks Union, Queensland Branch, which has been in constant turmoil since 1982. The national office is run by a National Civic Council faction, which used to hold sway in all the States. Over the past decade the South Australian, Victorian and Queensland branches have fallen into the hands of other factions. When Callaghan's reform group won power in the central and southern Queensland office it sacked Brophy, the NCC man, from his position as union organiser. The national executive has since provided more than \$750,000 to fund an office for Brophy. Callaghan alleges that Brophy, who holds no position in the union, has used these resources to disrupt the running of the union.

Four union elections have been held in six years. The March 1988 election was ordered by the Federal Court after it found that the branch's 1985 election was invalid because 80 per cent of the union membership was not fully financial. All elections have been plagued by allegations of ballot-rigging and misuse of funds.

Finally, we have the most unedifying saga of the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association of Australasia, Queensland Branch, which became the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Union of Employees, Queensland, on 28 July. That involves very serious allegations and counter-allegations involving the Queensland branch president, Mr Barry Gannon, by the branch secretary, Mr K. W. Goodhew. Mr Goodhew, of course, is a vice-president of the Labor Party in Queensland and another supporter of Wayne Goss. Last night on television some honourable members may have witnessed Mr Goodhew literally being thrown out of his office by former mates from the Federal section of the union, and I understand that there has been some destruction of evidence in that process.

I will not attempt to sum up the situation. Rather, I intend to leave it in the words of Mr Goodhew, who in a recent letter to members of the branch executive and others indicated that Mr Gannon's behaviour was so serious that he believed it would be referred—and these are Mr Goodhew's words—"to the commission that will be set up in this State to follow on from the Fitzgerald inquiry". I will table this correspondence at the end of my ministerial statement.

Mr Goodhew continues—

"The National Party Government in Queensland is under tremendous pressure from the Fitzgerald inquiry reports and the allegations surrounding Vasta and Pratt and they would like nothing more than to give us a flogging, particularly over the dishonesty of a union official in thieving from its members. If Mr Gannon is still president of the union when he is charged with stealing—after having admitted to everybody that he is guilty—well, that would be nothing short of a disaster for our union.

For reasons that totally escape me you are unable to act and cut out this cancer.

How you can expect our members to suffer the privations of industrial action when the president of the union, who gets paid whether the members strike or not, is feather bedding his own position with membership funds is totally beyond me.

In addition, the F.E.D.F.A. will be attacked by every other union in Queensland. The AWU will publicise this whole incident to their greatest advantage."

For the benefit of honourable members, I will table copies of various letters. They comprise a shocking chain of allegations of corruption and misuse of funds, which must cause great alarm in the ranks of the decent, honest members of that union. Even more shocking is the allegation made as recently as last Friday that up to \$600,000 had to be accounted for in the FEDFU finances, which are currently undergoing a special audit. Some of the evidence may well have been destroyed yesterday.

The bottom line on these issues is that the trade union movement in Queensland appears to be rife with malpractice. The time has come for some accountability in this sector of society. The time has come for a close look at the system of rigged elections and the system of rorts. We also must demand an answer to the question of how much

orted money, if any, is finding its way into the coffers of the ALP machine. In view of these serious allegations, some of which have already been fully proved, I believe that the Queensland Government would be remiss if it did not take the most serious action. Accordingly, I have passed on to the Minister for Police copies of letters that have come into my possession with regard to the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association. I understand that these matters and other matters relating to the other unions to which I have referred will also be subjected to a proper investigation.

Quite frankly, it is a disgrace that the ALP in Queensland, which is inextricably linked with these unions, has not made any attempt to tackle the corruption that is obviously rife. The Queensland Government is in the process of making things right in this State, and that includes the ALP-dominated trade union movement.

I seek leave to table the documents.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Steam-cleaning of Refrigerated Containers by Waterside Workers Federation

Hon. D. McC. NEAL (Balonne—Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services) (2.55 p.m.), by leave: I would like to inform the House that, following approaches from port-users, the State's waterfront reform task force has identified a costly and unnecessary work practice occurring in Brisbane. The task force has been advised that the Waterside Workers Federation has demanded and been granted the work of steam-cleaning inbound refrigerated containers generally used for meat exports from Brisbane. This is the only Australian port in which that occurs.

The State Government, through the Premier and myself at a seminar conducted by the task force on 26 July, has publicly voiced support for the task force to identify specific problems on our waterfront and to recommend strategies to overcome them. Shipping containers for the export of Australian meat and other refrigerated products are generally imported empty and are cleaned prior to shipment to Australia. The Waterside Workers Federation Queensland Division then does the work of unnecessarily steam-cleaning the inbound containers at the Fisherman Islands terminals. To satisfy export standards, these containers are then usually steam-cleaned a second time at the meatworks prior to the actual loading of meat for export.

This Waterside Workers Federation practice is a demonstrably useless and redundant task imposed on port-users to employ Waterside Workers Federation members unnecessarily. On quarantine grounds, there is no justification for this work practice. The Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy requires that imported containers are cleaned and free of soil. All inbound empty containers are inspected by Queensland primary industry plant quarantine inspectors as agents for the Commonwealth and, if the containers are clean and soil free, they are released from quarantine.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I bring to your attention the fact that in his speech last night the Government Whip read this. The Minister is now reading the same speech. That is tedious repetition.

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

Mr NEAL: Generally, while only 1 to 2 per cent of all imported empty containers are required by quarantine inspectors to be cleaned prior to being released from the Fisherman Islands terminals, the shipping lines and stevedores have been forced to accept Waterside Workers Federation demands that all inbound empty reefer containers be washed at the terminals by Waterside Workers Federation labour. Shipping lines should have the freedom to choose the most cost-effective arrangements for cleaning their containers. This is a ridiculous work practice that has meant unnecessary costs

being passed along the line and ultimately ends with beef-producers receiving less for their stock.

This particular work practice has been estimated to cost \$700,000 per year and is contributing to inefficiencies on the waterfront that are costing the Queensland economy more than \$100m each year. This is yet another reason for the immediate implementation by the Federal Government of the Inter-State Commission report recommendations for reforms on the waterfront. There will never be a better opportunity to get some sanity into waterfront work practices.

I will be highlighting this case and reinforcing the State Government's commitment to speeding up the reform process at a special meeting of the Australian Transport Advisory Council in Melbourne on Friday. The Inter-State Commission recommendations were handed down five months ago, and the Federal Government is losing the momentum for reform that was generated. As a result, I have grave fears that the Federal Government will bow to union pressure and stop far short of what is required to curb the union rorts and inefficient work practices that are slowly strangling our ports.

Mr R. J. GIBBS (Wolston) (2.59 p.m.): Mr Speaker, I move—

“That the Premier and the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services be further heard.”

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Federal Airports Corporation

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Minister for Industry, Small Business, Technology and Tourism) (3 p.m.), by leave: I refer to Federal Airports Corporation plans to charge access fees for second-tier car-rental firms to use FAC-managed airports. That is the latest outrage that is being perpetrated on the Queensland tourism industry by the ALP-controlled FAC. Essentially, the FAC has been sanctioned by the ALP to undertake practices of legal extortion against the tourism industry. Not only is the FAC damaging tourism nationwide, but its ideas of fair trading also leave a lot to be desired.

As at 1 August the FAC is charging second-tier car-rental companies—that is, those companies that are unsuccessful in winning an on-airport contract but which still wish to operate at airports—an annual licence fee starting at \$1,000 depending on the airport from which the company wishes to operate. The FAC intends to charge operators for the privilege of not having airport facilities.

A \$5 transaction fee will be charged every time a rental car is delivered to the airport to collect a client and when a client drops the car at the airport at the end of his contract. In addition, the FAC has told the second-tier companies that they must pay for each additional car-parking space that is required at the airport. A \$1,000 charge per space has been nominated for Coolangatta Airport.

Although the second-tier car-rental companies were given that ultimatum by the FAC on 21 July, the corporation has yet to produce the demands in writing or to designate the area where second-tier rental cars will be parked. However, after the first year, the right to operate at the airport will be put up for tender, even for those second-tier operators who are presently not operating out of the terminal buildings. The FAC's idea of calling for tenders leaves a lot to be desired. National companies such as Hertz, Avis and Budget are told by the corporation how much to tender.

At meetings in Coolangatta on 21 and 24 July, the FAC manager of commercial policy, Brian Maxwell, told second-tier operators that the FAC also had the right to inspect operators' books. Judging from FAC actions in other States, particularly South Australia and Tasmania, the subject of access fees is expected to spread to other sections of the Queensland transport industry that routinely do business at airports.

This Government does not want or need that situation to arise in Queensland. It is trying to build a tourism industry, not to nibble away at it by aggravating tourists with more added-on costs, as is the policy of the Labor Party's FAC—the Uncle Scrooge of Australian tourism.

In South Australia, tourism and transport industry outrage has worked against instituting access fees.

Mr Warburton: You tax hire-car companies yourself.

Mr BORBIDGE: I challenge honourable members opposite: do they support access fees to airports? From their comments it would appear that they do.

In a letter dated 20 December 1988 to the South Australian Premier, John Bannon, the general manager of the Adelaide Airport, Jack Moffatt, outlined his proposal for a \$1 pick-up fee per taxi. However, after a huge backlash from the transport and tourism industries, the FAC denied that any such levy had been intended. In an undated media release that was issued by the FAC, Mr Moffatt gave his unequivocal assurance that no such charge would be introduced in the foreseeable future.

The Taxi Council of Queensland, the Bus and Coach Association and the Private Hire Car Association have all expressed dismay at likely FAC approaches in Queensland. They are bully-boy tactics. The Federal Airports Corporation has never produced documentation to show how or if its massive profits are ploughed back into airport buildings or maintenance. The corporation certainly has not made any moves in Brisbane to provide a better airport. For at least another four or five years—judging by the Federal Government's forward planning—Queenslanders will still have to use that tin shed in a cow paddock that serves as an international terminal.

If the FAC cannot run airports without coming up with levies, fees and taxes that will ultimately be passed on to the community at large, I suggest that the Federal Government hand the business of running airports over to private enterprise.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Noosa North Shore Development

Hon. J. H. RANDELL (Mirani—Minister for Local Government and Racing) (3.05 p.m.), by leave: I am sure that honourable members will be aware of the many emotionally charged and, at times, misguided public statements that have been made about a proposed tourist development in the Noosa north shore area.

Recently, the television program *60 Minutes* dealt with this matter in its own fashion. Once again, this morning's *Courier-Mail* carried a statement on the proposal. I must say that, last Sunday evening, *60 Minutes* could not be accused of having discovered the wheel in the segment about this matter.

During the course of that interview I informed the *60 Minutes* reporter that it was the program's duty to hand over to police any material that it had in its possession about the allegations. As far as I am aware, it has so far failed to do so. I also offered to take that material and forward it to the Police Department. That offer was not taken up and was not reported on that program.

I will not attempt to waste the time of the House by spelling out in detail all of the facts leading to the current stage of the development of the land in question. The relevant facts are already on the public record. The current excitement seems to have been generated by the perception in some people's minds as to the personal background of individuals who are involved in the company to which the current approval has been granted subject to certain council conditions. That approval is currently before the Local Government Court on appeal from the Noosa Shire Council's decision.

The honourable member for Bundaberg seems to be obsessed with this issue, leading to his comments yesterday in this Chamber during the Matters of Public Interest debate. He will probably have more things to worry about in the near future.

It should be obvious to those who are making such forceful public statements about this matter that, so far as my responsibilities as Minister for Local Government and Racing are concerned—particularly in relation to the processing of rezoning applications—I have no control over those aspects and am convinced that it is right and proper that that should be the case.

The statements that are being made illustrate a complete ignorance of the philosophy of town-planning as recognised in the town-planning laws of this State. I should not have to do so, but for the benefit of Mr Campbell and other honourable members opposite I will explain the situation slowly so that they will get it through their heads.

In very broad terms, a town-planning scheme governs the use and development of the land in a particular area and the general concept is that some uses may be permitted as of right, some are subject to the consent of the local authority after advertising and objection and appeal processes and others require rezoning procedures which are also subject to those processes.

In accordance with the relevant law, all of these procedures are directed at determining whether a proposal up for consideration is an appropriate use of the land in question and this is the basis on which consent applications or rezoning applications have to be considered and finally determined at whatever level.

Mr Burns: As long as they lay the brown paper bag on the table.

Mr RANDELL: If the member for Lytton listens he might learn something. He might have a few problems in the days ahead.

Mr D'Arcy: The system that you operate under is wrong.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member for Woodridge might listen and learn, too.

There is no requirement under current law for a consideration of the personal background of an applicant to be taken into account when considering a proposal for the use and development of land. That is the law in this State, and we act under the law.

Mr D'Arcy: That is the law of the State organised by him. He presides over a corrupt system.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member should listen to this.

I deal with about 1 500 rezoning applications a year. Is it suggested that my department should examine the background of every person involved in those 1 500 applications? To do that I would need a staff as large as Australia's combined armed forces.

I would ask Mr Campbell and others who have questioned these procedures to ponder what would be the position in the case of, for example, a rezoning application approved for what might be termed an acceptable applicant and immediately on sold to a person or company which might be considered, in some quarters, to be unacceptable. What can I do about it?

Mr R. J. Gibbs: If Russo was here this would never happen. He would have taken a fistful of dollars and it would have been fixed up.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member is a comedian. From what has been said earlier, we might find out whether he has his nose in the trough.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister!

Mr RANDELL: Personally, I would not want to be any part of that process.

Finally, I might add, for the benefit of honourable members, that there is much talk about the Noosa North Shore rezoning having been approved. It has not been approved. Mr Campbell should know that. Quite simply, it is far from being approved. It is seized by the court and will remain so until the appeal is heard and determined. It is only after a determination is made by the court that the application will be submitted to the Local Government Department and I can assure this Chamber that when or if this occurs it will be determined on its town-planning merits and nothing else.

Mr D'Arcy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr D'Arcy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Woodridge under Standing Order 123A.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Government Action on Toxic Waste at Kingston

Hon. T. R. COOPER (Roma—Minister for Police and Minister for Emergency Services and Administrative Services) (3.11 p.m.), by leave: My ministerial statement refers to the Government's action on the Kingston toxic waste issue. Owing to its length, I seek leave of the House to table my statement and have it incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Whereupon the honourable member laid on the table the following document—

I wish to place on record the Government's appreciation of the efforts of the people of Kingston in bringing this serious problem to public attention, and in co-operating with the Kingston Task Force, the way they have done.

We believe it was the first incident of its kind in Australia. We now have the opportunity to learn ourselves and to show other State Governments and local authorities how the matter should best be handled.

The Government has set up the Kingston Task Force and called on overseas experts to ensure that the best solutions are found for all problems identified. It is appreciated that councils don't generally have the expertise to handle such complex matters.

It is a serious concern of the Government that outside interests with their own agendas are now using this problem in one small part of a pleasant suburb to stigmatise the entire area, purely for sensationalism and to serve their own ends. There appears to be a total disregard of the well-being of residents, in these actions.

The problem at Kingston is hazardous rather than toxic. This is an important difference that seems to escape some so-called experts who are making unfounded statements.

On a world scale of 1 to 10, the acid sludge pit has been rated as a 5 due to the acid content. Remove the acid, using basic chemistry, and the material is rated more properly as a 1. A normal suburban rubbish tip is usually rated as a 2.

Background information

Considerable amounts of mining and industrial wastes occur at three locations in the Kingston area.

The site with the most obvious signs of contamination is on Diamond Street, where acid sludge from oil reprocessing was dumped between 1955 and 1967. This waste was to have been removed from the acid sludge pit before residential development commenced, but this clean-up was evidently not complete as black sludge began to ooze to the surface in about 1970.

The third possible source of contamination is the main open cut of the former gold mine which was used as a municipal rubbish dump from 1968 to 1971. Local residents have reported the dumping of hazardous or toxic substances in this open cut. Evidence of these substances has not been found in water samples from within the rubbish dump nor in groundwater samples from surrounding boreholes.

Local residents fought hard for several years to have the problem recognised as increasing amounts of black sludge appeared on the surface. In the early stages the media assisted in having the problem recognised by Logan City Council who brought it to the attention of the State Department of Health.

More recently, commercial and political interests have sought to sensationalise the problem through the media. This has caused extreme distress and hardship to the residents of Kingston who feel stigmatised. They are suffering as a result of the adverse effects this publicity is having on their property values.

Scientific reports on the problem

A report by the Department of Health instigated by resident's complaints, led to the commissioning of the first scientific investigation. Sinclair Knight and Partners was commissioned by Logan City Council in March 1987 to investigate the nature of the contamination at Diamond Street and to recommend remedial activities.

Sinclair Knight and Partners then undertook some investigations, made brief interim reports in May 1987 to council. These identified that the site would have to be excavated to remove and treat the material.

Logan City Council then proceeded to purchase the affected properties and the Sinclair Knight and Partners investigation was suspended by Logan City Council while this was happening.

In May 1987 a local resident reported confidentially to council that he believed that drums of PCB material had been dumped at the Mt. Taylor tip. An approach was to be made to the then Health Minister to investigate the matter further.

Council requested Sinclair Knight at that stage to confine further works in the study to Diamond Street and to leave the matter of PCB'S dumping for State Government's consideration.

In September 1987 Sinclair Knight recommended detailed site investigations to determine the extent of acid sludge contamination and to identify a clean-up technique and estimate of costs.

The report on these investigations was presented to the council in December 1987. It included recommendations for detailed design investigations under works programme and scheduled the clean-up for completion by mid 1988.

This is the stage where Logan City Council approached the State Government for funding to complete the remedial works. The State Government being aware of the possibility of wider contamination determined that further investigation was needed before a decision on the extent of financial assistance was made. Sinclair Knight and Partners were subsequently commissioned by the Premier's Department in May 1988 to undertake an initial hydrogeological investigation of the Mt. Taylor area and to undertake one set of groundwater sampling so that a determination could be made as to the need of further investigatory work. In August 1988 a brief was extended to specifically investigate one incident of cyanide contamination and one pocket of acid sludge.

The report on all those matters was released in January 1989.

Work of the Kingston Task Force

The Kingston Task Force was formed on 31 January 1989 to pursue four areas of activity. These were:—

- medical assessment of residents;
- counselling services for concerned residents;
- continued scientific testing to assess the extent of contamination from all possible sources of contamination; and
- finalisation of clean-up measures.

The task force consisted of specialists from many departments including Premier's, Health, Mines and Energy, Water Resources, Emergency and Administrative Services, Environment and Conservation, and Treasury. Numerous external consultants were also involved including Sinclair Knight and Partners (who had the task of continuing the scientific investigations), University of Queensland, Environmental Toxicology International Inc., and Dr. Sally Leivesley. Logan City Council was also a member of the task force.

Extensive testing of water, air and soil in the area has refined that state of knowledge of the contaminants that are in the acid sludge pit and the tailings dam. The testing has also

established the extent to which chemicals are actually being transferred to the groundwater, soil, surface water and air from these sites and the main open cut.

This information has been considered by American experts in the field of public health. They have assessed all the physical and biological pathways through which people in Kingston could be exposed to each chemical contaminant. They have concluded that the acid sludge pit is not a health concern for people currently residing in Kingston.

The major hazard in the sludge is acid which can be completely neutralised with lime. The minor contaminants can be immobilised successfully with kiln dust. The resulting treated material is a solid which looks like concrete. Laboratory testing of the treated material shows that it can be safely stored in a suitable landfill.

Further information is being collected on possible contamination from the tailings dam and the main open cut, but preliminary results do not indicate any cause for concern.

Decisions by Logan City Council

Since the June report of the Kingston Task Force there has been no decision by Logan City Council to remove the waste material in Diamond Street.

The Kingston Task Force is committed to ensure the sludge pit is cleaned up as a matter of urgency. Since April the task force has been in a position to commence the process of letting contracts to excavate, neutralise and remove the treated waste.

This means that by August the whole situation should have been finished and we should now be rehabilitating the area by turning it into a park, community centre or other options as decided by the Logan City Council.

The Kingston Task Force views the situation as one of urgency and the Government has made a commitment to assist the local people to get rid of a sludge pit which is in the middle of an urban area.

The Kingston Task Force has had discussions with the council and arranged for further technical discussion with Dr. Kathryn Kelly who has experience in the technical management of similar incidents in the United States.

The Premier's Department has offered the council loan funds and interest relief to implement a council suggestion that the Queens Road sewage treatment plant be closed and alternative sewage treatment arrangements made without causing increases in rates. This would allow the Queens Road Site to be used for permanent storage of treated Diamond Street waste.

The Council has stated that there will be no decision until further advice is available to them from Griffith University in a couple of month's time, and also that it is not prepared to relocate the treated material to any site in Logan City as it views the disposal as a responsibility of the State Government. It is however giving consideration to the Government's offer.

Discussion with the Vice-Chancellor of Griffith University on the management of this incident have led to a full acceptance by the university and the task force of a future close working relationship where every effort will be made to assist people in Kingston.

There is no part of the Griffith University research which stands in the way of the Logan City Council making a decision immediately.

Logan City Council decided to engage Griffith University to review these two reports by Sinclair Knight and Partners.

This review was provided to the council in June 1989 who did not accept it, because it was alleged to be incomplete.

In April 1989 the scientific investigation of remedial works committee at Logan City Council made a recommendation that the Diamond Street works be commenced on the basis of the programme outlined by Sinclair Knight and Partners and that the Browns Plains landfill was technically and environmentally suitable for the disposal of the material after treatment at Diamond Street. The recommendations for the treatment method, treatment on site and disposal of the treated material at the Browns Plains landfill were all totally supported by the project leader Mr. John Ware and the environmental chemist Mr. Greg Millar from the Griffith University Institute of Applied Environmental Research who were present at this meeting.

Logan City Council upon receipt of the recommendation with the casting vote of the Mayor, Alderman Fred Huntress, rejected the Browns Plains landfill as a disposal site. However, the council accepted the recommended treatment process and accepted treating the material on site as proposed by Sinclair Knight and Partners.

The future

The problem has been addressed by a generous offer to Logan City Council with regard to the preferred site. The Government has also offered the full technical support of all departments and outside consultants including Sinclair Knight and Partners, under the co-ordination of the Kingston Task Force.

Logan City Council has passed a resolution to look at sites outside Logan City.

It is up to Logan City Council to be a compassionate and morally responsible local authority by making an urgent decision now to:

either proceed and accept the Government's generous offer on the Queen's Road sewage treatment site.

or

to proceed with the previously recommended technically and environmentally suitable site at Browns Plains landfill.

or

if Logan City Council is not prepared to consider the above it should proceed in any case to treat the material and construct a disposal site on the Diamond Street site and adjacent blocks and rehabilitate the area.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (3.12 p.m.): I seek leave to move a motion without notice on the issue of daylight-saving.

Question—That leave be granted—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 38		NOES, 45	
Ardill	Prest	Ahern	Katter
Beanland	Santoro	Alison	Littleproud
Beard	Schuntner	Austin	McCauley
Braddy	Sherlock	Berghofer	McKechnie
Burns	Smith	Booth	McPhie
Campbell	Smyth	Borbidge	Menzel
Casey	Vaughan	Burreket	Muntz
Comben	Warburton	Chapman	Neal
D'Arcy	Warner	Clauson	Nelson
De Lacy	Wells	Cooper	Newton
Eaton	White	Elliott	Perrett
Gibbs, R. J.	Yewdale	Fraser	Randell
Goss		Gamin	Row
Hamill		Gately	Sherrin
Hayward		Gibbs, I. J.	Simpson
Innes		Gilmore	Slack
Knox		Glasson	Stoneman
Lee		Gunn	Tenni
Lickiss		Harper	Veivers
McElligott		Harvey	
Mackenroth		Henderson	
McLean	<i>Tellers:</i>	Hinton	<i>Tellers:</i>
Milliner	Davis	Hobbs	FitzGerald
Palaszczuk	Gygar	Hynd	Stephan

Resolved in the negative.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (3.25 p.m.), by leave: In the House this morning, the Minister—

Mr Tenni: You're the leak.

Mr CAMPBELL: I ask that that comment by the Honourable the Minister for Northern Development be noted by the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. I ask the Minister to withdraw the comment.

Mr TENNI: I withdraw.

Mr CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I refer to the ministerial statement made by the Minister for Local Government this afternoon.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members will listen to the personal explanation.

Mr CAMPBELL: He stated that I had misinformed the House about the Government's involvement in the Noosa North Shore development. I wish to table a document dated 14 March 1989, stating—

“The controversial tourism development of Noosa North Shore was finally approved yesterday by State Cabinet.”

That indicates that approval had been given by the Government.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cabinet Decisions; Alleged Consultation by Premier with Sir Robert Sparkes

Mr GOSS: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to reported claims that on most days before Cabinet meets, the Premier has a telephone conversation with the National Party President, Sir Robert Sparkes, concerning matters that are to go before Cabinet. I ask: does the Premier believe it is proper for an unelected political power-broker such as Sir Robert Sparkes to have influence on and access to Cabinet discussions or decisions?

Mr AHERN: I warn the honourable member not to accept or to start to believe his own propaganda. The fact that the matter was raised on the *7.30 Report* almost guarantees that it is wrong.

Cabinet Decisions; Alleged Consultation by Premier with Sir Robert Sparkes; Book by Professor Peter Coaldrake

Mr GOSS: I refer to the answer that the Premier has just given to this House, in which he has disputed claims about pre-Cabinet telephone conversations with his party president, Sir Robert Sparkes, and I ask: is it true that the relevant chapter of a new book by Professor Peter Coaldrake containing those claims was sent to the Premier for checking and that those claims were not contested, despite the fact that the Premier contested other parts of the same chapter? Also, can the Premier explain the discrepancy between the answer he has just given and his failure to dispute those claims when he was previously given the opportunity?

Mr AHERN: As I understand it, Professor Peter Coaldrake was in receipt of a Government grant from the Federal Government to write a book in Queensland about the Labor Party. The same chap, in order to become eligible to receive the money, had to join the Labor Party and be associated with it. He did so and he was an applicant for the position of private secretary to the Leader of the Opposition when it was decided by Errol Hodder that the previous incumbent of the position had to go.

Mr Goss: Answer the question. How come you didn't dispute it?

Mr AHERN: I have hit a raw nerve.

The good professor is a card-carrying member of the Labor Party. Tomorrow I will outline the position and give all the details after I have had an opportunity to put them together. Then I will challenge the Leader of the Opposition to deny it.

Mr Goss: You'll never get it together.

Mr AHERN: It will certainly happen, because this whole grubby exercise—

Mr Goss: Sparkes is the de facto Premier of this State, and you know it.

Mr AHERN: This whole grubby exercise is nothing more than an attempt by the Leader of the Opposition to utilise certain people in order to promote the Labor cause in Queensland, and his mate on the *7.30 Report* is a co-conspirator.

Queensland Industry Development Corporation

Mr FITZGERALD: I ask the Minister for Finance and Minister Assisting the Premier and Treasurer: is he aware of reports in the *Courier-Mail* that he gave directions to the Queensland Industry Development Corporation in relation to the promotion of a Mr John Muntz and claims by the newspaper that he put pressure on the QIDC in relation to QIDC business? Is there any truth in these *Courier-Mail* reports?

Mr AUSTIN: Mr Speaker, I have to apologise. Today my voice is not all it used to be, but I will make the effort to answer the question asked by the honourable member.

I just happen to have a copy of the newspaper article with me. It reads—

“He said the Finance Minister, Mr Austin, also gave directions to the QIDC over the matter.”

I am not sure what transpired at some of those private meetings that are supposed to have been held, but I am told that a certain member of this House did say, “Who was the Minister? I am just losing track of it all.” Then Mr Boschma said, “In those days it would have been Mr Austin.” The other gentleman then said, “So Mr Austin asked Hielscher?” Then it went on.

Mr BURNS: I rise to a point of order. I ask the Minister to table the document from which he was reading.

Mr AUSTIN: I am quoting from notes.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.33 p.m.): I move—

“That the Minister table the document.”

Mr AUSTIN: The honourable member can't.

Mr BURNS: I move that motion.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, I will not accept that motion.

Mr BURNS: I move—

“That Mr Speaker's ruling be disagreed with.”

Mr AUSTIN: I think that the Opposition is a little sensitive about this matter, and I wonder why. Opposition members should go and ask their colleagues on the Public Accounts Committee about it.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to complete order. I have made my decision on what I can see from the chair. I call the Leader of the House.

Mr CAMPBELL: I rise to a point of order. I believe that the Minister's comments and the transcripts he is talking about are matters before a standing committee of this House. He is out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to complete order. There is no point of order. I have dealt with the motion from the member for Lytton. I call the Leader of the House.

Mr AUSTIN: I will say again that I am referring to a newspaper article.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr AUSTIN: How does the honourable member know what I am reading from?

At the time the alleged restructure of the QIDC was taking place, I happened to be Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister for the Arts, not Minister for Finance, who has responsibility for the QIDC. I simply say to the House: what is the validity of those allegations in the *Courier-Mail*?

I want to refer to another article, but before doing so I have to say that in 1987 the Queensland Industry Development Corporation became involved as an equity participant with Corporate Development Pty Ltd.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

Mr AUSTIN: I shall repeat that in early 1987 the Queensland Industry Development Corporation became involved as an equity participant with a company called Corporate Development Pty Ltd. This company was a subsidiary of BWD Industries, a large electronics company in Victoria. The corporation's involvement in this venture came about as a result of an introduction by the former Chief Executive of the QIDC, Mr P. S. Boschma, as he knew Mr Ron Wheeldon of BWD. Mr Boschma was instrumental in ensuring the corporation's involvement in the venture. It was not until some time after the establishment of QCD, of which Mr Boschma was a director, that the former chairman of QIDC became aware of Mr Boschma's interest in CDL. There is no record of Mr Boschma's having disclosed his interest to the board of QIDC when the matter was brought to the board's attention by the then chairman. When Queensland Corporation Development was later established, it was the function of the QIDC to provide funding to venture capital projects by QCD and Corporate Development would provide management and operations expertise and analysis on projects. This expertise proved to be totally inadequate, with the eventual resignation of Mr Bruce Cummings, manager of QCD. Mr Cummings' services were arranged by CDL. In one instance involving a loan to a QCD company, the QIDC chief executive officer at the time approved a loan outside his authority.

Mr BEANLAND: I rise to a point of order. I am in receipt of a letter from the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of this Parliament setting out Standing Orders 136 and 206. From those two Standing Orders, I was led to believe that these matters should not be raised in this House, as they would be contrary to Standing Orders. Mr Speaker, I ask for your ruling as to whether the contents of this letter—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I will rule when I believe that that should not be done. I call the Leader of the House.

Mr AUSTIN: I repeat that in one instance involving a loan to the QCD company, the chief executive officer of the QIDC at the time approved a loan outside his authority.

Mr Boschma was a share-holder in Corporate Development at the time, owning 1 000 shares in the public company. Both Corporate Development and BWD are now in receivership. Mr Boschma had great confidence in that venture as a result of his association with BWD Industries Ltd over the preceding three years in his position as chief executive of the VEDC. Perhaps the VEDC might like to look into some of the dealings involving those companies as well. The VEDC had been of considerable financial assistance to BWD Industries Ltd when it was rapidly expanding in the 1980s. In retrospect, it would appear that the corporation's decision to enter that joint venture was a poor financial decision.

In relation to the other matters raised in the honourable member's question—I refer to an article in the *Courier-Mail* of Tuesday, 8 August 1989, under the headline "Tucker critical of 'dishonest dealing'." That article is nothing short of a disgrace, and

is a downright lie. If honourable members do not believe me, as is their right, I will refer them to a statement issued by the former chairman of the QIDC, Mr Tucker. He asked that that statement be recorded fully in the *Courier-Mail*, but it was not. The response in today's *Courier-Mail* was deliberately designed to prop up its own argument, although it was written as though it was a response. Mr Tucker and I have an entitlement to have the matter read into *Hansard* so that people know what occurred.

In that statement, Mr Tucker said—

“On 26 July I was requested to attend and to answer questions on oath before the Parliamentary Accounts Committee allegedly concerning the format and contents of the annual reports of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation of which I was Chairman until 13 May 1988.

I am outraged that the information provided at this private hearing should be made public but further, when reported in the *Courier Mail* of Tuesday, 8 August, should in fact be so grossly misreported.

At no time did I say . . . or otherwise that I told Mr Austin he was ‘dealing with crooks’ nor did I say this ‘incident’ was one of two incidents concerning the minister, i.e. Mr Austin, or that he had put pressure on me relating to Q.I.D.C. business. At no time did Mr Austin make any representations to me concerning any matter whatsoever.”

I ask: would honourable members be of that view, having read the story in the *Courier-Mail*? I defy any honourable member to read the story and come to that conclusion. The story is a deliberate lie. It is a part of the campaign being perpetrated by the *Courier-Mail* against Ministers of this Government.

The statement continues—

“I did not say that there were two circumstances where another minister or ministers put pressure on me relating to Q.I.D.C. business. At no time did any minister pressure me to make or change a loan decision.”

I repeat that for honourable members—

“At no time did any minister pressure me to make or change a loan decision.

What I did attempt to convey to the Public Accounts Committee was that there were two circumstances where representations had been made in respect to two parties desirous of obtaining finance. Those representations were made by two other ministers and their representations were to Q.I.D.C. as such and thus only indirectly to me and related to requests that Q.I.D.C. attempt to assist the parties concerned.

In the first instance, upon examination, I found that Q.I.D.C. could not possibly provide the financial assistance sought as the business did not warrant it based on its profitability or its assets as security. A much more limited proposal was offered by me to the applicant who rejected it. It was the applicant who was most annoyed and who saw fit to inform me that he would report me to the Minister concerned. However, the Minister never spoke to me about the matter. It is appropriate to mention that the same applicant subsequently obtained from another source the financial backing he required and that since then the group in question has failed, and is under administration, thus vindicating the Q.I.D.C. decision.

In the second circumstance a representation was made by a minister to Q.I.D.C. (not to me personally) to consider urgent assistance for a business in his electorate. Officers of the Q.I.D.C. made appropriate enquiries concerning this business and the antecedents of the people involved bearing in mind these people had come quite recently from another state. The Q.I.D.C. enquiries disclosed that the people concerned had a most dubious background. As a result no advance was made and subsequently at a luncheon I informed the Minister”—

that is not me—

“concerned that he had been ‘dealing with crooks’ and should cease to have discussions with them. I have no reason to believe that he did other than accept the advice offered.

The *Courier Mail* report also stated that 'Mr Tucker said he had received many representations from Ministers and M.P.'s but had never reversed his decision'.

In fact I indicated to the Public Accounts Committee that Q.I.D.C. had received many representations from Ministers and M.P.'s and that was true and I do not see any thing wrong or sinister in that. I never reversed any decision I made because of representations—that is also true but what I was not asked, and therefore did not say, is that I was only once asked or pressured to do so. That was not by a Minister of the Crown but by a back bench member. That request was not acceded to.

At the press conference announcing my appointment as Chairman I was asked by a member of the media would I not be subject to political influence and I said in the presence of the then Premier 'I would not be. I never have been and I have not experienced it at Suncorp. I don't expect it to happen here'. It is inferred in the *Courier Mail* report that a politician posed the question.

The heading to the article 'Tucker critical of dishonest dealings' is in itself dishonest in that those words have been placed in inverted commas at the commencement of the article and particularly in the context of the first few paragraphs. Having today for the first time received a copy of the transcript of my evidence I can say quite truthfully the words used by me were 'somewhat dishonest dealing' and were used by me in relation to both some Commonwealth and State schemes for assistance in that the requirements under those schemes to enable an applicant to receive benefit were so tough that almost nobody could properly become entitled. These words were used in relation to some policies of both Governments but were not used in any other context or in relation to the political furore that has recently been created concerning the Q.I.D.C.

There are other inaccuracies in this report which make it quite unacceptable.

I have not been asked by any other person, in case this is now inferred, to clarify the press report on Tuesday 8 August. I make this statement because of my annoyance at being grossly misrepresented. I ask that my statement be printed in full."

One really has to look at the methodologies of the *Courier-Mail* in this particular instance. Mr Tucker has made it quite clear that the story that appeared on the financial pages of the *Courier-Mail* is not only a gross misrepresentation of the truth; it is a deliberate lie. It is a deliberate lie, perpetrated, I have to say, by the editor of the *Courier-Mail*. I expect that he will probably come out and give me a bath for saying that. That is about the level that he would sink to. To do what he is trying to do to Ministers of the Crown and, in this particular instance, to me is in my view unacceptable; it ought to be unacceptable to the Parliament; and I have to say that I intend to take legal action.

Mr BURNS: Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to Standing Order 298 headed, "Documents Read or Cited by Member", which states—

"A document read or cited by a Member may be ordered to be laid upon the Table."

I move—

"That all of the documents, newspaper cuttings and letters mentioned or read from by the Leader of the House be tabled."

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I will accept the motion. I did not accept the previous motion because I have the ability to interpret whether documents have been read from or cited. I will accept this motion.

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

In division—

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr Austin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn both the Leader of the House and the member for Lytton under Standing Order 123A.

AYES, 37

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

NOES, 45

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

Resolved in the negative.

Comparison of Victorian and Queensland Economies

Mr FITZGERALD: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to an article in *Australian Business* headed "Victoria, the State of Insolvency". I ask: can comparisons be drawn between the financial plight of Victoria and that of Queensland?

Mr AHERN: Whilst all the rhetoric is going on in Queensland in relation to corruption issues in the police force, in the trade union movement and so on, I think that there is a necessity for the people of this State to understand what Labor Party policies might really do to Queensland. The *Australian Business* of 2 August 1989 is worth reading. The front page depicts a photograph of the Treasurer of Victoria, Rob Jolly. The heading is "The State of Insolvency". That is the sort of thing Queenslanders could expect if a Labor Government is elected in this State.

In terms of future debts—the people of Victoria today owe a total of \$30 billion. That debt has doubled since 1982 when Labor came to power. Listed under "Unfunded Liabilities" is workers' compensation, which today is estimated by Moody's at \$5 billion. I think that has been confirmed by the Victorian Treasurer. In Queensland, the Workers Compensation Fund is prudentially sound. In Victoria, the unfunded liability of third-party motor vehicle insurance is \$717m. In New South Wales, under Unsworth it was \$4 billion awash in red ink. In this State, third-party motor vehicle insurance is fully funded. The superannuation liability in Victoria is unknown by Moody's, but it is estimated at about \$8 billion. In this State, public service superannuation is fully funded and actuarially sound. If all public servants in Queensland retired tomorrow and lined up to pick up their superannuation payment, it could be paid out of the funds that are invested on behalf of the superannuants.

Contingent liabilities in Victoria are \$27.9 billion, including liabilities of the State Bank and the State Insurance Office. On top of that, \$270m of debt was incurred by the failed VEDC—that was Boschma's organisation in Victoria—and about \$700m is due on the Victorian Equity Trust put option at 1 June 1992, which clearly has to be paid. On top of all of that, in the last 12 months the State Bank of Victoria—the sort of thing that Labor is recommending that we construct in Queensland—lost \$100m. Foreign exchange losses were \$544m. Investments were \$918m down following the 1987 share market collapse. The Railway Department in Victoria now operates at a \$1 billion annual deficit. During the coming months, the type of program that will be offered to

Queenslanders by Labor can be compared with what is happening in Victoria. One has only to look at contemporary Victoria to see how the modern Labor Party would treat Queensland. I do not think that Queenslanders will buy it in a fit.

Queensland Industry Development Corporation

Mr BURNS: I ask the Premier: given the long report from the Leader of the House in relation to the QIDC, will he support or oppose a full public inquiry into the Queensland Industry Development Corporation by the Public Accounts Committee or by some other independent body, because of all the allegations——

Mr Austin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BURNS: . . . of graft and corruption that he has been involved in right through?

Mr Austin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! For the second time I warn both the Leader of the House and the member for Lytton under Standing Order 123A.

Mr AHERN: I certainly will not. The allegations have been made. I will not. What has happened is under parliamentary privilege. A discredited person has been given an opportunity to impugn all and sundry when a threat was made prior to dismissal that all of this would be fed to the Labor Party.

Mr Burns: By whom?

Mr AHERN: By the previous director.

Mr Goss: Boschma?

Mr AHERN: Yes.

Mr Goss: Threatened to you?

Mr AHERN: It was a threat, which was clearly conveyed to me, that all of these allegations would go out and be fed to the opposition parties if we did terminate his services.

Mr Burns: What did you do about the threat?

Mr AHERN: That threat was made at the time and it was conveyed to me. That man has been thoroughly discredited by the chairman of the QIDC.

Mr Goss interjected.

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

Mr AHERN: Those forms are normally signed in an organisation in which commercial confidentiality is appropriate. The Leader of the Opposition ought to know that. That man's evidence has been thoroughly discredited. The chairman said that there is absolutely no evidence at all.

Mr INNES: I rise to a point of order. I refer to Standing Order 136 and to the new creature to which this Parliament has given rise, namely, the Public Accounts Committee.

As I understand it, what is happening now is a savage destruction of the credibility of a witness who was requested to appear before that committee and on whose evidence that committee has not yet reported. A select committee system cannot possibly be run

if the evidence of witnesses is attacked, abused and denigrated in this House before that committee has reported.

I make no judgments whatsoever. I have never spoken to Mr Boschma. But can the committee system work unless that Standing Order is observed and that select committee is entitled to make rulings and report on it?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to complete order. Honourable members really should not be told what the Public Accounts Committee is discussing. However, I have asked the chairman for his terms of reference. One of his terms of reference is that the committee is checking or will report on the reporting procedures of the QIDC. That is what I will be making my judgments on as to whether I will allow discussion in this House. I call the Honourable the Premier.

Mr AHERN: I wonder whether the self-righteous Leader of the Liberal Party is prepared to criticise the misreporting of this whole process. I would bet London to a brick on that he will be silent when all of the misreporting has taken place.

I will not be ordering a general inquiry. Plenty of general inquiries have been made in this State. No evidence exists upon which one could base calls for such a general inquiry. The issues before the Public Accounts Committee will be duly reported on by the Public Accounts Committee.

Cost of Damage to Schools; Logan Area Schools Security Trial

Mr STEPHAN: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Public Works, I refer to the amount of damage—accidental or otherwise—and arson that occurs in schools in Queensland. I ask: what is the yearly cost to repair that damage? What were the results of the Logan area schools security trial and how effective was that trial?

Mr GUNN: The Works Department has advised that the cost to the Government of accidental damage and arson to schools is less than \$1m per year. Although that figure is very distressing, it is relatively low when the value of State school buildings in Queensland is taken into account. The cost of insuring every school building in Queensland must be considered. The recent fire at the Woodridge North State School is estimated to have caused \$50,000 worth of damage, but the building is repairable.

Although it is too early to ascertain an overall picture, the Logan area schools security trial resulted in a downward trend of break-ins at local schools. No one step will wipe out the problem, but part of the trial was to determine what improvements may be needed to make the system more effective. The trial is only one of a number of steps that have been taken by the Works Department to protect schools. One of the more important projects that is working to a certain extent is security lighting in schools.

Resignations of Teachers from North Queensland Schools

Mr STEPHAN: In directing a question to the Minister for Education, I refer to the claim by a Queensland Teachers Union North Queensland organiser that, during the second semester of last year, six teachers resigned from the Mackay State High School and three teachers resigned from the Mirani State High School. I ask: is there any truth in that claim?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: Honourable members would be aware that it is almost Budget-time. It is quite a legitimate practice for bodies such as the Queensland Teachers Union and the QCPCA to lobby me and the Premier and Treasurer to try to obtain more funding for education. However, that incorrect claims are made public is quite unacceptable.

Honourable members would be aware that a 008 hotline has been set up to encourage members of the public to report matters that they believe are wrong in various schools in Queensland. This is just one example of incorrect allegations.

It was alleged that six teachers had resigned from the Mackay State High School and two had resigned from Mirani. An article that appeared in the *Mackay Daily Mercury* on Friday, 4 August 1989, titled "Principal rejects union claims" stated—

"A Queensland Teachers' Union organiser had vastly over-estimated the number of teachers to resign from Mackay State High School, school principal Mr Ed Bray said yesterday.

Mr Bray said QTU North Queensland organiser Mr Warwick Jull was wrong in his statement that six teachers had resigned from the school last semester.

'We had two resignations, not six,' Mr Bray said."

Other information that has come to my attention indicates that no teachers resigned from Mirani. It is quite incredible that two organisations that are looking for credibility in this State should come up with such false information. It is also interesting to note that the QTU claims that it wants an additional \$324m for education.

I refer honourable members to the Premier's comments a few moments ago about what has happened in Victoria in recent years because of its irresponsible budgeting. The Queensland Teachers Union's proposal is quite irresponsible, but it is trying to convince the people of Queensland that \$324m is needed to improve our education system.

I have received an assurance from the Premier—and I have spoken to the QTU about this—that the Education budget for this year will be enhanced, but it will certainly not be to the tune of \$324m. If it is, Queensland will end up in the sort of mess that Victoria is in.

It should also be placed on public record that the QTU and the QCPCA should be condemned for putting inaccurate information in the newspapers.

State Election

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to his statements made in the House yesterday, which appear to be in conformity with our Constitution, that, if the referendum were lost, the State election would "have to be held prior to 8 January 1990". I ask: are reports that some Government members are suggesting that, in that eventuality, a State election could be held in February 1990 without foundation and not in accord with the Constitution or with the proprieties of the situation?

Mr AHERN: I have not heard of the rumour. I suspect that the rumours may have come from within the honourable member's own party or from the joint opposition parties.

The plain facts of the situation are that under the Constitution Act—

Mr INNES: I rise to a point of order. I take objection, in parliamentary terms, to the suggestion that the Premier has made. It is a persistent and deliberate habit suggesting that there is a joint opposition in this House. There is an Opposition—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. I ask the Premier to withdraw the comment.

Mr AHERN: I withdraw.

The facts are quite clear: an election is due in Queensland by, I think, 7 or 8 January next year. There is absolutely no prospect of an election being held any later than that date—unless the referendum is passed, in which case it will be held no later than 7 July 1990. Perhaps I need to assure people that, if the referendum is passed, there is no prospect of an election being held after that date.

I heard either the honourable member for Sherwood or one of his colleagues suggest that the Government of this State might try to govern without a Parliament. That is

simply not on. It would be a reflection on the Governor of this State to allow that to occur. It is fantasy; it is nonsense; it is rumour and, in any event, it will not happen.

I give an undertaking to the people of this State that, regardless of all the furphies, all of the nonsense that has been put around about the Constitution Act and the Elections Act of this State, elections will be held when they are due and not later. There is no prospect in law, convention or propriety for it to go any longer. I make that position absolutely clear. I will be arguing in support of the referendum because I believe that process is proper and right and secure also.

Quoting by Liberal Party State Director of Words of Oliver Cromwell

Mrs NELSON: I ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General: has his attention been drawn to the statement made by the Liberal Party State Director, reported recently in the *Courier-Mail*, in which, in support of his party's opposition to the proposed referendum, he made reference to the words of the ruthless dictator Oliver Cromwell allegedly spoken in 1657—but his information was incorrect—at the dissolution of Parliament? What other constitutional innovations might honourable members expect if the Liberal Party were ever successful in converting its fantasies to reality?

Mr CLAUSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. I saw the newspaper item to which the honourable member referred. As a matter of fact, after noting the Liberal Party's penchant for dictatorships, I decided that it would be appropriate to do some research into that particular issue. I thought that a little history would not go astray on this occasion.

Firstly, I confirm the statement of the member for Aspley that the event did not occur in 1657, but in 1653. I would also like to point out to honourable members that it certainly was not a dissolution of Parliament, it was in fact a military coup being conducted by Mr Cromwell and his supporters. The words quoted and being attributed to Mr Cromwell on that occasion were not stated by him at the time but were taken from the precis of a speech made in 1940 by Mr Leo Amery MP, who spoke about the lengthening of the war-time Government of Neville Chamberlain during a debate on a no confidence motion in that Government. It is of great interest to note that the war-time Parliament in the United Kingdom was extended by five years in order to allow it to deal with the prosecution of the war against Nazi Germany.

Apart from the description of members of Parliament as "whore-masters, drunkards, corrupt and unjust" and "scandalous to the profession of the gospel", Cromwell's most famous words on that occasion were in respect of the Speaker's mace—the symbol of sovereignty in this place that the Liberal Party is so keen to uphold. It is your symbol, Mr Speaker. On that occasion Mr Cromwell's words were—

"What shall we do with this bauble? Here, take it away."

With that he kicked the mace from its rest in the House. I certainly hope—and I am sure that all honourable members other than those in the Liberal Party do, too—that those scenes are not witnessed in this place.

Let me look at a few more of Mr Oliver Cromwell's activities. He was first elected to Parliament in 1628 and was a member until he proclaimed himself Lord Protector in 1653.

Mr Gygar interjected.

Mr CLAUSON: The honourable member has a sense of military history and he should appreciate this.

As a member of the Long Parliament in 1641, he was one of those who voted for an Act that provided that Parliament's own consent was necessary to effect its dissolution—the very principle abrogated by his subsequent conduct. This man was a very real democrat for his day. In 1641 he supported a Bill of Attainder against the Earl of

Stratford. In 1644 he supported similar proceedings against none other than the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Mr Gygar: You don't say!

Mr CLAUSON: Yes. This should appeal to the member for Stafford because of his military bent. Because he is very good at dictatorships he will appreciate the fact that, as a result of Mr Cromwell's support for the Bill of Attainder in both instances, both gentlemen were executed. Another democratic act!

Mr Beard: This is prostituting question-time.

Mr CLAUSON: I am getting to the point.

By 1642, Mr Cromwell had taken up arms against his King. In 1648, he forcibly prevented over half of the members of the House of Commons from taking their seats in that place. The incident is recorded in history as "Pride's Purge". It was from this rump that he claimed the legal authority to put King Charles I on trial. But did he put the King on trial before a judge and jury? No, he certainly did not. He would not do it. He could not do it because he could not get any lawyers in the land to support such an atrocity.

He selected a hand-picked body of commissioners to act as judge and jury because few lawyers in the country would countenance the legal monstrosity that he wanted to set up. It was his hand that signed the warrant of execution that condemned the King and sent him to the scaffold. It was the purged rump of the Long Parliament that was the subject of his tender attentions in 1653. Honourable members on this occasion should be thankful for small mercies because it might have fallen to the honourable Leader of the parliamentary Liberal Party rather than its State director to identify the Liberal Party's constitutional role model.

Mr Beard: When you grow up, you'll be a lightweight.

Mr CLAUSON: At least I am not a leadhead like the member for Mount Isa.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CLAUSON: He was pulled out of a dunny roof outside Mount Isa and sent to Parliament.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. I ask the Minister to conclude his answer.

Mr CLAUSON: I shall, Mr Speaker.

In the event that the parliamentary Leader of the Liberal Party had been the architect of that political party's constitutional role model, and in view of the cumulative effect of the claret and quiche set's affection for things multicultural, the bicentenary of the French Revolution, his pretensions to pose as the twentieth century equivalent of Thomas Carlyle's seagreen incorruptible, and his setting at the elevated rear of this Chamber, corresponding with the montagnard setting of the Jacobin deputies in the National Assembly—coupled with his party organisation's sloppy research—no doubt he would have been impelled to select Maximilien Robespierre.

South Johnstone River Oil-spill

Mr MENZEL: I ask the Minister for Water Resources: would he inform the House of the circumstances surrounding the oil-spill into the South Johnstone River near Innisfail on Saturday, 22 July? Who, if anyone, is likely to face charges regarding the spill? What are the costs for the clean-up?

Mr NEAL: I am very much aware of the oil-spill that occurred on the South Johnstone River. It has been established that approximately 22 531 litres of oil escaped from the mill. However, the actual amount that entered the river is unknown.

The incident was reported to the Innisfail harbour master at noon on Monday, 24 July. Owing to the serious nature of the oil-spill, the marine safety officer, Mr Brian Biddle, left Brisbane on Tuesday, 25 July, to co-ordinate the clean-up. On 27 July, in my capacity as Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services, I elected to be the prescribed authority under section 18 of the Pollution of Waters by Oil Act 1973. This action was taken by me because it was considered that the clean-up arrangements undertaken by the South Johnstone mill were inadequate.

On 28 July field officer Peter Kirkby of the Boating and Fisheries Patrol was appointed under section 34 of the Pollution of Waters by Oil Act 1973 to investigate the discharge of oil into the South Johnstone River. Clean-up operations continued throughout last week and were considered to be completed by last Friday, 4 August.

It is considered that sufficient evidence has been obtained to indicate that the South Johnstone Mill Limited may be in breach of section 34(1)(a) of the Pollution of Waters by Oil Act 1973. This matter has been referred to Crown Law and I expect to receive a recommendation before the end of this month as to whether or not to proceed with charges. If breaches of the Act have occurred, then prosecution will proceed. It has been estimated that the cost of the clean-up has reached \$70,000, and I might add that breaches of the Act carry a maximum fine of \$50,000.

Attendance at Pre-Cabinet Meetings; Mr R. Baudino

Mr WELLS: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to reports that on most occasions before State Cabinet meets a meeting is held within the Premier's office involving himself, his personal staff, as well as National Party State Director, Ken Crooke, and motivational consultant Bob Baudino, and I ask: does this meeting consider matters of Government policy, including items on the Cabinet agenda? How much is Mr Baudino paid for his attendance, and is Mr Baudino's fee met from the public purse or out of National Party funds?

Mr AHERN: This has all been answered before. It is a total nonsense and a bit of Labor Party diatribe in an endeavour to discredit the Government. I consult very widely all of the time. I advise the honourable member not to be misled by some of the Labor Party's own propaganda or believe it, because it is all nonsense.

Ms W. Armstrong; Position Held in Premier's Department

Mr WELLS: I refer to the position of research officer within the Premier's Department held by Ms Wendy Armstrong and to reported claims that Ms Armstrong is of considerable strategic importance to Sir Robert Sparkes, has access to the Cabinet bag and plays a large role in National Party decisions and policy formulation, and I ask the Premier: can he inform the House of the total salary and other benefits paid to Ms Armstrong to carry out her job for the National Party at public expense?

Mr AHERN: I understand that the honourable member is asking the question on behalf of certain members of the ABC who are collectively known as the "Goss Squad".

Mr Wells interjected.

Mr AHERN: The honourable member is asking the question out of intellectual curiosity.

Today in this country the ALP has made an art form out of hiring ministerial advisers. No-one in the country can get anywhere near ALP Ministers. If one travels alongside any Federal Minister or State Labor Minister the room is chock-a-block full of ministerial advisers who are all paid for at public expense. There are representatives of trade unions and various minority groups, and some are dressed up in hippie uniforms. That is the plain, cold, hard fact of the matter. In Canberra in the Department of the Environment there is a gentleman wearing a dress and beads who meets the visitors, and every second word he says is a four-letter word. This guy's salary is paid for by the

tax-payer. He is one of the members of the ALP who advises the Minister for the Environment. It is total hypocrisy.

This particular member of staff has worked in my department for years. She is a researcher in the Premier's ministerial office and is a loyal staff member of many years' standing. There is no question at all of her not doing her job in a thoroughly professional manner. She is a person of absolute integrity. Last night the *7.30 Report* tried to peep on her and photograph her and other people arriving at work when they were not looking. This is a despicable way to treat a person of absolute integrity and professionalism. She does not deserve this denigration. She does her job and is a loyal public servant. It is also despicable behaviour on the part of the Labor Party for it to cooperate with this smear campaign.

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

ELECTORAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMISSION BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 8 August (see p. 115).

Mr BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.29 p.m.): According to my inquiries, in well over 100 years only one elected Parliament in Australia, either Federal or State, has been extended beyond its constitutional term of office. That was in 1917 in New South Wales when the pressure of World War I was cited as the reason. Now, 72 years later in Queensland this House is asked to set a peace-time political precedent by giving an extra six months to the least wanted, least democratic and least honourable Government in the history of modern Australia.

The legislation that is before the House does not guarantee electoral reform as the Premier pretends. In fact, last night the honourable member for Mount Gravatt let the cat out of the bag when he said that the National Party would give an "ironclad guarantee of possible reform". The legislation does not give Queenslanders an input through the proposed referendum into the type of electoral system that they want in order to elect future parliamentarians. The only purpose of this desperate legislation is to save Premier Ahern and his cronies until July next year, well after their official term of office has expired.

The members of this House are asked, on behalf of the Queensland community, to trust this thoroughly untrustworthy Government for a further six months after January while it searches frantically for some last-minute trick to deny voting democracy and cheat its way through yet another election. How could any responsible Opposition place such irresponsible trust in a Cabinet that is, at present, under investigation by Special Prosecutor Drummond for possible criminal misuse of ministerial funds? How could we, for a second, trust Cabinet Ministers who are obviously suspected, with good reason, by the Taxation Department of rip-offs involving their expenses and allowances?

Let us not kid ourselves. This National Party Government does not want genuine electoral reform. Premier Ahern, party president Sparkes, the Community Services Minister and others have made it very clear that fair elections are not part of their so-called "lock, stock and barrel" approach towards Fitzgerald. They will do anything, pull any dirty trick they can, to avoid true electoral justice.

In fact, we need only study the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill introduced this week by the Premier to learn that the National Party, as the Government, is already up to its normal villainy. Page 6 of the legislation shows that, before it is appointed or takes evidence, this supposedly independent commission is bound in advance to a redistribution that involves 89 seats. The Ahern National Party, as the Government, is in effect determining one of the major factors of the yet-to-come review before it even begins.

Is it any wonder that Queenslanders, who hope for a fair and democratic electoral system from the Fitzgerald recommendations, are suspicious while this operation remains under the control of the Ahern Nationals? The Premier boasts of the freedom of the commission, but at the same time presents legislation that says, "No matter what you think or decide, there will still be 89 seats." In simple language the National Party, as the Government, is directing the independent and impartial commissioners that they must reach their findings on the basis of the same number of seats that now exist under the four-zone gerrymander.

Before the independent commissioners are selected, the National Party, as the Government, is limiting their options for electoral reform. The Ahern Government is instructing the commissioners that the State will still have 89 seats, as it has now under the gerrymander, even if evidence and research show that more or fewer electorates are desirable. Before it is even sworn in, the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission is denied the options of either the Hare-Clarke proportional representation system as applies in Tasmania, or a one-vote, one-value proposal based on a division of the Federal electorates within the State. The 89 State electorates cannot be evenly divided by the number of Federal electorates in this State. Proposed section 2.9, under the heading "Immediate Function of Commission", states—

"(2) The provisions of the Electoral Districts Act 1985 have no application in relation to the discharge by the Commission of its function prescribed by subsection (1)."

That is a deliberate lie. Paragraph (d) of subsection (1) of proposed section 2.9 names as immediate functions of the commission—

"the 89 electoral districts into which the State and each zone (if any) should be divided."

Far from the Electoral Districts Act 1985 not having any application, as the Premier pretends, its provision of a fixed number of 89 seats is binding on the still unappointed committee. It is cynical in the extreme to tell Queenslanders that the Electoral Districts Act 1985, the official title of the present gerrymander, does not apply when in fact it determines the number of seats for the so-called impartial redistribution. If proof was needed that the Ahern and Sparkes' Nationals cannot be trusted, it is provided here in this legislation by the Government itself. Ahern and company are up to their old tricks and, as far as they are concerned, Fitzgerald and his sidekicks can go jump in the lake.

I am concerned that the nine points under the "Immediate Function of Commission" clause seem to concentrate on the merits and demerits of the present zonal system—in other words, the gerrymander—rather than the consideration of alternative fair and democratic electoral systems. With the National Party, as the Government, acting as the legislative guide to the commission, the emphasis rests undesirably on retention of the present four zones, or a variation of them. The thrust of the legislation is a continuance of numerical and boundary imbalances rather than an equal voting system which, I believe, the majority of Queenslanders are seeking.

No matter how the Premier argues otherwise, his National Party, as the Government, is already intruding into the proposed redistribution and restricting the rights of the commissioners. The truth is that the Ahern Nationals know they are headed for a thundering defeat. From by-election results and public-opinion surveys, they know that the overwhelming majority of Queenslanders are totally disgusted with their rorts and discriminations and cannot wait to get rid of them. These unclean, discredited political desperados are playing for time and cannot be trusted.

Several significant matters must be seriously considered in this debate. Almost all of them involve the question of trust. This referendum will be rejected, not because Queenslanders do not want electoral democracy; it will be rejected—indeed, soundly defeated—because the honest voters of this State are not prepared to trust the Ahern Nationals for one day longer than necessary.

The legislation to establish the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission shows that these honest voters are correct in their assessment. Already the National Party, as the Government, is attempting to influence the result of the commission's independent findings. How could any Queenslander looking towards an honest, new future for the State possibly entrust yet another six months to the National Party? Every rort singled out by Tony Fitzgerald for exposure in his report points directly towards the National Party.

It is not just naughty old Joh, not just Russ Hinze, not just Don Lane and not just "Top Level Ted" or Sir Terry; Premier Ahern was there throughout the Joh years and, until recently, never spoke up once for fair elections, clean government or accountability. Sparkes was also there as National Party president defending his gerrymander and, in 1986, even promoting Bjelke-Petersen—God help us—as the next Prime Minister of Australia.

Pages 86 and 87 of the Fitzgerald report reveal Sparkes, as the National Party bagman, collecting slings to the tune of \$250,000 through the notorious Ted Lyons for favours rendered by this unprincipled Government. Need I add that these hefty donations just happened to coincide with Cabinet's decision to give Citra Pty Ltd the generous Bundaberg maternity hospital contract against the recommendations of the Bundaberg Hospitals Board?

Really, I ask members from all parties: how could a responsible Opposition in all sincerity possibly go forth into the electorate and ask decent, law-respecting Queenslanders to give another chance to such a collection of fools, freeloaders and political shysters as we see in the Ahern Cabinet?

Last night the *7.30 Report* had the launch of a book called *Working the System* by Professor Coaldrake. If honourable members have not seen the program, it is worthwhile having it replayed. I want to talk about Sir Robert Sparkes, because he is the man who will manipulate the system in this State and he is the man who will make or break any redistribution in the future. He has already said that he wants the zonal system and he has already made it clear to Mike Ahern and the Cabinet that they will do as they are told. Last night on the *7.30 Report*, Coaldrake made that very clear. It was shown so that everybody could see it. Coaldrake claims that he has evidence that shows that the National Party organisation effectively controls the Government and the public service, not the elected Government members.

He went on to show that there is a traditional pre-Cabinet ritual. Before public service heads are called to the Premier's office for their Monday briefing, there is a pre-arranged important telephone conversation. Professor Coaldrake confirmed that the Premier and the president of the National Party, Sir Robert Sparkes, customarily discussed by telephone important matters coming before Cabinet that day. That is extremely significant. It indicates a formal link between the parliamentary and organisational wings of the party in the handling of Government affairs. Coaldrake confirmed this Sparkes-Ahern link in his interviews with Cabinet Ministers and public servants. To double-check his facts, a copy of his findings was sent to the Premier. The formal pre-Cabinet link between the Premier and the party president was not contested by the Premier. He left it in the story.

Between that telephone discussion with Sparkes and the briefing with public service heads, Ahern chaired what was termed inside the Premier's Department as a meeting of his personal staff. However, the meeting was more than that. More often than not, the meeting was joined by two other people, one being Ken Croke, the National Party State director and former press secretary to Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, and the other being Bob Baudino, a public relations expert hired by the Ahern Government. Baudino has a national reputation as a fix-it man for the Governments of Malcolm Fraser; Robin Gray, who will go to gaol in Tasmania, Paul Everingham, who should have gone to gaol in the Northern Territory; and Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, who I believe will go to gaol in Queensland.

Cabinet minutes exhibited at the Fitzgerald inquiry reveal the handwritten notes of the Cabinet secretary. They record the initials and the remarks of each Cabinet Minister who contributed to Cabinet discussion. They also indicate the influence on the deliberations of the National Party organisation. For example, some time ago, a discussion took place on Cabinet's reaction to news of a child prostitution network. The Cabinet minutes and the notes from the Cabinet secretary show—

“WAG (Bill Gunn, the Deputy Premier): ‘Sparkes wants an enquiry into the police. There are going to be articles in the press this week.’

Committee of Enquiry NH (Neville Harper): ‘Matters on pornography are referred to the Solicitor General.’”

Other matters were dealt with, and the minutes continue—

“Sparkes is also uptight. . .”

Sparkes comes into Cabinet discussions on another topic dealing with allowing service stations to sell food products. The minutes continue—

“MGA (Mike Ahern): ‘Premier and Sparkes said not prepared to legislate, management committee of party meeting on Friday.’”

So the Government cannot legislate until the management committee tells it what to do.

In a later discussion which resulted in the appointment of Des Sturgess, Director of Prosecutions, to inquire into child pornography, Harper said—

“Had discussions with Premier in London and Sparkes.”

Mr Katter: Where did all this information come from?

Mr BURNS: In the Fitzgerald inquiry, this material was tabled in the ministerial documents that the Government made available to Mr Fitzgerald. They are public documents and they appear in the Fitzgerald report.

The material talks of Wendy Armstrong, a research officer in the Premier's Department who was formerly employed at National Party headquarters. It talks about Armstrong being a contract public servant who vetted the draft policy statements emanating from the National Party policy committees before they were approved by the management committee. However, I merely want to keep up with Sparkes' involvement.

In 1980, Sparkes intervened in the divisive abortion debate to demand a conscience vote which thwarted the legislative efforts of anti-abortionists within the Parliament. I congratulate him on that.

In 1986, Sparkes intervened to announce that the Government would respond to community concern about its Drugs Misuse Bill and police powers. He said—

“The Minister will take and the Government will take contents of the various suggestions and criticisms that have been put forward and they will modify the legislation to some extent to overcome those criticisms.”

Here is this outside controller, this faceless man. Today, the Premier spoke about outside control of the union movement by the Labor Party. However, he never talks about Sparkes, that black shadow that hangs over the National Party all the time, the bagman who collected the big money for the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation. It was Sparkes, not Bjelke-Petersen, who was the architect of cronyism through the Bjelke-Petersen Foundation, a slush fund which exploited private-enterprise support for the Nationals. In return for donations, corporations had direct access to Bjelke-Petersen's Cabinet Ministers.

Following the falling-out with Sir Joh, Sparkes forged a new alliance with Mike Ahern. Evidence suggests that the president's power has been enhanced, not diminished. When we witness that and ask the people of Queensland to trust the National Party Government, we are asking them to trust Sir Robert Sparkes, not the elected members of Parliament. They do not have any say. They are not involved at all. The decisions

will be made in the bunker at the top of Spring Hill by Bob Sparkes and his cronies. They will be made by the people who left bags full of money there.

Every rort unmasked by Fitzgerald points towards the National Party. We have witnessed forgotten and forgiven loans worth over \$1m. The Nationals ask us to believe and to trust them. However, someone came along and loaned Hinze \$1m and never asked for it to be repaid—forgot to ask for it to be repaid.

Mr Newton interjected.

Mr Davis: One of Sparkes' calves.

Mr BURNS: That is right. Billy Newton is one of Sparkes' calves; the honourable member is dead right.

We have witnessed forgotten and forgiven loans worth over \$1m, surrendered options in return for Cabinet favours, and paper bags full of funny money left in the Premier's office by mysterious little messengers. No-one knew how they got past security downstairs.

Mr Eaton: Irish leprechauns.

Mr BURNS: People laugh at the Irish when they talk about leprechauns, but these little men came in and left bags of money. And we are asked to trust these National Party politicians!

We also have the \$1-a-month Burleigh Heads penthouse let out by Les Thiess—who has done very well out of the Queensland Government—to Russ Hinze's missus because he happens to think of her as a daughter. He lets her have that place for \$1 a month. If it was not so criminally wrong, it might almost be funny.

Mr Katter: It is entertaining, but we have heard it all before.

Mr BURNS: I will continue repeating it all round the countryside. I am saying that the people of Queensland should not trust Government Ministers, or the Government, after all the rorts which have been revealed by the Fitzgerald inquiry—all the forgotten and forgiven loans and funny money. If it was not so criminally wrong, it might almost be funny.

Suddenly, after four redistributions in which Mr Ahern had the chance to bring electoral justice to Queensland, with his first election only months away, he now proclaims that he has seen the light. Suddenly, this champion of the four-zone gerrymander sees himself as another Steele Hall. Frankly, I find the whole exercise sickening and degrading.

The Ahern Nationals could not care less about true electoral reform, and his legislation to set up the review commission proves that. They could not care less about the vast majority of Queenslanders beyond conning them into voting for their phoney referendum. There is only one certain way to obtain true electoral reform and that is to hurtle these National Party tricksters well and truly out of Government.

We cannot possibly trust National Party greenies such as Sparkes and the present Premier who wanted to drill our Great Barrier Reef for oil. We cannot trust these instant greenies who, years ago, demanded their right to mine beautiful Cooloola and who still want to see our precious northern rainforests conserved with chain-saws and bulldozers. They are the same people who wanted to install a chlorine plant at the mouth of the Brisbane River and who now show such cruel indifference towards the problems of toxic waste dumps in residential communities. It is time for a change in Queensland.

Too many Queenslanders have been fooled for far too long by the extremists in the National Party. How, in August 1989, after the disclosures of Fitzgerald, could we extend new trust to such undesirable elements, which have acted so deliberately against the interests of Queenslanders in the past? The voters of Queensland cannot trust any longer the type of Government that condones rorts involving public funds in areas such as drought relief and QIDC loans.

The response of the Ahern and Sparkes Nationals to evidence of such blatant National Party abuse of public funds is to attack the honest Government employees who dare to speak out in the public interest. I find no fault with people who leak information that exposes Government discrimination and cronyism. In fact, Mr Fitzgerald suggested that they ought to be protected by legislation. Crooks should not be concealed by the silence of public employees. If there are public servants, past or present, who have confidential information in regard to Government dishonesty and financial misuse, then they have an open invitation to contact me or my colleagues. Their identities will be protected, and in cases in which there is substance in their information, I will make sure that the facts are brought to the attention of the Queensland public.

Since Joh disappeared in December 1987 the Ahern Nationals have promised Queensland their vision of excellence, their imported Quality Queensland, open government and accountability. I ask honourable members: what have they got? Quality Queensland is already forgotten and the vision of excellence is no longer even whispered. As for open government and accountability—Fitzgerald found the pecuniary interests register to be inadequate, and the Public Accounts Committee has been branded a “kangaroo court” before it delivers its first parliamentary report.

At this stage I will make some references to the Referendums Bill itself. The proposal to go before voters extends the life of the Parliament, not the Ahern Government. The Government, with its usual disregard for constitutional propriety, has taken for granted its own interpretation that a “Yes” vote on 14 October not only extends the life of the Parliament but also gives it a new mandate. I believe that before the vote on this legislation is taken in Parliament, honourable members should have a statement from the Governor clarifying the potential situation. This becomes more important than ever as we find the National Party binding the commission in advance to 89 seats.

Constitutional sources advise me that, in the unlikely event of the referendum being carried, the Government would be required to make a separate approach to the Governor to extend its own mandate. Since there is no Australian precedent for such a situation, the Governor will be faced with the responsibility of determining the role and degree of authority of the Government during the extended life of the Parliament.

Would a Government such as the Ahern Government, which does not have its own mandate, be seen as only a caretaker administration restricted to the issue of electoral review alone? Can a Government with such a doubtful prolonged mandate of its own make contentious appointments and approve binding long-term contracts while it holds office to deliver nothing more than the results of an electoral review? That is what it says in the Bill. The Bill seeks the extension of the Government’s term of office till 7 July next year to enable an electoral review to take place.

Will the Government be able to pork-barrel the electorates, spend money on public advertising, use the public purse in the way it has done in the past, appoint crony judges as it has done in the past? Will the Government be able to do those sorts of things? Is the Government’s mandate going to be extended, or will it only be, as the referendum says, an extension of the life of this Parliament?

I believe that, in the unique circumstances that could apply, Sir Walter Campbell would be within his rights to appoint an administrator or an administrative board for the duration of this unprecedented parliamentary extension—that is, of course, if the referendum is passed. It is the National Party we are talking about. We are not talking about the Parliament; we are talking about the National Party, and that is the party in Government.

The National Party’s idea of impartiality is something that is National Party-dominated. Queenslanders demand an exercise in electoral impartiality in which the major political parties must be treated equally and be seen to be on an equal footing rather than a Government and an Opposition. It may be that, to preserve strict independence, Sir Walter will find it desirable to suspend the normal government of this State for the duration of the parliamentary extension.

In this debate honourable members should have a clear statement from the Governor in regard to the way in which he will view the administration of Queensland after the present Government's term expires. This Government, with only 39 per cent of votes at its peak, appears to believe that a vote to extend Parliament to enable electoral review only automatically extends its own mandate also, even though that is not stated in the referendum question.

The real question before Queenslanders on 14 October is whether it is possible to trust the National Party any further. I say that that party has destroyed its right to the respect and trust of the voters of this State. It has let Queensland down, dishonoured our parliamentary processes and wrecked the faith that the community should enjoy in them.

On 14 October Queenslanders will be asked to give this Government more time to conduct an electoral review that it could have held any time in the past 20 months since Mike Ahern became Premier. There was never any reason to delay such an exercise until after the Fitzgerald inquiry, since electoral change was not named in his specific terms of reference. The simple truth is that this Government's interest in electoral review has only been sparked in the past few weeks as it realised that it needs an urgent diversion to defer annihilation at the ballot-box.

I will deal with the Bill just briefly before I conclude. The last clause of the Bill headed "Report under section 2.9." states—

"Should the Constitution (Extension of Duration of Parliament) Act 1989 not be approved by the electors qualified to vote for the election of Members of the Legislative Assembly at a referendum, the Commission must take no further action under Section 2.9 prior to an election of the whole number of Members of the Legislative Assembly held prior to 8 January 1990."

What the Bill says is that if the Government loses the referendum, it cannot do anything until after the election. The Government lays down no timetable. It lays down no timetable if the referendum is not carried. The Bill states that the commission must report by 31 March 1990. It lays down in the Bill that by 12 December 1989 the commission must bring down its first report. The Government lays all that down in the Bill in the event that the referendum is passed. However, the Government lays down in this Bill no timetable whatsoever in the event of the referendum being defeated. I want to know why. I want to know whether the draftsmen were directed by the Government not to do it, because such a timetable should be contained in the Bill.

I also want to know why, unlike the Federal scheme and under most electoral review schemes around the world, after the first advertisements are placed in the newspaper calling for submissions and the submissions are made and the electoral commissioners make some determination and draw up their tentative set of boundaries and names, those submissions from every party and individual are not made public. It is only if they are that we will find whether the Government has been rorting the system or not.

The Bill should contain a provision ensuring that all of the submissions made by members of the public and by political parties are made public and published in the report so that people can look at them and say, "That is what the Labor Party recommended. That is what the National Party recommended. That is what the Liberal Party recommended."

Despite all the talk about consultation, despite all of Mr Ahern's promises of consultation, clause 2.2 headed "Composition of Commission" states—

"The Commission consists of five members, being a Chairman and four other members, appointed by the Governor-in-Council . . ."

They are appointed by Cabinet. There is no provision for anyone to knock it back. At best, the consultative process is very tentative. One could not use any word other than "tentative" to describe it. The Cabinet appoints the commission. It appoints a parliamentary committee dominated by four members of the National Party to two Labor members

and one Liberal member. Therefore the National Party has a 4 to 3 majority on the committee. As Executive Council, members of Cabinet have the right to appoint members to the commission. Members ought to be able to read everybody's submission to that parliamentary commission. I want to read what the National Party said. If the so-called independent people were as independent as I think, I would not be surprised that at the last redistribution the National Party's submission was reproduced in full in the Electoral Districts Act of 1985.

Mr Gygar: Of course it was.

Mr BURNS: Of course it was!

If at that time the law contained a provision that submissions had to be made public, everyone could have seen the National Party's submission and we could have proved what everybody in the community knows to be true today.

The Government has written provisions into the Bill on the basis that the referendum will be carried. A timetable has not been provided. In fact, it is the "Beyond 2000 Bill". I am sure that honourable members have seen the television program *Beyond 2000*. That is what this Bill is. The commission might never report.

The honourable member for Mount Gravatt said, "We give a binding commitment to possible reform."

Mr Mackenroth: "An ironclad guarantee".

Mr BURNS: He said, "We give an ironclad guarantee of possible reform." I suppose that is pretty clear—National Party clear!

I conclude with this message: Queensland will have true electoral reform with or without this traitorous National Party. Labor will, as the Government after the end of this year, bring electoral justice to this State through an impartial review. It will bring democracy back to Queensland after 40 years.

Mr Katter interjected.

Mr BURNS: I have never been in office. I have been in Opposition for 17 years. The Minister has been in office all those years. His old man was a member of the Labor Party in those years, then a member of the DLP and then a member of the National Party. He has been a member of every party. He has been a party to every little thing that happened along the way. The Minister should not put back onto me what happened in 1957. In those days I was a lad in the air force. I did not have anything to do with what happened at that time. However, I point out to the Minister that Mike Ahern was a member of Cabinet for the last 10 years when all the rorts were going on. The Minister was a member of Cabinet when the rorts were going on. He was part and parcel of the Cabinet that was making the decisions.

Mr Katter: I did something about it. I am on the record as doing something about it.

Mr BURNS: What did the Minister do? At any old time Opposition members would like to hear what the Minister did. What did he do to support Kevin Hooper when he raised certain matters in this Chamber? What did the Minister do when Opposition members raised the issue of the corrupt actions of Joh Bjelke-Petersen? What the Minister did was kiss Joh's backside.

After the end of this year, Labor in Government will bring electoral justice to this State through an impartial review. The National Party, whether the Premier is Ahern or Bjelke-Petersen, does not deserve further trust. It is important for Queensland that it does not get this last-minute reprieve from the people of this State, whom it has so arrogantly disregarded over more than 30 years. To the electors of this State I say, "Let us use a 'No' vote on 14 October to begin the habit of voting against the National Party and liking it. Let us then follow it up in the general election that must come soon after with an even more resounding vote of rejection."

For the good of a Queensland that looks to a brighter and honest future, it is essential that the Ahern Nationals are not only defeated but wiped out.

Mr Newton interjected.

Mr BURNS: When I was a lad, people used to say, "Empty vessels make the most sound." Poor old Bill has been in this Parliament for a long while. His longest speech was three minutes, and none of that made sense, either.

Mr SCHUNTNER (Mount Coot-tha) (4.57 p.m.): The presentation of the Fitzgerald report has provided a major challenge to the Queensland Parliament. Any observers of affairs in Queensland over the last few weeks would be thoroughly appalled by what they have seen. This Parliament has, in the opinion of observers, failed dismally. Mr Fitzgerald, as the architect of the report, must be extremely disappointed in what he has seen. I believe that we are at something of a low point in Queensland politics.

What we have seen over the last 20 years and the type of revelation that has come out of the Fitzgerald report, particularly the incidents that have occurred in the last five or six years, indicate very clearly the need for major action to be taken to remedy the situation. When a person reads columns in the newspapers, over and over again the theme that comes through is one of despondency, of disillusionment and of despair that some writers feel for the future. I have to say that I have gone through those moments of despair, too. But a person has to maintain his idealism and be optimistic. I am quite sure that some good can come out of the Fitzgerald report if certain attitudes are changed. That was one of the fundamental matters mentioned in the Fitzgerald report—the need for attitudes to change. Did any honourable member see any significant change in attitude when this Parliament met on 5, 6 and 7 July, or over the last couple of days? I doubt it.

Very little has been said that convinces the public that this Parliament really cares for the future of Queensland. The people of Queensland are looking to us for a lead. Until Parliament itself can get its house in order, there is not a great deal of hope for getting the rest of the institutions in order. It is quite clear from a reading of the Fitzgerald report that Mr Fitzgerald believes that the Government and Parliament itself in many respects have little understanding of the proper roles that ought to be played by Parliament, by the Speaker, by Cabinet, by the judiciary, by the police force and by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, and the correct behaviour in terms of appointments, transfers and a whole range of other activities of this Government.

I want to refer to the Fitzgerald report in some detail. In particular, I shall refer to pages 123 to 145 because I think that those are the pages that are most relevant to the Bill that we are debating. The point is made that no Government has all the expertise. I concur whole-heartedly with that comment. If that comment is taken on board by the Government, one would see a much more open style in the way operations are followed in Queensland.

Because the Minister for Education has consulted with me and the Labor Party shadow Minister for Education prior to the introduction of new legislation, I commend him. Although I welcome and acknowledge that development, far too often legislation is not shared and discussed and decisions are made without wide-ranging input.

The Fitzgerald report made the point that rational debate is needed, but not a great deal of rational debate occurs in this House. Honourable members attempt to make serious, sincere and worthwhile contributions, but more often than not the opposite occurs.

A great deal of legislation would have been improved if notice had been taken of members' comments during debate in this House. However, once legislation is introduced, the Government seems committed to pushing it through regardless. How often has legislation been brought back for minor amendment when it could have been improved at the time of its introduction if cognisance had been taken of members' comments?

Honourable members have been denied the opportunity to put forward reasonable suggestions.

Between 5 and 7 July, one day was wasted on the election of a new Speaker and two days were spent debating the Fitzgerald report. The Leader of the Liberal Party attempted to move a motion to extend debate on the Fitzgerald report. To the shame of this Parliament, that motion was defeated and honourable members were denied the opportunity of debating more fully the Fitzgerald report in the days immediately after it was presented.

On 5 July, when the House resumed after the Fitzgerald report had been presented, this Parliament sank to an all-time low. The time of this House was taken up with the election of a new Speaker. Why did that occur? It seemed to me that that was a classic example of one of the things that Mr Fitzgerald pointed out have gone wrong in Queensland over many years. On the first day that this House met after the Fitzgerald report was released, it was a marvellous piece of irony that events such as those that were outlined in the report occurred in this House.

Mr Mackenroth: How many years do you think?

Mr SCHUNTNER: About six.

Mr Mackenroth: I thought you would say that.

Mr SCHUNTNER: Yes.

On that occasion the Government should have upheld the Speaker's suggestion to refer that matter to the Privileges Committee. However, the issue was brushed aside and this House witnessed a day of utter fiasco. The people of Queensland were utterly appalled by what occurred in this House.

Page 124 of the Fitzgerald report talks about the need for the parties that are not in Government to be provided with adequate information and resources if the institutions of our form of government are to operate properly. If that information is not provided, secrecy surrounds various Government activities and it is a short move from secrecy improperly surrounding various activities to corruption. That is adequately pointed out in the Fitzgerald report and I endorse totally those comments. The report states that secrecy effectively prevents parties—other than Government parties—from doing their job. It states—

“It is essential that the Government is not able to claim that secrecy is necessary when the only thing at risk is the exposure of a blunder or a crime.”

I ask honourable members to cast their minds back a few months to when the Leader of the Liberal Party asked many questions that were designed to place before the people of Queensland the guide-lines for ministerial expenses. There should be nothing secret about those guide-lines. Why were those expenses not tabled? That is a classic example of how secrecy, unnecessarily and improperly applied, cannot be justified.

The Fitzgerald report refers to the desirability of more parliamentary committees. As Government of a modern society becomes more complex a need exists to extend the operations of Parliament through the formation of committees. The report notes that the only committees that operate are really those that are fairly innocuous, that is, until the Public Accounts Committee and the Public Works Committee were established.

Mr Mackenroth: And the Parliamentary Service Commission.

Mr SCHUNTNER: Yes. I will include that with the other two committees that have been established in recent times.

I want to remind honourable members of some comments that were made by the Premier when he was a back-bencher. On 4 April 1978, when Mr Ahern was moving a motion for the establishment of a select committee on education, he said—

“Approximately a fortnight ago I circularised all members of Parliament with the form of the motion that is now before the House. To my knowledge, this is the

first time that this type of action has been taken, and I hope that all honourable members appreciate it. The idea was that this would give honourable members as much time as possible to examine the form of the motion and to consult on it.”

What commendable action Mr Ahern took as the mover of the motion and soon-to-be chairman of that select committee. He went on to say—

“Select committees have not been used enough in our Parliament in recent times. In fact this is only the fourth occasion during my 10 years in this place on which we have had the pleasure of speaking to a motion to establish a select committee.”

Mr Ahern pointed out that, in recent times, he had been associated with three of the four committees of inquiry appointed by the Parliament. He stated further—

“ . . . and I hope that the Government will see fit to use this device more in the future than it has done in the past.”

What has happened in relation to a greater use of select committees over the past 10 years? Very, very little. The Fitzgerald report was again spot on when it pointed out the need for those select committees which, by definition, include representation from all parliamentary parties.

The Fitzgerald report also refers to the role of Cabinet. If I have to single out one particular issue on which things have gone dreadfully wrong over the past years, it would be in the way in which Cabinet has misused and abused its powers.

Mr Mackenroth: Did he actually say how many years?

Mr SCHUNTNER: About six, I think.

Mr Mackenroth: Does he actually say that in there, though?

Mr SCHUNTNER: No, I am reading—

Mr Mackenroth: You are quoting from Fitzgerald?

Mr SCHUNTNER: Not on that, no. I am speaking from my notes. I would say that it has been particularly evident over the past six years. If Mr Mackenroth would like to make a particular point about this, I suggest that if he spoke a little more widely with members of the community he would find a very wide perception by them that the kind of misuse, abuse and corruption referred to has become particularly bad in the past six years. It may not have even existed to a great extent before, but that is a perception that is certainly widespread.

The overall control of the Legislature, the Executive and the Cabinet is merged in the Westminster model, that is, the Cabinet is part of the Legislature. That is fair enough. But what has failed to occur in the administration in Queensland is that the Cabinet has not separated its policy activities from the detailed administration of that policy. That is where things go dreadfully wrong, and they have gone wrong by design, not by accident. A careful reading of the Fitzgerald report reveals the example in relation to Citra, which is a classic illustration of the way in which Cabinet has involved itself in the detailed administration of matters with which it should not have anything to do.

Priorities have been given in a whole range of works projects that have been the subject of ministerial and Cabinet intervention. From my involvement in education I know of matters such as the development of the second high school in Gladstone, where an objective analysis of the priorities put the second high school in Gladstone as the highest of all the priorities required in secondary education. That was the case three years in a row. That second high school was not built, because by the time the politicians got their hands on it, the order of priorities had been altered. I am aware of examples such as ordinary materials that were required in a school were diverted to another school because the school in which they were needed was not in an electorate of the right colour politically.

That was clear before the 1986 election when Sir Roderick Proctor spoke on television about the cronyism and the improprieties that have occurred in the tendering and contract process. On many other occasions in this Chamber the establishment of the school at Laurinel has been mentioned. That was a classic example of political intervention. I well remember that the school at Bedourie was closed in accordance with proper departmental guide-lines but, because of political intervention, a few days later it was reopened. Only four children attended that school.

The appointment of school inspectors has been the subject of intervention. I am quite well aware that, a few years ago, a Minister, who still sits in this House, intervened to prevent the appointment of an inspector. I can recall examples of a teacher being transferred because he excluded from the polling room a whole host of National Party scrutineers who were not official scrutineers. The fellow in question was new to the school. He asked, "Who is the official scrutineer?" The official scrutineer showed his document and the others were told to get out of the room. Soon after, that teacher was transferred. Mind you, after a lot of activity, that transfer was cancelled. But it does not take Sherlock Holmes to work out why that man was transferred.

It has been said that these were things of the past and that the Ahern Government is a clean, new Government. I intend to refer to two examples which give the lie to that. Mr Brian Cahill, who was formerly a National Party member of this House, wanted a job as a drama consultant in the Queensland Education Department. The normal procedure is for an interview to take place at which the applicant is interviewed by two senior officials of the Education Department. The interviewing panel was ready for the appointment but Mr Cahill did not turn up for the interview. Contact was made with Mr Cahill, who informed the waiting officials that he would not have to front up for an interview because he had already been assured of the job. That occurred earlier this year.

Another example relates to the Cooroy State School and the production of lists of parents of students for the member for Cooroora. Anyone in this House would know that information regarding the names of the children enrolled, their parents and their addresses is not widely available; it is used for distributing newsletters and the like. But how is it that the member for Cooroora was able to obtain that list of parents of children who attended the Cooroy State School? He got it because of direct political intervention that enabled it to occur, whereas other people would, quite properly, be denied that material, as the member should have been.

Mr Austin: Have you ever asked? How would you know unless you have asked?

Mr SCHUNTNER: Is the Leader of the House suggesting that someone has only to ask?

Mr Austin: I don't know. I have never asked. Have you?

Mr SCHUNTNER: No, I have not, because I know the right thing to do. I am surprised that the Leader of the House had to ask that question, because it suggests that he does not know the right thing to do. That is the type of activity that leads to the problems outlined in the Fitzgerald report.

Mr Austin: What a lot of rot!

Mr SCHUNTNER: I will take this a little further. Does the Leader of the House say that is a lot of rot? I see that he does not want to take the matter any further.

Page 127 of the report deals with electoral laws. Much has been said about the statement in the report that it is a "fundamental tenet of the established system of parliamentary democracy . . . that public opinion is given effect by regular, free, fair elections." I wish to make it quite clear that I believe the referendum is a farce. If there were any intention on the part of the Government to have an independent, fair review, why would anybody say right at the outset that there will be 89 seats? If it were to be a fair review into the whole electoral system, there would be no such specification. In

fact, I make the point that it should be open enough in terms of its guide-lines so that the question of whether there are two Houses of Parliament or one can be looked into.

I think that a great case can be made out for having two Houses of Parliament. The "Westminster tradition" is a very vague and woolly term, if the literature on the subject is any guide.

Mr Newton: You are saying that you want two Houses of Parliament and yet you say that you want to cut down on the numbers.

Mr SCHUNTNER: I am glad the honourable member raised this matter. I do wish to cut down on the numbers of parliamentary representatives, but I would prefer to see fewer members of Parliament in Queensland in two Houses—the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. Mathematically it is quite possible to achieve that objective. One does not have to be too brilliant to work out that, by having a much smaller Legislative Assembly, a Legislative Council could be re-established to maintain a ratio usually found in bicameral systems. The total number of parliamentarians need not be greater than the present 89. There is good reason to think that if Queensland had had a House of review, instead of suffering the effects of its abolition which occurred in 1922, that may have been a major factor in preventing the types of abuses that have occurred.

It is sad that while honourable members are looking urgently at this legislation dealing with electoral review, they are not looking into all the other matters that require change, if corruption of the type that has been spelt out in the Fitzgerald report is to be avoided. In the debate that took place on 6 and 7 July in this Parliament, one of the National Party speakers mentioned that it would still be possible to have corruption even if fair boundaries were established. Of course that is true, and I am not suggesting for one moment that electoral boundary changes or better apportionment of electoral districts will overcome corruption. They will go a long way towards achieving that end, but it will be necessary to take into consideration a whole host of other matters to get the ship of State in Queensland sailing truly.

I said earlier that I think the referendum is a great waste of time and money. I would much rather see \$5.5m spent on remedying needs in schools and hospitals. I could rattle off needs such as class room accommodation at Bardon, a teacher and administrative assistant at Rainworth, additional speech and drama facilities at The Gap High School, a librarian at Payne Road, a pre-school centre at Milton State School and library facilities at Ithaca Creek State School. I am sure that most honourable members could do likewise. The sum of \$5.5m would do much more for Queensland spent in the ways I have suggested than by wasting it on the convoluted referendum question that has been dreamt up. If the Government of Queensland really wants to know what it claims it is trying to find out, it should ask the following two questions—

"(1) Are you in favour of electoral reform?"

It is as simple as that, and—

"(2) Are you in favour of extending the term of Parliament?"

Those two questions could be asked, instead of the convoluted question that will be put before the people later this year.

Page 130 of the report deals with politicisation of administration and reads, in part, as follows—

"A system which provides the Executive Government with control over the careers of public officials adds enormously to the pressures upon those who are even moderately ambitious. Merit can be ignored, perceived disloyalty punished, and personal or political loyalties rewarded. Once there are signs that a Government prefers its favourites (or that a particular Minister does so) when vacancies occur or opportunities arise, the pressure upon those within the system becomes immense. More junior public servants rapidly become aware of the need to please politicians and senior officials who can help or damage their careers, and not to provoke

displeasure by making embarrassing disclosures. The advantages of co-operation and discretion and the disadvantages of any other course are manifest.”

It is time that certainly this Parliament took to heart those words included in the report by Mr Fitzgerald. Page 131 of the report makes it quite clear that not very much progress will be made unless, by example, Parliament shows the way forward. The report also states that a self-serving and cynical Government will be reflected in its bureaucracy.

I make the plea that this Parliament should try to put aside point-scoring and think more about what Queenslanders in their tens of thousands want this Parliament to do. Queenslanders want this Parliament to act responsibly. The people want a Government that makes sure that the parliamentary process operates as it is intended to operate.

The report states that it is a legitimate concern of Ministers to ensure that the appointment system provides honest and efficient people in the particular positions to which the appointments are made. The more important the position is, the more need there is for scrupulous propriety in the way those appointments are made. The report says that political favours must not be the basis of appointments and it points to the disruptive effects of inappropriate appointments. Anyone who knows anything about Government departments would know about the disruptive effect in most areas of the public service these days.

The report points out that the Ministers and the Governor in Council should delegate many appointments to areas away from the political arena. I served on a panel in the Education Department with two departmental representatives. We were considering secondary promotions, and the appointments that were made through that process were regarded as having been made efficiently and honestly. Appointments are called into question when the practices that have been used in recent years are allowed to flourish. I am talking not only about education, but also about a whole range of Government appointments.

On page 131 of the report there is reference to the need to advertise all vacancies. The report asks why all vacancies are not advertised and states that there should not be as many limits on appeals. It is not immediately apparent—which is the phraseology used in the report—why so many appointments are made by the Governor in Council. Those points in the report are extremely important and I urge the Government to give greater emphasis to those points when it looks at the whole question of appointments. For instance, when appointments were made in the new Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training at the time when that department took over TAFE a few months ago, many appointments were made without being advertised. Many of the people involved were left with the feeling—and rightly so—that those appointments were not the best appointments that could have been made, because certain people had the inside running. This feeling could have been avoided had the positions been advertised.

The report refers to contract employment, special appointments, ethical considerations and the need for protection of whistle-blowers, but I would like to spend a moment talking about the role of the media. It is acknowledged in the report that the media were a major influence in causing the Fitzgerald inquiry to be established. I am pleased to have had a hand in the education of one of the two reporters who are generally attributed with having brought the inquiry about. However, the Queensland media have a fair bit to answer for in allowing the situation to continue for so long. There has been a fawning, giggling subservient approach—and in using those words I am actually quoting from something that was written—and a lack of persistence in interviews. That superficial approach by the media has allowed politicians in Queensland in the last five or six years to get away with behaviour that should never have been tolerated.

Finally, there are many members in this place who were motivated in their desire to stand for Parliament by the view that perhaps they could contribute to a better Queensland; a more decent and honest Queensland. I hope that there will be some improvement in that direction as a result of this legislation.

Time expired.

Mr MACKENROTH (Chatsworth) (5.28 p.m.): Before beginning my speech on the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill, I wish to briefly comment on the matters raised by the member for Ashgrove. It always amazes me to hear members of the Liberal Party talk about the Fitzgerald inquiry report, the matters raised in it, the corruption of the Queensland National Party Government and the corrupt practices that it is likely to get up to in the future. The members of the Liberal Party conveniently forget that they sat on that side of the House with the National Party for 26 years. I interjected a couple of times on the member for Ashgrove and asked him when he thought all of these things started to happen. He said, "Around about six years ago."

Mr Schuntner: Mount Coot-tha.

Mr MACKENROTH: I am sorry, Mount Coot-tha. That is how much impact the honourable member has made on me in the two and a-half years he has been in this Chamber.

In approximately 1976-77 the former Commissioner of Police, Sir Terence Lewis, was appointed by a Liberal/National Party Government. That happened not six, but 13 years ago. If one reads the Fitzgerald inquiry report from front to back, one will find many references to things that occurred before 1983. In fact, the Justice Minister, who at that time was Mr Lickiss, received a report through Australia House from a Scotland Yard detective regarding an investigation into corruption in the Queensland police force. As Justice Minister, Mr Lickiss did nothing about this report. This is the Liberal Party; the party that wants people to believe that everything that is bad in this Government and State started only six years ago. I suggest to the people of Queensland that the bad things in this State started many years before. People talk about not being able to trust this Government; but they could not trust a Liberal Party/National Party coalition Government, either. A clean sweep is needed in Queensland, and the only way that the people of Queensland can put a broom through the whole of this Government is to return a Labor Party Government at the next election.

The referendum is a complete and utter sham that is a waste of between \$5m and \$10m, yet Mr Ahern comes to us and says, "Trust me. You know that you can trust me." At the same time as he is saying that, he has a bloke like Bob Baudino telling him where to put his hands and a bloke like Robert Sparkes telling him when to move his lips; yet he is the person who is saying, "Trust me." Today's *Australian Financial Review* shows that, at the National Party meeting on Monday, the Premier threatened to resign. How can we trust him when we do not have any guarantee that, if the referendum succeeds, Mr Ahern will be the Premier in July next year?

I suggest that the National Party is well aware that the 14 October referendum will not be passed by the people of Queensland. The National Party's reason for wasting this amount of money—as the Premier told us, it was thought up in the shower—is to try to remove electoral reform from the agenda for the election, which will be held at the end of November or the beginning of December this year.

I would be very happy if the question of electoral reform were not to muddy the waters at this election. I am very happy to see the referendum go to the people. I know that it will be defeated and I suggest that the figures will be 70 per cent for "No" and 30 per cent for "Yes". Sure, the question of electoral reform will not then be a question for the following six or seven weeks during the campaign to elect a Government for the next three years. The reason that I am happy about that is that it will allow us to put the real issues on the agenda—the issues of corruption and cronyism that have been identified in the Fitzgerald report.

The Premier told us that he was committed to implementing the Fitzgerald report. I am yet to see any real, positive action—action that could have been taken without waiting for these particular matters to come before the House. Some things could have been done immediately; they were not done. Although things still have not been done, we are asked to wait until such time as the Premier does something. The Premier wants to move slowly on everything. This referendum is another way in which he is showing

the people of Queensland that he is not prepared to move quickly. If he really wanted to see electoral reform in Queensland, he would have taken up the offer made by the Leader of the Opposition for the House to sit last month and to have this legislation pass through the House so that the electoral review and redistribution could have taken place before the election, which could then have been held on 9 December this year.

Last night in this place the member for Mount Gravatt slipped up and said, "What we are giving you is an ironclad guarantee of possible reform." He did not offer an ironclad guarantee of reform, but an ironclad guarantee of possible reform. They were the words that the member for Mount Gravatt used in this House.

Mr Austin: What about if the commissioner says you don't need reform?

Mr MACKENROTH: Is the Minister suggesting that that is the likely outcome?

Mr Austin: It could be.

Mr MACKENROTH: That is what Sir Robert Sparkes has said.

The thing that the people of Queensland really need to understand is that I do not trust this National Party to appoint five independent commissioners.

Mr Austin: We wouldn't trust you, either.

Mr MACKENROTH: That is fine. Let us go to the people of Queensland and see who, at the present time, they would trust to appoint the five commissioners. The Minister knows quite well that his party's stocks are so low that it has no chance of being re-elected.

Mr Austin: That's not true.

Mr MACKENROTH: That is why we see this desperate bid to try to gain an extra six months in power. The National Party cannot be trusted.

I will return to the appointment of those five commissioners. The Fitzgerald report mentions consultation with the leaders of the political parties. Any mention of consultation with the leaders of the political parties was taken right out of the Premier's second-reading speech. What he is talking about now is consultation with the select committee, a committee that will have four National Party members, two Labor Party members and one Liberal Party member. It is quite easy to see that the Premier and Mr Sparkes can pick those whom the National Party wants as the commissioners. The committee can be consulted, and the four National Party members will agree with whoever is put up. That will result in the setting up of a commission of National Party stooges who will do exactly as they are asked—or told—to do.

Even forgetting the zonal system, the problem with the State's electoral system today is that the three commissioners who drew the boundaries were appointed by the National Party. There is even the ridiculous instance of taking one part of Queensland out of one electorate and putting it into another electorate, leaving it like a little island. That is the sort of thing that we got from the so-called independent commissioners who were appointed by the National Party.

The National Party's view of the zonal system in this State is well known. Mr Sparkes has stated quite clearly that he expects to come from this commission a report stating that the zonal system will stay. If the referendum were to be passed and if the review were to proceed, in six months' time the State would have exactly the same electoral system as it has now.

I will now mention last night's *7.30 Report*. As much as the Premier wants to dispute it, what is outlined in Peter Coaldrake's book is perfectly correct. Every Monday morning before Cabinet, the Premier contacts Sir Robert Sparkes and obtains his views on the matters that will be discussed in Cabinet that day. I am aware that in February this year Peter Coaldrake's book was proof-read by a former Cabinet Minister.

Mr Austin: How would you know that?

Mr MACKENROTH: Perhaps the former Cabinet Minister.

Mr Austin: Maybe, yes. I didn't think of that.

Mr MACKENROTH: It may be.

Mr Austin: That wouldn't be true.

Mr MACKENROTH: I am not prepared to say that. However, after the former Cabinet Minister read the section of the book dealing with Cabinet, he said to Peter Coaldrake, "Look, this particular section where the Premier rings the party president could not be right because that wouldn't be the Westminster system." As I understand it, Peter Coaldrake went back to the Premier, reasked the same question and was told, "Yes, that is what happens." Yet, today, the Premier said that does not happen.

When that book comes out on Friday, I would like the Premier to take legal action against Peter Coaldrake. I am sure that he will not, because there is no way that the Premier could get around that section.

There is no doubt that the morning that the nomination of commissioners is considered by Cabinet the Premier will ring Sir Robert Sparkes and say, "What about these five people, Robert?", and Robert will tell him whether he agrees with those people or not. Before the members are selected for the commission, Cabinet will need Sir Robert Sparkes' imprimatur.

This Bill from Tony Fitzgerald is supposed to be the light of the future, yet no provision exists for submissions made by private individuals or by political parties to be made public. In the past in Queensland, the principal problem with redistributions has been that political parties have made submissions to the redistribution committee and their submissions have not been made public. Members of the National Party know quite well that it has been claimed time and time again that in the last redistribution the maps that it submitted were adopted by the commissioners.

Honourable members might not believe that. However, this time let us make the maps public. If we want to be open and have the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission having an open look at the redistribution of the boundaries of the electorates in Queensland and at whether there should or should not be zones in Queensland, let us say to the commission, "When you publish your report, you will publish the submissions so that the people of Queensland will know if in fact you have taken the view of one party or another." Only if that is done can we in any way believe that the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission has carried out its task correctly.

Mr Elliott: What happened in the last New South Wales redistribution? Do you know anything about it?

Mr MACKENROTH: Yes. The Labor Party lost the next election.

Mr Austin: What's in the legislation stopping the commission from making them public?

Mr MACKENROTH: It does not state anything. Does the Minister support making them public?

Mr Austin: I have no view on that matter.

Mr MACKENROTH: The Minister's time will come later this evening when the Labor Party moves an amendment to allow him the opportunity to enable the National Party submissions to be made public. If he wishes to support that, we will give him every opportunity.

In conclusion—I am opposed to the referendum on 14 October. I call for the electors in my electorate to vote "No" because there is no way in the world that the people of Queensland and the people of Chatsworth can trust the Government with another six months in office.

Mrs NELSON (Aspley) (5.43 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to join in the debate on this legislation. It gives me the opportunity to follow up on some of the statements that I made yesterday in the Matters of Public Interest debate concerning the sheer hypocrisy of the Australian Labor Party in this State in its claims that it can provide fair and honest boundaries for the voters and that it will get rid of what it calls the gerrymander and be able to provide honest, open and accountable Government.

We judge people by their track record, not by their rhetoric. I will examine the track record of the Australian Labor Party. A little later in my speech, I intend to examine some individual issues of corruption relating to elections, but firstly I refer to the most recent history of the Australian Electoral Commission. Like many other Queensland members of State and Federal Parliaments, Government members have grave reservations about the way in which the last Federal election in this country was undertaken. I have heard allegations that it smacked of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, except that that is an insult to the man. The events that occurred in the electorates of Petrie, Rankin, Capricornia, Hinkler and Leichhardt were all scandals. There was a move in the Senate, supported by Labor parliamentarians, who were obviously not part of what I believe was a genuine conspiracy, to have an inquiry. That move was quickly squashed, the Senate select committee was abandoned and the Australian Electoral Commission was asked to investigate itself. Of course, nothing came of that.

I will relate to the House some of the matters that occurred. The seat of Petrie is a gerrymandered seat if ever there was one. Later, I will reveal more detail on that. In that seat, there were at least 600 people who enrolled within three or four weeks of the election being held who did not exist. When as a State member I wrote to those newly enrolled electors, in my electorate alone I received back more than 120 letters saying that those people did not exist or, even worse, that the address to which the letter was sent did not exist. I checked to see that I had addressed the letters correctly.

Mr Elliott: They'd even be vacant blocks.

Mrs NELSON: They were big, vacant blocks of land. There was in fact a whole subdivision, which had been approved for redevelopment by the Brisbane City Council many years ago but which for various reasons has never gone ahead. It was just amazing to find the number of people who allegedly lived out there in the scrub. No development ever took place but there were people on the roll at these non-existent addresses.

After the election this matter was raised with the Federal electoral returning officer in Petrie. People wanted to look at the marked roll to see who had actually voted. The returning officer in Petrie said that nobody could look at the roll until 1990. He said that it was not possible to look at the one that had been ticked off and that a new roll would not be printed until 1990. So it was impossible to check to see whether any of those non-existent people had in fact voted.

On the day of the election itself a group of very well-dressed gentlemen in three-piece suits were manning booths on behalf of an organisation outside a political party's base. They were handing out how-to-vote cards for their organisation, but they were actually asking people to support the Labor Party. They had a permit to use the Labor Party as a base. I took the National Party candidate for Petrie around the electorate in my car that day. These fellows went to every booth in that electorate, and they voted a number of times. They went into those polling-booths and they voted. I believe that these fellows voted in at least nine of the polling-booths in Petrie, and I believe with all my heart that they were voting for an acknowledged list of non-existent voters.

I thought that this was a difficult election. I genuinely believed that the conservative parties were going to win. I certainly was not happy with the behaviour of the Liberal candidate in that seat, who had a fake Democrat how-to-vote card on the day. I told him on the day that he would lose the seat because of it, and he did. I also discovered later that he probably lost the seat because of the votes of people who did not exist. I thought that maybe this behaviour was peculiar to Petrie. When I spoke to people who

live in the Lilley electorate, I found that the same thing had happened in that electorate. I spoke to people who live in the Rankin electorate. I found that the same thing had happened in that electorate—another gerrymandered Federal seat. What Inala and Warwick have in common is quite beyond me. Mick Young drew the boundaries for that one—whoever the commissioners were—and he boasts about it.

I then contacted some of the State members. The member for Broadsound, Mr Hinton, related experiences in the Federal seat in his area. Max Menzel also said that there were extensive activities of this nature in the seat of Leichhardt in north Queensland. What is very interesting is that in every one of the seats that I have mentioned, the swing was different from the swing in every other seat in Australia. In the rest of Australia, there was a 2.3 per cent swing away from the Government. In those seats there was a 1.7 per cent swing to the Government. So the result in those electorates—those marginal electorates—was that ALP members either won or retained those seats. I believe that they did that on the votes of people who did not exist.

As I have said, I contacted the returning officer. In fact, I contacted that so-called baron of opinion, Quentin Dempster, about this. I said, "I want something done about it." I am still waiting for the man who champions truth, honesty and the American way to force that matter to be a publicly revealed scandal. I asked for something to be done about it. I went to the returning officer and said, "Look, I have got 120 people and 62 letters from individuals who have to come off the roll because they do not exist." He said, "Oh, we cannot take them off the roll. We will not take them off the roll until we do the next census of the roll, and that will not happen until 1989." That was two years later! In the mean time, if there had been a constitutional crisis and an election had been held, voters would have gone to the polls in the belief that the election in which they were voting was being held in a fair way, and the same non-existent people would have voted again in that election.

I do not believe that the Hawke Government has a right to be governing Australia at present. I believe that Labor lost the last Federal election. I also thought that this issue might be peculiar to Queensland. From discussions that I have had with people in other States, I understand that there were up to 40 electorates in which these activities may have taken place and that in 18 of these electorates it had been firmly established that there were irregular practices in the enrolling of people prior to the issue of the writs for the election.

That is the past; that is history. However, that is the party that wants Queenslanders to trust it. That is the party that wants to govern this State instead of the National Party. That is the party that says that it will give Queenslanders fair and honest electoral boundaries. I will examine some of Labor's fair and honest electoral boundaries.

I also refer to something the member for Chatsworth said about secrecy in relation to party submissions. He must have an awfully short memory because when the last State redistribution was conducted in Queensland, every political party had a press conference. The Labor Party, the Liberal Party and the National Party showed everybody their submissions because none of the political parties believed that it had anything to hide. I am absolutely certain that in this process each of the parties will be proud to stand up for what it believes in and that, through their party organisations, the parties will publicise their submissions to the commission.

I will now examine some of the Federal boundaries. I have in my possession a map of the Federal boundaries in Australia, particularly those for Queensland. If honourable members look at the map of the boundaries in Australia provided by the Commonwealth Government itself, they will find that there are gerrymandered seats in almost every State. There may not be malapportionment. We might have one vote, one value with a 10 per cent tolerance. However, we sure as heck do not have democracy. We certainly do not have democracy in this country, and that is what our young journalists straight out of QUT and some other institutions do not seem to understand. They have had this word "gerrymander" thrown at them for so long that they do not know what it means.

The Federal electorate in which I live, Petrie, is represented by a member of Parliament who fortunately will serve only one term. The electors cannot wait to get rid of him. I would not care what party he represents; he is just not appropriate to serve in any Parliament in Australia. Petrie is a gerrymandered seat. It has the shape of a dragon. It has its head in Redcliffe and to the islands, its neck in Bald Hills and its body in Aspley and West Chermside.

Mr Beard: That sounds revolting.

Mrs NELSON: Yes, it is pretty revolting.

There is no community of interest between the two groups. I understand that, before the redistribution was carried out in New South Wales, a Labor electorate had a town on the right, a town on the left and a railway line down the middle, which was the boundary of the electorate. The two towns were connected by a railway line. What possible community of interest could there have been? That was a Labor Party gerrymander in the State of New South Wales.

Western Australia has a gerrymander. Nobody bothers to argue about that. Even the ALP members in this Chamber do not argue about that. Let not the media be fooled and let not the people of Queensland be fooled into thinking that Queensland has gerrymandered seats, because it does not. It has different zones with different numbers of electors and different weightages. There are two very important reasons for that. The most fundamental of them is that Queensland does not have an Upper House. The Queensland Parliament is the only Parliament in Australia without an Upper House. The rights of the isolated voters in this State must be protected. If a substantial weightage system did not exist, those people west of the Great Dividing Range might as well never vote. They produce a third of the nation's wealth; but they might as well never vote. Without the weightage system, they would never have a voice in the Parliament.

I hope that the media note that the irony of the whole debate is that the National Party is the only party in Queensland which has seats in every zone. The National Party wins votes in the north, in the west, in the south and in the centre of the State. The National Party wins those votes because it has the support of the people. There is another myth espoused by members of the Labor Party and the other voices on the benches opposite. I refer to the members of the party which at the moment is in coalition with the Labor Party and which from time to time seems to be having marital problems. Those members use the boundaries as an excuse for their failure to win the hearts and the minds of the people.

The Labor Party likes to say that the National Party was elected on 40 per cent of the vote. The Labor Party received only 41 per cent of the vote. The other minor parties in this State received the balance of the votes, and 78 per cent of their preferences went to the National Party. The National Party received 55 per cent of the two-party vote. At the previous election the National Party received roughly the same percentage. When the coalition existed, the National Party always received between 55 per cent and 60 per cent of the two-party vote. That was the result in every State election held since 1957. The members of the Labor Party in this State are trying to perpetuate a myth. Their Federal colleagues do not believe it, nor do their colleagues in other States. They know that the Queensland ALP has failed and will continue to fail because it does not have the leadership, the candidates of stature or the policies that the people of this State want. The people of Queensland do not want the type of economic mismanagement that has occurred in Victoria, in Western Australia and in New South Wales. More importantly, they do not want the welfare state that has developed in those parts of Australia.

The latest population movement trends show that the boom that Queensland experienced between 1979 and 1982 is recurring. The Labor Party and the Liberal Party continue to tell everyone how terrible this State is, that it is a dreadful place in which to live and that the people are slaves in their own State. However, tens of thousands of people are moving to Queensland from New South Wales, Victoria and other States.

After the dinner recess I shall cite examples of corrupt practices adopted by some of the Federal ALP members in this State.

Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.30 p.m.

Mrs NELSON: Before the dinner recess I spoke about the hypocrisy of the Labor Party and the absolute corruption at the Federal level in terms of the distribution of electoral boundaries, the actual voting system and the scandal that occurred in the last Federal election. I intend to devote the remainder of my speech to specific corruption involving members of the Federal Labor Party in their desperate attempt to retain seats.

In his report, Mr Fitzgerald recommended that an Electoral and Administrative Review Commission be established to examine electoral boundaries. This Government has given an undertaking to act on the recommendations that will be brought down by the commission. This is the first step in the establishment of the commission. The referendum will give the people the opportunity to vote on whether they wish to extend the term of the Parliament so that the commission's task can be undertaken properly and effectively and its recommendations implemented.

This Government is offering the people of Queensland the very thing that Peter Beard, the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, was espousing in this House some weeks ago and the very thing that Deane Wells and Wayne Swan were trumpeting all over Queensland two weeks ago. However, the leaders of the two respective parties are now running for cover. They cannot have it both ways.

In the House tonight I have exposed the general scandal and the general corruption in how the Federal boundaries have been drawn up and the gerrymander of a substantial number of seats in this State. One has to look only at a map of Queensland's Federal seats to realise that a gerrymander exists. Leichhardt, Kennedy and Herbert in north Queensland are classic examples of that, and Petrie, Forde and Rankin in the southern part of the State are a pictorial example of what the people of Queensland will have to look forward to under a Labor Government—apart from its awful policies.

I turn now to issues that are closer to home for some of the Labor members in this House.

Mr Menzel: What about all the dud voters they put on the roll?

Mrs NELSON: Yes. I spoke earlier about that.

When Labor was elected, not content with the boundaries, Mick Young and a couple of his cronies got together and appointed a team of commissioners. No-one in the Labor Party has ever denied that Mick Young drew up the boundaries. Mick Young and his friends have certainly boasted about that.

Mr De Lacy: What rubbish!

Mrs NELSON: Because Elaine Darling was in trouble, Mick Young and his cronies made changes to Lilley and Petrie. Although there was no community of interest and no need for a change in the boundaries, a 6 per cent change was made in Elaine Darling's electorate. The seat of Petrie was made winnable for the Labor Party. Mick Young and his cronies shored up an unsafe Federal member and gave themselves another seat while they were at it. Any semblance of community interest was removed from those two seats.

I draw the attention of honourable members to two cases in New South Wales which I wish to use as the focus for a case in Queensland. A gentleman in New South Wales had his seat declared vacant by the courts because he was found guilty of trying to buy votes. The judge made it very clear that the issue was not one of broad pork-barrelling but was specific and narrow. That is why he threw out the election result. In the five to ten days prior to the election, that member gave away \$38,000 in his electorate.

Mr Davis: Who was that?

Mrs NELSON: I am referring to the seat of Port Stephens in New South Wales. A Labor member lost his seat over it.

Mr Davis: What about Wal Murray?

Mrs NELSON: The other Labor member in New South Wales who lost his seat because of a court action had 400 dead people enrolled to vote in his electorate.

As a member of Federal Parliament, the member for Leichhardt should lose his seat immediately and should be asked to resign from Parliament. Mr Gayler, the member for Leichhardt, has been spending tax-payers' resources trying to buy votes. I do not know how much honourable members know about what Mr Gayler has been up to in north Queensland. He is an embarrassment to his Federal Minister. He has attempted to have buildings knocked down and new buildings constructed at the expense of tax-payers to try to buy votes from groups in the area. It is the talk of the district. I received that information from a number of my contacts in north Queensland. That information has been confirmed by telephone and in writing.

Mr Gayler went to the golf club and said, "I will get the road put through the golf course and we will get you a new clubhouse and half a new golf course." A road should never be put through that area. There is no need for it. Mr Gayler is deliberately trying to buy votes. He has promised the golf club that he will build it a new clubhouse and fairway.

Mr De Lacy: What golf club are you talking about?

Mrs NELSON: The club is situated in Mr Gayler's electorate. I am referring to the Babinda by-pass, which is the talk of the region.

Not content with trying to buy the votes of the golf club, Mr Gayler went to the CWA and said, "Listen, I think that I can get a deviation through the CWA hall, knock down the hall and get a new one out of the tax-payers of Australia."

The Federal Government starves this State of funds for roadworks. Only 17c in every dollar that is paid in taxes and excise comes back to this State for roadworks. Mr Gayler is so desperate to hang onto his seat that he is corrupt. That is the only word for it. I do not believe that Mr De Lacy would do anything like that.

Mr Gayler has changed the road, embarrassed the engineers and embarrassed his own Government. Because Mr Gayler is desperate to hang onto his seat, he is changing the alignment of the road that was agreed to by the two Ministers. Everybody in that CWA is talking about him. They do not want a tax-payer-funded hall just because a desperate man is trying to get back into Parliament. They believe that it is improper and corrupt, and that is what it is.

I call on Mr Gayler to resign immediately from Federal Parliament. I call on the Federal Minister, Mr Brown, to investigate that issue of great sensitivity. That road should have gone somewhere completely different, but because a local group of Aborigines complained, Mr Gayler was so petrified of losing their votes that he had the road shifted.

The CWA is a very good network. For a long time I have been a paid-up member of it.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mrs NELSON: I certainly was.

I believe that the matter to which I have just referred is a clear case of a breach of the Act. A member of Parliament is not supposed to offer any inducements to get votes. Mr Gayler is specifically offering inducements to individuals, and it is possible to check that with the individuals in those clubs and the CWA who will speak of the disgust they have for this particular individual and his desperate attempt to stay in office.

I call on the Labor member for Cairns to ask his Federal Minister to investigate this matter. If the road should not go through the golf course, as it should not, and if it should not go through the clubhouse, as it should not, and if it should not go through the CWA hall, as it should not, I ask the honourable member for Cairns personally, as an honourable member of this Parliament, to tell the Federal member and the Federal Minister to save the money and instead spend it on roads elsewhere in Queensland. For all I care, the money could be spent on roads in the honourable member's own electorate.

It is not tolerable that a Federal member of Parliament be allowed to continue to serve in the Federal House when, in an endeavour to obtain votes, he is offering bribes to the people in his electorate. He has made no secret of that. He is making promises to the people. He should not be making them. He is not in a position to make them. He is a back-bench member of Parliament. He has no right to be making such promises and he has no right to be forcing his Federal Government to change the direction of a road, which will be a significant extra cost, and, what is more, when the resumptions take place, forcing the State and Federal Governments to build new premises for these two organisations when such a road is not needed.

I urge the Federal Minister to carpet the member for Leichhardt and to call on him to resign from Parliament. If he does not resign, the people of Leichhardt will throw him out, because the whole district is talking about him and his desperate attempt to stay in power. Any member of Parliament who has to do that sort of thing is not worthy of a place in the Federal House.

I want to make some further comments——

Mr Davis: Will you join me in the ex members' club this year?

Mrs NELSON: Nobody could take the place of the court jester from Brisbane. Nobody could take Mr Davis' place.

In returning to the specifics of the Bill, I point out that the Government is offering the people a fair opportunity to have their say on 14 October, to exercise their rights under the Queensland Constitution to say whether or not they wish to extend the term of this Parliament. The opposition parties have made all sorts of pompous and ponderous comments that are entirely in conflict with their previous demands and their previous statements. In fact, many of their own members support the extension of the term of this Parliament so that the commission might undertake its review properly.

This Government has kept its word to the people. It is making it right. Despite the "Goss squad" at the ABC and other elements of the media attempting to discredit the Government, I believe the people of Queensland will support the Government, both at the referendum and at the next State election. It gives me great pleasure to support the Bill before the House.

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (7.42 p.m.): I listened with interest to the member who has just resumed her seat and I was led to believe that that was going to be the third knock-out punch for the day. Earlier today when we had the first two knock-out punches, the member for Wolston moved that the members delivering them be further heard. I am inclined to move a similar motion now.

In respect of the allegations made against the member for Leichhardt, Mr Gayler, I am afraid that they all fell flat and will continue to fall flat, just like most of the things that the Government presents to us.

Mrs Nelson: Do you support Mr Gayler?

Mr De LACY: In fact, what the honourable member was arguing against was what is now referred to as the central by-pass, which is something that John Gayler has always supported, it is something that I have always supported and it is something that about 95 per cent of the population of Babinda have always supported. It does not surprise me to hear the member for Aspley speaking in defence of the member for Mulgrave, Mr Menzel.

Honourable members might remember that Mr Menzel went out on a limb to have the western by-pass built, it being a highway right through the middle of Babinda. All sorts of pandemonium broke loose. The people of Babinda revolted against it. The member for Leichhardt, John Gayler, took up the cudgels on behalf of the people of Babinda. The Federal Government intervened and now the people are to get what they wanted all the time: a new road, but not a road going through the middle of Babinda entailing hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions of dollars, worth of resumptions. Now there will be a by-pass that will resume a couple of small buildings, the CWA and part of the golf course. But that is absolutely minuscule in comparison with the plan recommended by the honourable member's colleague the member for Mulgrave.

If the honourable member for Aspley believes that people who propose something that would be a burden on the tax-payer should resign from Parliament, Mr Menzel ought to take up the offer and resign forthwith, because the proposal that will go ahead, the central by-pass, will involve virtually no resumptions compared with the proposal that Mr Menzel supported.

Mrs Nelson interjected.

Mr De LACY: I know that the honourable member will not take advice, but she should really check these things out before she stands up in this House and makes a complete fool of herself.

Mr Davis: And to take a brief from Max Menzel.

Mr De LACY: Yes. To take a brief from Mr Menzel is always a big risk.

Mr MENZEL: I rise to a point of order. I did not give Mrs Nelson a brief. I ask that that remark be withdrawn.

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

Mr De LACY: I withdraw the remark, anyway.

Mr Prest: Even Max wouldn't take credit for what she said.

Mr De LACY: That is right. It seems that even the member for Mulgrave will not take credit for that information.

I have examined the Bill that is before the House and have found that some of its provisions are perfectly acceptable to the Labor Party. Basically, however, this legislation is a fraud. It is a phoney, just as the referendum is a phoney. The reason it is a phoney is that it will depend upon the referendum's being passed.

Mr Stephan: Why did you change your mind? What happened to the petition that you were sending around, looking for an extension of the Parliament?

Mr De LACY: Members of the Labor Party always support the concept of electoral reform. We do not support a phoney referendum that is designed to give the National Party a period of six months more in power to enable it to do whatever it wishes. On its past record, one thing the National Party will do is scheme, plot and plan and do everything in its power to ensure that no electoral reform takes place. One only has to look at this legislation to see that the term "zone" is still being used. The person who pulls the strings in the National Party, Sir Robert Sparkes, has said that there is no reason to believe that when the commission inquires into the electoral system there will not be a system of zones as a result. If members of the National Party think that members of the Labor Party do not have good reason to be suspicious of the motives of the National Party, they have not really looked at their record over the years.

The fact is that the Labor Party does not trust the National Party. Moreover, the people of Queensland do not trust the National Party. Despite what the member for Aspley said about the National Party doing the right thing and people finally realising that that is so, the fact is that the polls show what the people of Queensland think and

what they have seen. If the honourable member went out into the community and spoke to people, she would know what people are saying. The referendum has two chances of being passed—the National Party's and Buckley's. The National Party has known that all along.

When the National Party Government came up with this all win, no loss theoretical proposal for a referendum on electoral reform, it looked as though it would be just that—all win and no loss. However, the realisation is now starting to dawn on members of the National Party that it will be all loss, no win. How members of the National Party will launch themselves into a State election within a month after the referendum—the National Party's own initiative—is resoundingly defeated by the community, I do not know. People are talking about a 70/30 result, but I would go so far as to say that only 15 per cent of the community will vote "Yes". As a matter of fact, the other day I had a bet with my father that only 15 per cent will support the referendum. The National Party will be demolished by this referendum, as well it ought to be, because the people of Queensland will certainly not support the proposal.

Mrs Nelson interjected.

Mr De LACY: People do not trust members of the National Party. As the member for Brisbane Central said, when the member for Aspley joins him in the former members' bar, if that is what it is called——

Mr Davis: The former members' club.

Mr De LACY: The member for Aspley would have more right to be a member of that club than the member for Brisbane Central, because she has been a former member of this Parliament more often than he has.

Mr Elliott: No, she hasn't. That is where you are wrong. He has been a former member many times.

Mr De LACY: All right, I withdraw.

Mr Davis: I will have a lot of National Party colleagues with me.

Mr De LACY: Exactly. Next year, it will be crowded.

There is another reason why the Labor Party is not supporting this package of legislation and is not prepared to give this Government an additional six months in office. The reason is that the whole process of Government in this State is grinding to a halt. Paralysis has set into the decision-making process of Government. Morale in the public service has reached rock-bottom and when morale reaches rock-bottom, productivity declines. I can name approximately half a dozen areas in which morale is at a critically low level—the Department of Health, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Queensland Railways, TAFE colleges and a number of statutory organisations. Morale is very low because of the paralysis that has set in at the top.

The Government in Queensland is continually involved with crisis management and damage control, but the real business of Government is not being carried out at all. Another reason that the Labor Party will not support this package of legislation is that cronyism and corruption and other defects that have been pointed out in the Fitzgerald report are still running rife in Queensland. The fact is that nothing has changed since the grand old days.

I wish to take up a specific issue that makes the point very clear. It illustrates a clear conflict of interest in the financial affairs of this State. It involves a company by the name of Crongold Pty Ltd, a major Queensland financial institution and people who occupy positions of trust within that institution. The story begins in April 1987 when a company called Aquaculture Industries (Queensland) Pty Ltd received a \$1m loan from a major State financial institution. I have five documents to which I wish to refer. At the conclusion of my speech, I will table them. Crongold received \$1m, and in that connection I refer to document No. 1. On 4 August, Crongold Pty Ltd was incorporated.

Mr Austin: What year was that?

Mr De LACY: It was incorporated in 1987. Three weeks later, on 21 August, Crongold invested virtually all its capital—\$300,000—into Aquaculture Industries as equity. It seems perfectly obvious to me that the company was established for the express purpose of investing in Aquaculture Industries. On that very day, the State financial institution also invested \$200,000 in Aquaculture Industries. To substantiate that, I refer to document No. 3.

The parallel nature of these investments is very curious indeed, considering that one is a private company and one is a State institution. As I continue with my speech honourable members will understand how this parallel investment took place. The day after the issuing of this share capital, on 22 August 1987, two appointments were made to the board of Aquaculture Industries (Queensland) Pty Ltd, and I will table document No. 4 as evidence of that fact. One of the two people who were appointed to that board was Mr Jim Brennan, who is a board member of the State financial institution concerned. I presume that it can be argued that this was to safeguard the investment of the institution of which he is a board member. The other person who was appointed was a Mr Thomas Maule, a major share-holder in Crongold Pty Ltd. However, a closer examination reveals that Mr Brennan also had a large number of shares in Crongold—in fact, 50 000 \$1 shares—and I refer honourable members to document No. 2.

Mr Brennan is a board member of a financial institution which is lending and investing money in a company in which he has a substantial interest via Crongold. Mr Brennan and Mr Maule are now business partners as share-holders in Crongold and both are directors of Aquaculture Industries. I will round out the circle by advising this House that Mr Maule was appointed in February 1989 as a board member of the State financial institution which is lending tax-payers' money. In the meantime, Mr Brennan was elevated to chairman of that same State financial institution. On 7 April this year that State institution referred to invested a further \$1m of tax-payers' money in Aquaculture Industries (Queensland) Pty Ltd through its investment arm, Venture Fund Pty Ltd, which is shown in document No. 5.

The conflict of interest to which I am alluding is obvious. It involves the commercial relationship between Mr Maule and Mr Brennan, and their personal involvement with companies which stand to benefit from dealing with the State financial body on which they also hold prominent positions. In recent months much has been said about the level of corruption and cronyism in Queensland. The events that I have outlined tonight represent another example of cronyism, one that must be laid firmly at the feet of the Premier and the Minister for Finance.

I will spell it out once again. Jim Brennan is a senior member of the National Party. As everyone knows, he is a member of the management committee and vice-president of the Darling Downs organisation of the National Party. In June last year, he was appointed chairman of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation, having previously served as director. In February this year, Thomas Maule, Mr Brennan's associate in Crongold, Aquaculture Industries and another company called Hallglen, was appointed to the board of the QIDC. The State financial institution which provided the \$1m loan to Aquaculture Industries, as well as the subsequent \$200,000 in shares and a further \$1m in venture capital, was the QIDC. Mr Brennan and Mr Maule, whilst they are directors of the QIDC, are also major share-holders in Crongold Pty Ltd, a company deliberately set up to invest in Aquaculture Industries, which in turn is receiving direct and continuing financial assistance from the QIDC.

Yesterday's *Courier-Mail* reported that the previous chairman of the QIDC, Mr Tucker, was asked to resign last year by the Minister for Finance, Mr Austin, because of an alleged conflict of interest. The circumstances I have outlined represent a clear conflict of interest. People in positions of trust stand to personally gain from those positions.

Mr Deputy Speaker, in the light of these latest developments in the saga of National Party cronyism, the continuing saga of the QIDC, the conflict of interest and the political corruption of the goals of the QIDC, I call on the Premier and the Minister for Finance to apply the same rules to all appointees, and remove both Mr Brennan and Mr Maule from the QIDC board. On the evidence that is before me, this is one of the worst examples of a conflict of interest that I have had to inquire into.

Earlier this afternoon the Minister for Finance, Mr Austin, once again tried to discredit the former chief executive of the QIDC, Mr Boschma. Amongst other things, he alleged a conflict of interest. He said that Mr Boschma was involved with the QIDC whilst at the same time holding some shares in a public company.

Mr HINTON: I rise to a point of order. I do not believe that the speaker is addressing the subject of the Bill in any way.

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

Mr De LACY: The Minister for Finance made the point that Mr Boschma had a conflict of interest simply because he was involved with the QIDC whilst holding shares in a company which was receiving assistance from the QIDC. On exactly that same criterion I call on the Minister for Finance to immediately order both Mr Brennan, who is the chairman of the QIDC, and Mr Maule, who is a board member of the QIDC, to stand down. Not only is this a gross conflict of interest, but also it may even border on insider trading. It appears on the surface that Mr Brennan had access to the prospectus of Aquaculture Industries; he was present at board meetings when the QIDC decided to invest \$200,000 in equity for the first time in Aquaculture Industries; and at the same time he must have contacted Mr Maule. Between them they set up a company, invested their money in that company and then caused that company to take out a \$300,000 equity in Aquaculture Industries, the same company that was benefiting from their dealings with the QIDC.

Mr Randell: How do you know?

Mr De LACY: I will table the information at the end of my speech and the Minister can look at it.

Mr Vaughan: As long as the paperwork is right, he's right.

Mr De LACY: Yes. The Minister is on record as saying that, as long as the paperwork is right, he is right. I assure him that in this case the paperwork is right, and I will table all of the evidence that relates to what I have said.

The whole saga of the QIDC has brought great shame to the people of Queensland, and it ought to have brought great shame to the National Party. We had the new vision of excellence. When Mr Ahern came to power, he was to introduce accountability and do away with all of that nasty corruption of the past. When one examines the affairs of the QIDC, one finds that it has become much more cronyistic and that its financial goals have been broken down and replaced by this sordid political interference to a much greater extent than ever existed under Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, the so-called master of cronyism.

Mr Stephan: Are you trying to say that the QIDC should be taken out of existence?

Mr De LACY: I will answer that question directly.

I support the concept of a QIDC, as the Labor Party always has done. However, because of the way it is being administered on a political, non-commercial basis by a board that has been stacked with political appointees who do not have the commercial expertise to make commercial decisions, it should not exist. If the two options are that it should continue to exist in its present form or not exist at all, it should not exist.

Mr Stephan: Are you trying to say that there should not be any assistance given to those facing difficult times?

Mr De LACY: I never said that at all. If that is the level of the honourable member's questioning, I cannot continue to accept his interjections.

The way in which the QIDC is being administered is an absolute disgrace.

Mr HINTON: I rise to a point of order. I refer to Standing Order 120, which states that a member may not digress from the subject-matter under discussion. I suggest that the member has been digressing for probably 15 minutes.

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

Mr De LACY: If the honourable member for Broadsound had been in the Chamber when I commenced my speech, he would know that I am speaking to the Bill, because he would know that I am saying that this State cannot have another six months of this Government. I am giving the House evidence—irrefutable evidence—that the people of Queensland cannot tolerate another six months of this Government.

Mr Randell: Allegations by innuendo.

Mr De LACY: I am not making allegations by innuendo; I am making allegations based on hard evidence, and that hard evidence will be tabled. I challenge the Minister to look at it, come to his own conclusion and then take action on the basis of the evidence I have presented to the House. If he is a fair man, he will abide by the request that I have made and ask both Mr Brennan and Mr Maule to stand down from the board of the QIDC.

Two years ago the QIDC had a seven-member board, only two of whom were members of the National Party. After two years of the vision of excellence, it has an eight-member board, five of whom are card-carrying members of the National Party. One is the Under Treasurer, and two others are Mr Cameron Boyle, who has not got bad credentials because he is a Sunshine Coast developer, and this Mr Maule, to whom I have referred tonight as being involved in a gross conflict of interest. Yet the Government says that the QIDC is a major financial institution.

Mrs Nelson: That is speculation.

Mr De LACY: It is an absolute disgrace and Government members ought to be ashamed of themselves. The member for Aspley does herself no credit by trying to defend it.

Mrs Nelson: That's speculation.

Mr De LACY: It is not speculation. Nothing I have said is speculation. It is based on hard evidence.

What has happened with the QIDC is the replacement of respected, influential and experienced Queensland businessmen with National Party members, or their friends and business associates.

In conclusion, I reiterate that the people of Queensland—our economy, our people and our whole social fabric—cannot stand another six months of the kind of government that is being delivered now.

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

Mr HINTON (Broadsound) (8.06 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker—

Mr Davis: Make sure you keep to the Bill.

Mr HINTON: I can assure the member for Brisbane Central that that is just what I will be doing. It is not what we have been hearing for the last 20 minutes; we have been hearing about Jim Brennan and the QIDC.

I will certainly speak to the Bill, which I support because it puts to rest all the wild, dishonest statements and all the hypocritical garbage that has been dished up by both the Labor and Liberal Parties over the last three months. They have now been seen to

be absolutely barren, absolutely sterile, in their arguments. They have done a complete back flip.

Mr Randell: Have we heard one thing about corruption in the trade union movement?

Mr HINTON: No. I am very pleased that the Minister has raised that. Over the next few months, we will hear a lot about that corruption. Once we start to delve into the corruption of, in particular, the mining unions—I have mining unions in my area—we will really open up a can of worms. After seeing representatives of the FED and FU on television tonight, I have seen plenty of good evidence of that. When we get amongst that lot, Opposition members will be sorry they raised the issue.

Mr Campbell: We will let all the miners know about that.

Mr HINTON: We will see what happens. I have an opponent who comes from the Combined Mining Unions. He is being funded from that source. Where do those funds come from? They come out of union dues. Not one of those miners has a say in whether those funds should be provided for my opponent's election campaign. Even those members who are Labor Party supporters would not necessarily want their funds to go to that type of political activity, but it is taken from them by force. Ours are the funds that are raised from the chook raffles and what-have-you that Mr Goss was talking about, not from the sale of radio stations and not from the coffers of the Combined Mining Unions. We will be hearing plenty about that. The member for Port Curtis will be squirming in his seat.

I am pleased that the Government is introducing an electoral Bill that provides an ironclad guarantee for a review of the electoral system and that subsequent redistribution will take place before an election is held. That is what the members of the Liberal and Labor Party coalition had been crying for, until something happened. What was that? We gave it to them. What happened when we gave it to them? We saw the greatest political back flip that this State has ever known.

I will mention some of the comments made by Mr Goss and Mr Innes prior to the announcement that a referendum would be held. Mr Goss said—

“What we should be looking into is to implement the reforms as soon as possible, and if Ahern does that before the next election, I will be the first to congratulate him, because it will be for the good of Queensland in the long term. So I want to see those implemented before the next election and I will do everything in my power to give Ahern the opportunity to do that.”

What do we see? He has done everything in his power to make sure Ahern does not have that opportunity. It is a complete back flip, and the people will see through it. At present, the Labor Party and the Liberal Party are throwing up a smoke-screen of confusion. But they can only fool some of the people for some of the time. When the referendum is held, they will be found out.

Mr Comben: Not one vote in three will you get.

Mr HINTON: That is a good point. I am pleased that the honourable member mentioned it. At no stage have Mr Goss and Mr Innes said that they would be prepared to accept the findings of the electoral commission. They are saying that if we do not have one vote, one value, they will not accept the findings of the commission. They are only interested in one vote, one value, not a fair review and a fair decision by an unbiased umpire.

The Government is saying that it will accept the umpire's decision no matter what it might be. However, it has every right to be confident, because most Western democracies have systems with electoral weightage. I do not believe that a fair and unbiased electoral commission will come down with a decision that will put 63 per cent of the members of Parliament within 100 kilometres of the Brisbane GPO. If it did, it would be doing Queensland an enormous disservice. I am confident that, when a fair and unbiased

electoral commission has examined electoral systems around the world and heard the arguments, it will not do anything as stupid as that.

I will refer to more of Mr Goss' famous quotes that will haunt him in the near future. He said—

“Whether we have new boundaries or not, I think the way in which corruption and cronyism has been exposed by which this Premier has been exposed for not standing up and speaking out down through the years will give us a very good chance, but I still believe that the first priority of this Government with Parliament sitting this week is to start the process so that we can have honest electoral boundaries for the first time in 30 or 40 years, because the people are owed that—not the Labor Party, the people of this State are owed that.”

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr HINTON: At this stage, given the amount of hype that has occurred and the confusion that has been caused by people such as the member for Brisbane Central, the Government intends to give the people a say in the matter.

Mr Davis: What about enrolments? Clear that up.

Mr HINTON: As the honourable member is probably well aware, I have been a maligned man. Being a man of principle and fair play, the honourable member would appreciate that.

Mr Goss said—

“What we should be looking into is to implement the reforms as soon as possible, and if Ahern does that before the next election, I will be the first to congratulate him . . .”

We have not heard too many congratulations from him. He went on to say—

“And I think it's unthinkable that Ahern could go to the electorate on corrupt boundaries and seek a mandate to clean up corruption.”

I am certainly not agreeing with his propaganda that the electoral boundaries are corrupt. Only one year ago at a referendum in this State and across Australia, those so-called corrupt electoral boundaries were supported strongly by the people. They are hardly corrupt.

Mr Goss says that it is unthinkable that Ahern could go to the polls on the present boundaries. However, what do we see? Our friends in opposition are campaigning frantically to get us to go to the polls on the very boundaries on which a few weeks ago they said it would be unthinkable to go to the polls. It must be the greatest back flip in political history. I could go on and on quoting Mr Goss. Mr Innes has said similar things. Wherever Goss goes, the little echo from Sherwood follows. We all know that they are in club on this issue.

One of the reasons that they are not anxious to go to the polls prior to a redistribution is that they have a fair bit to fear about the outcome of that distribution. For a start, the Labor Party would no longer have any excuse for its electoral defeats. In the past few years, Jack Houston, Tommy Burns, Keith Wright, Ed Casey, Percy Tucker and Nev Warburton have all come and gone. At the end of electoral defeat, what have each of them said? They said, “It's the boundaries that are the problem.” Mind you, I think 36 per cent is the worst result and 43-odd per cent is the best result they have ever had.

Mr Comben: What's your side's best result?

Mr HINTON: I do not know what our best result is, but at the last election, on a two-party preferred vote, it was 53.5 per cent. If that is not enough to govern, I will fly to Bourke.

Mr Comben interjected.

Mr HINTON: I am quite happy to take up this point. When one looks around Australia——

Mr Comben interjected.

Mr HINTON: We get their preferences. It is a two-party preferred vote. We beat the Opposition hollow every time.

I will talk about what some of the honourable member's colleagues are living with. Tasmania now has a Labor Premier who received 34 per cent of the vote and who has teamed up with a group of people whom he said before the last election he would not have a bar of. Western Australia has a Labor Premier who received 42 per cent of the vote. Queensland is supposed to have a gerrymander, but on the present boundaries 51.5 per cent of the vote will elect a Labor Government; yet the Labor Party has a Premier in Western Australia who got in on 42.5 per cent of the vote.

Mr Ardill interjected.

Mr HINTON: It was the Labor Party in Queensland that got rid of the Upper House. Opposition members must never forget that it was the Labor Party that got rid of the Upper House in this State.

I am very pleased that the member for Windsor raised this point. I will deal with the Federal situation. It would require 52.5 per cent of the vote to elect a coalition Government. I believe that at the last poll the Labor Party, with 48 per cent of the vote, won 58 per cent of the seats. I repeat that the Labor Party got 58 per cent of the seats from 48 per cent of the vote. Queensland is supposed to have a gerrymander, when a Labor Government can be elected with 51.5 per cent of the vote.

Queensland would have one of the fairest electoral systems in Australia. A legend has been created by Houston, Burns, Wright, Casey, Tucker and Warburton. One after another, when they have been defeated, they have whinged and whined and said, "We couldn't win because of the gerrymander." I do not have the slightest doubt that, when the Labor Party is defeated at the next State election and it dispenses with the present Leader of the Opposition, honourable members will hear more whining of a similar nature.

Another reason why the Opposition does not want the referendum to be passed is that a review would show that most of the States in this country do in fact have a weighted electoral system. I believe that not having a weighted electoral system in Queensland would be very bad. It would not allow for balanced development. Where there is political power, the dollars will follow. If a party has 63 per cent——

Mr Campbell: In every electorate where you've got extra political representation, you're losing population. In every electorate that you've got under the quota, very low numbers, you are losing population. They are driven out of those areas.

Mr HINTON: Let us face it——

Mr Campbell interjected.

Mr HINTON: That is not correct.

My seat of Broadsound is in the country zone. It had 12 500 electors at the last election. Now there are 15 500-odd on the roll. So the honourable member is dead wrong about my seat. The population in my electorate has increased by 20 per cent since the last poll.

Mr Austin: If you want to know about rorting electoral systems, the member for Brisbane Central is the biggest rorter of all time. He lost all the ballot-papers on Bribe Island for the Transport Workers Union.

Mr HINTON: That is a very interesting statement.

Mr DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I know that the Minister for Finance was only joking when he made that comment. However, for the benefit of those who may read *Hansard* in the future, I ask that he withdraw it. He knows that it is untrue.

Mr AUSTIN: The honourable member is very thin-skinned. I withdraw the comment.

Mr HINTON: I am delighted that the Leader of the House raised this particular point. It has just refreshed my memory.

My seat of Broadsound falls within the Federal seat of Capricornia. I cannot remember the exact figures; but, when a check was made after the last election, there proved to be hundreds of dead people on the roll. People who did not exist were on the roll. That is quite extraordinary. Streets listed in Yeppoon and streets listed in Rockhampton did not exist. Phoney voters were on the roll. I might say that I asked the Minister for Justice to check the roll for Broadsound and he was able to tell me that no dead people voted in Broadsound at the last State election. However, given the performance in the Federal sphere in Capricornia, I will certainly be watching that very closely.

Mr Comben: How does he check that roll? How did you get the Minister for Justice to check your roll? How do I get him to check mine?

Mr HINTON: I cannot answer that. If the honourable member recalls, I put on notice in this House a question to the Minister for Justice. He said that his officers had checked and that there were no dead people on my roll and that nobody had voted twice in the electorate of Broadsound.

I believe that the Labor Party has a long history of rorting rolls. What I am saying is that the case is very strong for a weighted electoral system in this State—in fact, in most States of Australia. That is particularly so if there is a high concentration of population in one corner of the State. I believe that would have to be the finding of any unbiased and reasonable electoral commission. One only has to consider other democracies around the world. I cite the example of Great Britain, which has a heavy weightage system. It is a very small country, but it is recognised that someone being able to ride a bicycle around an electorate is a far cry from what happens in larger, more extensive areas. I believe that the same type of zonal system may not evolve but that a weightage system will evolve, if in fact there is a fair and proper redistribution.

Mr Campbell: They have a weightage system in the UK.

Mr HINTON: That is quite right. The United Kingdom does have a weightage system. Queensland may not have a zonal system in the future, but I believe that it will have an appropriate weightage system which will serve this State well.

Mr Austin: I have 29 000 people on my roll. There are not many Labor seats that have that number.

Mr HINTON: I am very pleased that the Leader of the House raised that matter. That is another reason why members of the Labor Party would not be looking forward to a review of the electoral system before the next State election. In Queensland the electorates with the highest population are National Party electorates. The Leader of the House said that he has 29 000 voters in his electorate. The biggest populations are in seats such as Somerset and Fassifern and those on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. All other things being equal, one must assume that, with the same voting pattern, more National Party seats would be created.

It is very interesting that some months ago in the *Australian* Mr John Stubbs carried out an analysis of what would happen if the one vote, one value system was introduced into Queensland. I will enlighten the House with some facts. The analysis showed that, although the National Party would lose six seats in the country and western zones, it would, as the Minister has just outlined, gain four seats around Brisbane in areas in which National Party seats have the highest population.

On a one vote, one value basis and all other things being equal, the National Party would lose two seats, not the deluge of seats that the clowns on the opposite side of the Chamber have been propagating through the media. The Liberal Party would lose the seat of Mount Isa, but it would gain one seat in Brisbane. The net effect of that would be nothing. What a terrible disappointment that would be for Mr Innes and his little gang in their telephone box. Under a one vote, one value system, they would lose one seat, they would gain one seat and they would be no better off. There is heart for the members of the Labor Party. Under a one vote, one value system, they would pick up two seats. However, all other things being equal, the National Party would still maintain government in its own right.

Mr Austin: If they get commissioners like they have in New South Wales under the independent system there, they would lose the lot.

Mr HINTON: The Leader of the House is right. I am very confident that fair and unbiased commissioners will be appointed to the commission. It must be remembered that if such persons are not appointed, we would hear a scream from the joint parliamentary committee. We would also hear a scream from the leaders of the other two parties. We will ensure that they are properly consulted and that there is no concern or discrepancy in that area.

The members of the Liberal Party and the members of the Labor Party have screamed blue murder about electoral reform, but when they have been presented with electoral reform, they have not wanted it. Their Wailing Wall has been lost.

Yesterday, I listened with some interest to the 11 points raised by Mr Goss and I came to the conclusion that there was no concrete objection to the Bill that could be raised by Mr Goss or by Mr Innes about the content of the Bill. If there is a concern, it is that the Bill is implementing in full—"lock, stock and barrel"—the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry and that they could be too severe and threaten Western democratic principles. That is something that needs to be examined very closely over the next three weeks. I will certainly be looking at it closely. I hope that when the members on the opposite side of the House clear the fog and the smoke-screen away from their brains, they will take a good hard look at the contents of the Bill to make sure that our democratic institutions are not threatened. That is my only concern. However, their concerns and their Wailing Wall cry that they cannot trust the National Party are now hollow. Their cry is completely empty because every area about which they complained has been covered by an ironclad guarantee.

The Bill puts to bed completely all those concerns. It should be supported by all the newspapers that have been giving us such a hard time around the country. If they are genuine in their recent criticisms, they will now support the Bill because it has an ironclad guarantee and because the concerns they have been echoing have been covered.

The Labor Party's smoke-screen has been blown away. The Bill is set in concrete. The guarantees are solid and they should be supported by the people of Queensland.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (8.29 p.m.): I am disappointed at having to rise and speak in this debate on the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill, simply because I expected that before I would be debating this Bill, which resulted from the Fitzgerald inquiry, I would be debating the Fitzgerald report. I would have thought that we would be debating the report of the Parliamentary Judges Commission of Inquiry. In both instances, members of the Opposition have been denied the right to speak. We have been denied the right to speak on the Fitzgerald report. The Parliamentary Judges Commission of Inquiry was to advise the Legislative Assembly whether any behaviour of His Honour Judge Eric Charles Ernest Pratt warranted his removal from office as a judge. That report has not been debated. The decision by the Parliamentary Judges Commission of Inquiry was taken out of the hands of the Parliament and made by the Executive Government. In all fairness and in all righteousness, that report should have been debated in the Parliament. Although the commissioners may have recommended that Judge Pratt not be removed from office as a judge, I believe that many ordinary

people—the people represented by Opposition members—would not share that feeling or come to the same conclusion.

I became angry when I read the Fitzgerald report, because there are honest and innocent people in gaol. Out of the whole inquiry, they are the forgotten people. As we speak about electoral and administrative reform, they are forgotten. However, they are the first people who should be the subject of a review. We should be ensuring that there is no innocent person in gaol because of verballing or because of inappropriate, corrupt practices in the Queensland system.

For 11 months Lorelle Saunders was degraded in gaol, but this Government has taken no positive steps to offer her any compensation. Because of verballing and other police actions one must seriously question whether some people should be in gaol.

Not one member of the Government cares about this issue. Not one of them has said, “Yes, we should be considering those honest policemen who have been decimated by the corrupt system—those honest and innocent people who are in gaol.” Not one word has been said in defence of those people and the Government has taken no action. That is what makes me angry.

I turn now to Detective Constable James George Slade. Because he made corruption allegations against Sergeant Alan Frederick Barnes, Detective Slade was shunned by fellow police and received anonymous telephone calls. He was so concerned that he had to sleep with a gun under his bed. After Sergeant Eric Gregory Deveney reported an alleged bribe attempt, dog droppings were left on his desk and the word “dog” was written across his note pad. Sergeant Deveney said—

“It reached the stage where I was camping on the front landing at night. I could identify cars coming into the street. If my dog barked viciously I would investigate it at all hours of the night, hiding in the shadows. I was frightened my house might be torched.”

Not one Government member has said that the Government is doing anything for those people. Honest police—Pitts, Jeppesen and Saunders—have received no consideration from the Government. It has shown no concern for those honest police or for Condren, who is alleged to be a murderer. Supposedly the body was found when Condren was in gaol, but the judges say that, because of technicalities, no action can be taken. The innocent people should be released from gaol.

The National Party Government cannot be trusted. I do not believe that Judge Pratt should still be serving on the bench.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Booth): Order! The honourable member has made no attempt to speak to the Bill. I remind him that he is speaking to a Bill.

Mr CAMPBELL: I believe that the Bill is a result of the Fitzgerald inquiry. Because the Government gagged the debate, approximately 20 members were denied the right to speak on the Fitzgerald report recommendations.

The Government talks about trust and says, “We have tabled a draft Bill on which this Bill is modelled.” But the draft Bill was tabled after the other Bill had been printed. What is the use of seeing the draft Bill after the other Bill has been printed?

The Bill states that the commission’s object is—

“... to provide reports to the Legislative Assembly and to the Government with a view to achieving and maintaining—

(a) efficiency in the operation of the Parliament”—

and honourable members saw that go down the drain today—

“(b) honesty, impartiality and efficiency in—

(i) elections;

(ii) public administration of the State;

(iii) Local Authority administration.”

The Bill mentions nothing about honesty, impartiality or efficiency. Because the Government does not want those as objectives of the review commission, it has taken them out of the Bill.

The most important word that has been left out of the Bill is the word “agreement”. The Bill mentions consultation but not agreement. Until agreement is reached between all parties who will serve on the parliamentary committee, this Bill is a waste of time. The National Party will always use its numbers to get the results that it wants.

There is no obvious reason why the referendum is being put to the people of Queensland. The issue is highlighted in an article that appeared in the *Australian* of 20 July 1989—the day after the referendum was announced. That article is titled “Ahern’s desperate power play” and states—

“But Mr Ahern and the National Party State president, Sir Robert Sparkes, told delegates an election in the present climate could be disastrous and the party had nothing to lose.

If the Government won the referendum it had six months to consolidate; if it lost it could say it at least offered the option and still had the benefit of the present boundaries.”

That article mentions nothing about fairness, honesty or impartiality; only a final, desperate effort to retain power. That is what it is all about: trying to retain power; nothing more and nothing less.

As I have said, just as this Parliament has been deficient, so is this Bill, because it contains no provisions for agreement, only consultation. One instance of the Government’s lack of consultation arose when the Opposition asked who was going to sit on the Pratt inquiry. The Government cannot be trusted.

Another point of concern is that the legislation does not provide that any submissions made to the electoral commission will be published. Nowhere is it stated that the situation will not be the same as it has been in the past. Nowhere is it stated in the immediate functions of the commission that is to undertake the review whether zones should be established. Nowhere is it stated that elections will be carried out in an honest, impartial and efficient manner. That does not appear anywhere.

When the Opposition has made submissions to an electoral review commission, those submissions have been made public. They have always been made public. Those of the National Party have not, simply because the pencil lines that the National Party draws are the same as those that are drawn by the commissioner. That has been said before.

Mr Hinton interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind the honourable member for Broadsound that if he wishes to interject he should do so from his correct seat.

Mr CAMPBELL: The Government says that the commission of review will not be shackled in any way, yet it says that there will be 89 members of Parliament. The Government has already made one decision that there will be 89 members, no matter whether the commission regards that as being the appropriate or most efficient number. How can it say that an overall review will be conducted and that it will be fair and impartial?

Lin Powell wrote about the coming referendum and what should happen.

Mr Veivers: Was he the Speaker then?

Mr CAMPBELL: He was not the Speaker. He was the member for Isis. It has to be remembered that at present the seat of Isis is vacant and that no member of Parliament is acting on behalf of that electorate’s constituents.

An article under the heading "Government trap" appeared in the *Chronicle* of 26 July, in which Mr Powell stated—

"It's a fairly well-renowned Australian axiom that if a government wants more power the electorate should say a resounding 'no'. In the campaigning for the referendum on October 14, I hope the electorate can see through the smokescreen of so-called fair electorate boundaries and not give the Ahern Government one more day than is currently legally necessary.

Let the next government see to the recommendations of Fitzgerald and let us not be stampeded into another six months of indecision and rhetoric about what Fitzgerald might or might not have wanted."

Mr Davis: The Biblical saying is, "Begone, Satan."

Mr CAMPBELL: Yes. The article continues—

"If you want the electorate boundaries changed to a different base say no in the referendum and don't vote National at the general election. If you do not want the boundaries changed to a different base, still vote no in the referendum and vote for the Nationals in the general election.

An extra six months will not change National Party policy and, I hazard to guess, will not implement the recommendations of an electoral commission."

Mr Powell does not even trust his own former colleagues. The article states further—

"If the Government had a will to change the electoral system a simple amendment to the Electoral Act on August 8 would set in train a procedure which would be completed and in place in time for an admittedly late 1989 or early 1990 election.

Don't let us step into the trap of this procedure. A no vote on October 14 is the only vote that will help to give this State real democracy."

Those comments were made by a former National Party member and former Speaker of this House. He was saying that the Nationals could not be trusted.

It has been said that the Labor Party sees 11 problems with this Bill and that nine changes could be made to it. The real problem lies in extending the term of this Parliament. If that were to happen, it would create the greatest waste of the funds of this State that has occurred in its history. The gravy train would go on for six months trying to buy the electors. It would be very devastating for this State. That is one reason why it cannot be allowed to happen.

I repeat that nowhere in this Bill is there a provision for agreement between the political parties in relation to electoral reform. The former Speaker of this House has warned that the Nationals cannot be trusted. The member for Broadsound said that there was no concrete objection to this, that it would be accepted in full—"lock, stock and barrel". However, I have already noticed that the National Party has made two changes in the draft Bill that do not appear in the Bill that is presently before us. They are great changes that do not give guarantees. Because the National Party has the numbers, it can never be trusted. The members for Broadsound and Mount Gravatt said a guarantee could only be possible. There are no concrete guarantees. That has been said by some of the National Party's own numbers. But most of all, it has been said by Sir Robert Sparkes. There will not be any change. The Opposition knows that, when the Government has the numbers, there will not be any changes.

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (8.45p.m.): I have pleasure in rising to speak in this debate. It is interesting that so much is heard from the Labor Party about trust, honesty and impartiality, and distrust and dishonest shams. There is only one dishonest sham and that is the one carried out by the Leader of the Labor Party. On the *Sunday* program he said that he did not want any part of having Mr Hawke—the silver-haired bodgie—coming into his campaign; that the Labor Party in Queensland would run its own State election campaign. I have in my possession the ALP policy document and branch

members' handbook. On the left-hand side it has a picture of the Honourable R. J. Hawke, Prime Minister—and he would have to be on the Left, for sure—Leader of the Federal parliamentary Labor Party. He heads the policy document. The handbook makes some interesting reading because of the way in which the Labor Party goes on about issues. Last night, the Opposition Leader spoke about 11 defects in this legislation.

Mr Davis: Is this your own book?

Mr GATELY: No. The Parliamentary Library gave it to me. When people talk about the honesty of the Labor Party, I wonder whether Opposition members wish to hear something about Peter Baldwin when he was beaten up in Sydney by some of his thug mates, and some of his other mates who have been before the courts over those issues? Let us talk about those things.

Talk about honesty and sincerity! Opposition members come into the Parliament and cast aspersions on this Government day after day. I totally reject them, and so does every fair dinkum and fair-minded Australian. People know that he who protesteth too much has something to hide. An illustration of that took place recently when this Parliament undertook a change of Speaker.

It is interesting that yesterday during the Premier's response to a question, the Leader of the Liberal Party said, "When you stop doing the wrong thing, the conspiracy will disappear." By his own tongue he clearly indicated to this Parliament that he and others had conspired. I have no doubt that he was confessing that the allegation of conspiracy was in fact true. They were his words; not mine, and not anybody else's.

I have to listen to he and ye rising in this Chamber and talking about honesty. Not for one minute do I believe what is being said. The people of Australia should look very carefully at the document prepared by the Australian Labor Party. The Labor Party has taken out a few words such as "communism" and "socialism" and substituted words such as "community benefit". The Labor Party has also put plenty of effort into showing the public, through this document, how much it will give. The document states that the Labor Party will give more to people receiving welfare.

Mr COMBEN: I rise to a point of order. I noticed that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, earlier stopped an honourable member for not addressing the Electoral and Administrative Review Bill. This member has not yet mentioned the Bill. He has merely cast aspersions upon the Labor Party, and quite incorrect aspersions at that. I ask you to bring him back to the Bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sure that the honourable member will come back to the Bill.

Mr GATELY: I am pretty sure I will. You need have no doubt about that, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will come back to it in great big heaps.

I started to look into the reality behind all the squawking and squeaking from "Gagging" Goss on the Opposition side and from the lily-livered Liberal Leader, Mr Innes. Has any one of them ever said, "Let's reintroduce the Upper House into this Parliament."?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr GATELY: I have not heard them say it lately. When they talk about crime and corruption, I remind them that it was their cruddy lot that threw out the Upper House. They could not stand the Upper House.

Mr COMBEN: I rise to a point of order. The language used by the honourable member in the last few sentences was clearly unparliamentary in many respects. I specifically ask him to withdraw the last comment.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Windsor has asked the member for Currumbin to withdraw his last remark.

Mr GATELY: I withdraw the last one, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that nobody wants an unruly debate. I would like the honourable member to address the Bill.

Mr GATELY: Thank you, sir—no problem.

Mr Milliner: And the language, too. I am offended.

Mr GATELY: But the honourable member is easily offended. If he is offended, I am also offended by having to continually listen to Opposition members rising in this Parliament saying, firstly, that there is an absence of trust. I point out that the only absence of trust concerns the Labor Party and people in this place who cannot be trusted.

Mr Prest: If the cap fits, wear it.

Mr GATELY: The honourable member could not get a cap big enough for his head, so he should not worry about wearing a cap. He would need a broad-brimmed hat, but he would not be allowed to have one because he would desecrate it.

Mr Prest: You get personal; that is the problem.

Mr GATELY: Was that a bullfrog speaking?

Let me get back to the Bill. I wish to cite the words used by the Leader of the Opposition last night. National Party members are supposed to sit in this Chamber and cop absolute garbage from the Opposition night after night, day after day, when it suits them to go squawking and squeaking like the little pig down the road, or “Gagging” Goss, or “Squawking” Peacock. The opposition parties talk about being genuine about electoral reform, but they would not know how to go about it. They should take a look at what their parties have done in other States throughout Australia and in the Federal sphere.

The Leader of the Opposition said that this Government should look at the electoral weighting system that operates in the other States. The Opposition should not try to tell me that this State’s electoral boundaries are corrupt, because they are not.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr GATELY: Queensland has a zonal system because the Labor Party did away with the Upper House in Queensland. The Labor Party says that the zonal system was introduced to provide fair and reasonable representation for all people in this State. Members of the Labor Party say that that is why the ALP introduced it; that it was not for any other reason. Oh, no! Of course, members of the Labor Party would not have been trying to fix the boundaries to suit their particular party. No! Everyone is supposed to believe that they are all honest and above board. I can tell members of the Labor Party without any hesitation that that was not the way it happened at all. They did it so that they could gain political advantage and to disadvantage other political parties.

When the Leader of the Opposition spoke about the second defect in the legislation being that it contained no legal or constitutional guarantee that the reforms would be carried out before the election, he failed to take into account that yesterday my Premier said unequivocally that the matter would be dealt with in the proper manner. The Premier has placed all of the facts before the people of Queensland.

Another party to the conspiracy that is being carried on in this State—against the people of this State—is the media that aid and abet the opposition parties. I am sure that every honourable member would agree that everyone owns a television and watches it every day. If members of the Opposition do not own a television and watch it every day at home, I would bet that they watch it in the Parliamentary Annexe to see whether their faces are on television.

Mr Milliner: You would not even be able to understand *Sesame Street*.

Mr GATELY: The honourable member would have been watching to see whether his face appeared on television, to see whether he got any coverage. What the honourable member needs to remember is that the world does not revolve around him.

Something that concerns me in today's world is the ever-growing strength and influence of the media, their ever-decreasing accountability and the way in which they portray matters that are under debate in this House concerning electoral reform, or any other reform and legislation. The media are just as guilty as the Labor and Liberal Parties in pushing the barrow of dishonesty, mistrust and all the rest of the nonsense.

When one looks at the Fitzgerald report and his recommendations for reform of electoral legislation and boundaries, one finds that at no stage did Mr Fitzgerald say that the boundaries were corrupt. I defy any member of the opposition parties to show me where Mr Fitzgerald said in his report that the boundaries were corrupt. He recommended a review, and that does not mean that the boundaries are corrupt. It is time that members of the opposition parties told the public the truth. At no stage did Mr Fitzgerald tell anyone in this State or nation that the boundaries are corrupt. He recommended a review, and that will happen.

My Government has the guts to go to the people on 14 October to allow the people of this State to determine whether or not there will be an election this year before 8 or 9 December, or alternatively grant the Government time to have the zonal system and the electoral boundaries investigated. The Opposition has been trying to con the public of Queensland with a petition that is nothing short of absolute nonsense. The Opposition was caught out and suddenly the factions were running all over the place like galahs in a tree that had been scattered by a shotgun blast. Goss was running around saying one thing; one faction was saying something else; and Mr Milliner was doing something totally different—he was out fishing with Tommy Burns and did not know what was happening.

Mr Milliner interjected.

Mr GATELY: I believe that the honourable member was out fishing with Tommy Burns. He should have stayed there. The public is not getting a fair go out of any of the Opposition members, because they are not telling the public the truth.

Mr Goss' fourth fundamental defect with this legislative package was as follows—
“... that the National Party Cabinet has the final say on the appointment of the commissioners.”

I suspect that members of the Opposition think that they should have the last say. That would be a fine set-up; the commission would be full of their union mates. Today the Premier referred to the Opposition's union mates and the corruption and crime that go on.

Mr Milliner interjected.

Mr GATELY: The honourable member should read a copy of the Premier's speech, and he will learn something about how crook the trade unions are. What about trade union elections? How many of the members of the Opposition are union organisers? That is what should be looked at; not the nonsense that the Opposition is referring to.

In addition, the media twist and turn the whole issue. There are plenty of examples of stories given to the media that are twisted around. For example, when a member gave the media a story entitled “Sewage effluent disposal on land a dead issue”, the paper did not print that; it printed “Sewage effluent disposal on land not a dead issue”. How can the media have any credibility when that happens? Today the Minister for Finance raised another matter where the media had been caught red-handed. The members of the Opposition have all got their fingers in the cookie-jar. The lid should be jammed back onto the jar, and their fingers should be caught and never let out. They cannot be trusted anywhere at any time. I said the same thing about a gentleman who was in Federal Parliament in 1972 and I was proved to be dead accurate.

Mr Goss went on to state—

“The fifth fundamental defect, or problem, with this legislation is that of consultation. This National Party and this Premier have failed repeatedly to consult in the spirit recommended by Mr Fitzgerald . . .”

I suggest that one of the main reasons why there has been a lack of consultation is that when my Premier and my Minister for Justice consulted with the leaders of the two opposition parties in this House—the opposition coalition—the next minute the matter was released to the public before it was ever raised in the proper place, that is, this House. Why the hell should the Minister for Justice trust the opposition parties? The opposition parties should not question the National Party; they should question themselves. They must not cast aspersions against every member of the National Party because they happen to have a guilty conscience.

Mr Goss went on to state—

“The sixth fundamental defect, or problem, with this legislation is that the parliamentary select committee is controlled by the National Party.”

What rot! It will be controlled by the members of the actual committee. As to the selection of the members of the committee, I suppose that the members of the Opposition would suggest that they should do it. Australia is in a mess because of the Australian Labor Party. Look at Australia's balance of payments deficit! Good God, it has never been worse!

The seventh fundamental defect raised by Mr Goss is as follows—

“ . . . is that the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission is tied to a reform based on 89 seats.”

What does the Opposition suggest?

Mr Comben: Whatever the best is.

Mr GATELY: For the Labor Party? It is strange that the honourable member would say, “Whatever is the best.” I suggest that he means the best for the Labor Party. At the present time many members of the Opposition are running around like fowls with their heads chopped off, trying to work out what will happen if the boundaries are changed. They are worried about keeping their seats and what they will do if they lose them. There will be a great deal of faction fighting amongst the members of the Opposition when this hits the deck.

Mr Milliner: You'll be selling chocolates.

Mr GATELY: I will tell the honourable member that one thing I have never been frightened of is fronting the voters. They will make the determination; not the members in this House. The members of the Opposition can laugh, squawk and make whatever accusations they like about who will or will not be here, but I will leave that judgment to the people of Queensland based on the performance of the members of this House. Many members opposite will not be back in this House after the election.

Mr Goss also said—

“The eighth fundamental defect, or problem, with the legislation is that there is no commitment in the legislative package if the referendum is defeated.”

The National Party is giving the public the right to a vote to determine whether Mr Fitzgerald's proposed review should take place. It is very simple; either people want a review or they do not. If they do, the people of Queensland will vote “Yes”. That will give the review that the Labor Party was claiming had to be carried out before the next election. The point that the Labor Party did not put on its petition was the timing of the next election. That was not stated publicly. The petition was only about whether people wanted a review and new boundaries before the next election. The Labor Party should have been honest to the public and clarified that by putting that in writing on

the petition for everyone to see. It should not have had a hidden agenda like that in its policy document about the legalisation of homosexual behaviour, a topic from which Mr Goss tried to hide last night and refused to answer questions about, and the decriminalisation of marijuana. I ask the Labor Party to have the guts to put these things in writing so that people know what it intends to do. It should not hide the facts.

Mr Casey: Your mates on the Gold Coast all want free prostitution.

Mr Veivers: Like hell we do! What are you talking about?

Mr GATELY: He would not know. He is only trying to bait us.

I will turn to the subject of integrity. The matters raised by the Premier in this House today clearly identify a hell of a lack of integrity in the union movement. It is so corrupt that matters being dealt with by judges in the courts of Australia clearly indicate corruption and crime in the running of a union ballot. They could not even get that right. We should remember that 60 per cent of union funds go in kick-backs to the Labor Party. That is the reality of it. That is where it gets its funding from.

That may well be why the Labor candidate in Currumbin is muscling in and trying to stand over people in the security industry on the Gold Coast. He and his union organiser, Mr Dave Brown, are threatening people and using bad language. Their behaviour to people in an industry who have determined that they will introduce voluntary employment agreements is nothing short of despicable. These people are standing over employers in their offices and using blackmail and threats.

I ask members to consider the actions of the Building Workers Industrial Union and the Builders Labourers Federation, which have denied a gentleman on the Gold Coast contracts worth \$2m. Because he is prevented from gaining access to the site, currently \$30,000 is being withheld from him by a builder. That is the sort of thing the union movement and the Labor Party represent. Honourable members should never forget it. That is what is wrong with Australia. By taking ballot-papers to which they were not entitled, these people have fiddled union elections. They have been caught red-handed and taken before the courts. We have former union organisers in this House; I bet they are not game to stick their hands up, but that is their problem.

Mr Ardill: Say it outside.

Mr GATELY: The honourable member would not be good enough outside to blow a chicken off the edge of a broken egg.

Mr Goss also said—

“The tenth fundamental defect or problem with the legislation is that the referendum empowers an extension of the term in office of the Nationals until July 1990.”

I suggest that Mr Goss have the guts to wait to learn the public's decision on the referendum. Why is he so frightened? It is because he is not game to go to the public while Australia has the high interest rates that are crippling every home-owner and every business in this nation. He keeps throwing in the red herring by saying, “Dishonest sham! No honesty! No impartiality! No integrity!”

The only people who do not have the integrity are those who were involved in the conspiracy just a short time ago. Mr Innes has even admitted it. His words were, “When you stop doing the wrong thing, the conspiracy will disappear.” What an indictment that is of that man! He is the same man who said that police were liars; what else can one expect from him? They cannot win by fair means. Let them go out and face the voters; that will be the litmus test for every one of these characters opposite.

Let us also see what the voters have to say to the Labor Party about its interference in Queensland affairs by the use of the external affairs powers, which were used to take control of Queensland's rainforests. Let us see what the public says about that sort of thing. The people will not miss Senator Richardson and these blokes opposite.

Mr Goss also said—

“The eleventh and final fundamental defect or problem with the package—when we have had time to examine the legislation in more detail, there may be more—is that the Nationals support and will be arguing for the retention of the present corrupt system.”

I say that there is no corrupt system. Opposition members should look at the reality. Yes, there has been an inquiry. But who conducted it? Who instigated it and who allowed it to run its full term? The National Party of Queensland! Yes, it is true that some people have been named as being involved in some deals that may or may not result in their being charged and convicted, but I suggest that that is a matter for the courts to determine, not for members opposite.

Mr Casey: Russ Hinze was your promoter.

Mr GATELY: The court will determine these matters, not the honourable member for Mackay. I suggest to him that he pay back the money that he still owes.

Mr Veivers: He has not paid the \$16,000.

Mr GATELY: It is \$50,000. The honourable member's activities need to be properly examined. But that is another matter for another day. The court will decide those issues. If two Government politicians and one Opposition politician were named, so be it. However, people from other walks of life were also named.

I say this to Opposition members about their crime and corruption crap: many people listen to the rubbish that they are peddling and say, “Isn't that fine?” How many people who are in gaols are politicians or police? A greater percentage of criminals come from the general community. I object to the comments being made continually by members of the Liberal Party and the Labor Party that Government members are involved in corruption, that they cannot be trusted and that they are running a sham. No sham is involved.

When people complain to me about crime and corruption, I ask them if they have ever taken home a biro or a notepad that belonged to their boss. The answer has always been, “Yes”. I suggest that that is crime and corruption. Once a person takes an item worth more than one shilling, or 10c, he commits an offence.

I have heard people ask, “Can you help me out with some photocopy paper?” or, “Could you get me a program for a computer?” When the person who was asked said, “Go back to the company that you bought your computer from”, the other person said, “We can't do that.” The person said, “Why not?” The answer was, “Well, it fell off the back of a truck.” It is incredible that that reply was made by one of our good citizens.

Mr Mackenroth: Name them.

Mr GATELY: Mrs Mackenroth.

Members of the Labor Party are painting an unfair, untrue and totally inaccurate picture for the public. Does that mean that Labor Party members are corrupt? I suggest not. Does that mean that Government members are corrupt? Again, I suggest not. However, that is how Labor Party members want to brand other politicians. They will regret what they have been saying to the public, because the public does not accept it. Members of the public talk about Wayne the whinger and his gagging mob of geese. Opposition members are wrong.

This legislation shows clearly that my Government has the determination to give the public of this State the right to make the decision on whether or not they want a review of electoral boundaries before the next election. There is no more honest move than that. Yet Opposition members try to find reasons why it is wrong. They are the only ones who are wrong. In the long term, the public will prove them to be just as wrong as “Wobbly” Warburton was when he travelled around the State in the bus that had the wheels falling off. His proposed reforms were not accepted, and this action by Opposition members will not be accepted.

The people of Queensland are entitled to fair dinkum, up-front, no-garbage representation, which is what they are receiving from the National Party. It takes more guts and determination to make some of the decisions that have been made by the Government than it does to merely decide to do what might appear to be popular but which disregards totally some sections of the community.

As the member for Currumbin, I am proud to serve the National Party under Mike Ahern. At the end of the day, because it has the determination, the grit and the guts, the National Party will come out in front.

Mr SHERLOCK (Ashgrove) (9.13 p.m.): I am delighted to join the debate about the review of the electoral process. Mr Gately seems rather confused. He has been speaking for almost 30 minutes about the referendum. Of course, we all know that the referendum has nothing to do with electoral reform. They are separate issues. The referendum is a farce.

I begin by drawing the attention of the House to the Labor Party's record in the process of government in Queensland prior to 1957. At that time, no attempt was made by the Labor Party to introduce all-party committees to this place. The Liberals were the people who called for accountability in government. We called for a public accounts committee and a public works committee and went into the wilderness on those matters in 1983. At that time, the Labor Party voted against a public accounts committee.

I will examine Labor's record in democratic government in Queensland. The House was reminded earlier that a Labor Party Government abolished the Upper House in this place after a referendum was defeated by the people of Queensland. If we had had the check and the balance of an Upper House in this Parliament in the last 10 or 20 years, one wonders if the Fitzgerald inquiry would have been necessary at all.

Mr Henderson: They also abolished the right of private members to raise issues in the House.

Mr SHERLOCK: I thank the honourable member for his interjection, which I accept. In the past two or three weeks, all honourable members have been frustrated in not having an opportunity to debate very important matters of electoral and administrative reform referred to in the Fitzgerald report. Two or three weeks ago when the report was being debated, the debate was adjourned. Now we find that Parliament has been prorogued. Tonight we have an opportunity to debate the issue, yet Government members are taking up time speaking about matters other than the Bill before the House.

I return to the Labor Party's record in this Parliament prior to 1957. I was saying that there may be a case to restore the Upper House in this place. Perhaps that might be considered by the commission in the work that it will perform; although who in Queensland would vote for more politicians? The public perception of politicians is not good. It conjures up visions of extra costs, of rorts and of non-accountable Governments, which is an indictment on all of us who sit in this place. I am sure that all honourable members, from whatever party, feel that quite keenly.

I draw the attention of honourable members to the number of Queensland citizens who are members of Parliament, both on the State scene and on the Federal scene. Currently on the Federal scene, of course, Queensland has 12 senators and 24 members of the House of Representatives. When one adds to that the 89 State representatives, Queensland has a total of 125 elected representatives. I also draw the attention of honourable members to the position in 1920, just prior to the abolition of the Upper House, when Queensland had six senators, 10 members of the House of Representatives, 72 members of the Legislative Assembly and 61 members of the Legislative Council, making a total of 149 representatives from Queensland. That is not so many more than we have today. Perhaps in the coming months consideration should be given to the possibility of restoring in this Parliament the check and the balance of an Upper House.

The process of electoral reform begins with the passing of this Bill. As I have said, electoral reform will occur whether or not there is a referendum. Whether it be three months, six months or 12 months, it is clearly just a matter of time. The reform should be allowed to take its course.

I remind honourable members of the position of the Liberal Party on electoral reform. As I have said, in 1983 the Liberal Party went into the wilderness on the issue of accountability. In 1986 the Liberal Party campaigned on electoral reform. In 1987, in the very first days of the current Parliament, the Forty-fifth Parliament, my colleague Sir William Knox introduced a private member's Bill that would have brought about electoral reform in this State. I remind honourable members that the Queensland Liberals campaigned against Question No. 2 in last year's referendum. So the record of the Liberal Party on electoral reform is excellent—it is impeccable.

As I have said, it is a curious quirk of the parliamentary process that, despite the Government's having prorogued the Parliament, the debate on the motion to accept the Fitzgerald report that was moved by the Premier on 6 July has not yet been concluded. Yet tonight honourable members are debating a Bill to establish the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission recommended in that report. Today or tomorrow honourable members will debate Bills to provide for a referendum to extend the life of this Government when the Fitzgerald report, the very genesis of all this legislation, has not yet been accepted by this Parliament.

The fact is that the Government holds this Parliament in contempt. The debate on the Fitzgerald report has been cut off; it has been stopped. If the Fitzgerald report is going to be debated, I guess that the Premier will have to again move a motion. This afternoon Mr Gygar gave notice of a motion that would allow honourable members to debate the Fitzgerald report—the very important report that was presented to this Parliament on 6 July. As I have said, I was prepared to speak in that debate. The people of Ashgrove, as concerned citizens of Queensland, asked me to represent them and express some of their concerns about the wide range of issues that are highlighted in the report. My constituents have visited me at my office and telephoned me, and I am sure that that has been the experience of other honourable members.

It now appears that the hype of an unnecessary referendum and the election that will ultimately follow will result in my being denied the opportunity to speak about the Fitzgerald report. However, if I had been allowed to speak, perhaps I may have said that communities can only make decisions and ensure that their will is carried out by their leaders if there is an effective parliamentary system, which must be the very cornerstone of our democracy.

The view that all wisdom resides in the Executive Government or the public service has belittled the role of Parliament over the years. Without an effective parliamentary system and without open, honest and accountable government, the will of the people of Queensland to have rectified the problems raised by the Fitzgerald inquiry will come to nothing at all. Perhaps it was best summed up by that great father of the Liberal Party, Sir Robert Menzies, when he said—

“Parliament does not exist merely to record decisions that have been made elsewhere . . . nor merely to pass laws. It exists to a very great degree to enable administrators to be criticised and to be questioned, and for the grievances of electors to be brought forward, ventilated and rectified. These functions . . . are of first importance in a democratic community. Consequently, Parliament does not exist only for the Minister: it exists in a large measure for the private member.”

After three years in this place, I have found that there is not much for a private member—certainly not a private member who is not a member of the Government. That is very frustrating.

Mr Fitzgerald has said that the basis of the relationship between the Executive Government, the Parliament, the judiciary and the police must be changed radically,

and if this change is brought about by a true tripartisan approach in this Parliament, Queensland will never be the same again.

I have a vision that this Parliament will develop a true all-party committee system. A multipartisan approach has great advantages for the Parliament and for the people because of the topics and the issues that may be raised not only of the Government's volition but also by the volition of the Opposition. Opposition members would have access to Government departments, and parties outside this House and Ministers would be given a parliamentary platform from which they could be heard. The Parliament and the State would become better informed of the facts. Members of different parties may find common ground—surprise, surprise—for agreement, and public debate on a matter would be stimulated and broadened. That is the nub of the matter. All of the elected representatives of the people—indeed, the constituency itself—are represented in and involved in the debate on this issue. That is democracy at work.

The conventions which underpin the Westminster system depend upon people—be they Premiers, Ministers, private members or public officials—acting and behaving with absolute propriety in carrying out their duties. If there is a flaw in the Westminster system, it is that it assumes that those people will act with integrity, even when it is not in their interests to do so. If the system fails because of human frailty, that does not mean that the system is wrong, it means that we have to do better.

Perhaps the Westminster system worked better when Government was simpler; when it was less complex and less powerful; and when Ministers had a deep sense of commitment to public service. If I express any doubts at all, it is about the moving away from the traditions of the Westminster system that Mr Fitzgerald proposes. However, I am prepared to give those proposals a go. In the end, it comes down to individual members of Parliament, individual Queenslanders, who will make their own stand.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the principles behind Mr Fitzgerald's recommendations include more than political or administrative issues. What is needed is a change of public and institutional attitude, which must commence with you and with me, and the need to refocus upon individual responsibility and individual integrity.

I want to draw to the attention of honourable members a letter written to me by a group of 28 concerned constituents from Brisbane, the Darling Downs, the north coast and the Brisbane Valley. Those constituents write—

“We write to offer our support as you grapple with the issues raised by the Report of the Fitzgerald Enquiry.

We would also like to draw your attention to what we see as the ordinary citizen's responsibility in overcoming corruption in this State.

Corruption is not simply going to go away by changes in structure and financial administration at the top, nor by the conviction of officials who have committed crimes, essential as all this is. It is going to take individual commitment to the standards of a corruption-free society, as the problem is widespread.

With this in mind, ‘Our Decision for a Corruption-free Queensland’ to which we, with many others, are committed was drawn up . . .

Experience convinces us that the effective and durable answer to corruption is incorruptible men and women.”

The letter goes on to draw to my attention the decision for a corruption-free Queensland and was signed by 180 members of the Indooroopilly Uniting Church: It states—

“Our Decision for a Corruption-free Queensland

We wish to pay tribute to the epoch-making work of the Fitzgerald Enquiry which has exposed the rottenness in our State and will lead, we are confident, to the establishment of systems more able to control corruption and wrong-doing in police and government administration in the future. For that we thank God.

From experience most of us are realistic enough to appreciate that any system, however well-designed, is only as effective as the people who operate it and the community environment in which it functions.

In the final analysis the only effective and durable answer to corruption is incorruptible men and women.

Our State has pioneered the way in the rigour of its anti-corruption investigation. It is now the responsibility of us, the citizens, to build the moral infra-structure of a corruption-free and honourable society.

We therefore commit ourselves to the following:

1. to make no false claim on any expense account, government or private;
2. to pay our taxes honestly;
3. to offer no bribe to win administrative favour, personally or on behalf of a company or business;
4. to accept no bribe or inducement to give favourable treatment;
5. and finally, if a corrupt or dishonest practice has been entered into, to make appropriate restitution."

That statement has been signed by 180 people in Indooroopilly. I understand that the statement is being disseminated throughout the State of Queensland.

I refer now to an article in the *Sunday Mail* of 5 July in which Tess Livingstone drew attention to 40 problems in Queensland revealed by a National Party sponsored poll. I will deal with the first four of those concerns that Queenslanders had about this State. The first concern was about undetected big dealers in drugs. A total of 97 per cent of people were quite concerned or very concerned about that as an issue. Child abuse was the No. 2 concern, drugs in schools was No. 3 and the early release of criminals from prison was No. 4. All of those are issues associated with drugs, corruption and crime.

I draw the attention of honourable members not only to the whole list of 40 problems but more specifically to issue No. 11, which is that politicians are more interested in re-election than running the State. A total of 66 per cent of the people interviewed were very concerned about that issue. An additional 20 per cent were quite concerned about it.

Liberals put it on the line in this Parliament, and they have been doing that consistently for a long time. I outlined the Liberal Party's position in 1983 when we walked away from Government. Any Liberal who sat in this Chamber between 1983 and 1986, as some of my colleagues did, was committed to Liberal philosophies and was fair dinkum about these issues of accountability and electoral reform. I pay tribute to those people who were rubbished by Government members for those three years, who were derided by the Labor Party but who held the line during that time. The parliamentary Liberal Party now has 11 members: We are going to face the people. I notice that the member for Currumbin is not in the Chamber at present. He was not in the Chamber when the Fitzgerald report was debated. He will face the people in the electorate of Currumbin. The members of the Liberal Party are confident about facing the people on those issues.

Accountability and the balances and checks of the parliamentary process are the central reasons for the Liberal Party's leaving Government and walking away from the Treasury benches in 1983. Accountability and matters of principle to which the Liberal Party is committed are highlighted in Mr Fitzgerald's report.

The Liberal Party will return to Government in this State on those very same issues of accountability because those principles are fundamentally right. Queenslanders have always known that they are right. Mr Fitzgerald's report has provided a flagship from which to launch them.

In Government, the Liberal Party guarantees to end the gerrymander. It guarantees real electoral reform, not just a charade in the form of the Bill before the House. Tonight, the Liberal Party will be seeking to significantly amend the Bill.

Mr WELLS (Murrumba) (9.28 p.m.): It is a great pleasure to speak in this Parliament after the honourable member for Currumbin and the honourable member for Ashgrove. The honourable member for Currumbin is the only member of this House who is capable of making the Liberal Party look urbane and sophisticated. However, he strikes a chord in the hearts of many. That fine 1950s nostalgia that he evokes about reds under the bed and McCarthyist stuff is something that is missing from the political climate of today. I suppose that we should all be grateful to the honourable member for Currumbin for reintroducing this fine and uplifting aspect to parliamentary debate.

It was interesting to notice that the 11 defects in the National Party's Bill, which the honourable member for Currumbin listed so accurately, were not taken any further by him. Rather, he chose to take us back to the past, to remind us how a tub-thumping pub brawler can add in an edifying way to the intellectual discussion of a great State such as Queensland.

The honourable member for Ashgrove also evoked a degree of nostalgia with his suggestion about bringing back the Upper House. Mr Deputy Speaker, as you would know, it has not been in existence for a few years. For some time I have been conducting a low-key conversation with a number of members of the Liberal Party about the proposition of restoring Upper Houses. The problems with Upper Houses is that they serve only two possible roles. The first role is to duplicate what is done in the Lower House and the second role is to obstruct what is done by the Lower House. Neither of those functions is particularly useful. That is why the people of Queensland will never cop any suggestion from the Liberal Party to return the Upper House.

Mr FitzGerald: Didn't you write a speech yourself?

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for asking that question. I did write my speech. I write all my speeches, unlike the honourable member whose very interjections are scripted for him by some ministerial office. I did write a speech and I would now like to commence that speech.

Because the 11 defects in the Bill were so adequately outlined by the honourable member for Currumbin, it will not be necessary for me to pursue them. I wish to concentrate on two major points that go basically to the substance of the Bill.

Mr Austin interjected.

Mr WELLS: The Honourable the Minister for Finance is interjecting from his incorrect seat. I am very interested in his interjections. However, Mr Deputy Speaker, I draw your attention to the fact that he is violating Standing Orders and I invite you to draw that to his attention.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Burreket): Order! I was about to make a similar comment. Certain honourable members are interjecting from other than their correct seats. If they wish to interject they will do so from their correct seats.

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

The first point that I would like to emphasise about the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill is that, because honourable members know the result, the Nationals cannot be trusted with an instrument such as the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission.

I ask honourable members to cast their minds back to a few days ago when Sir Robert Sparkes and the Premier, Mr Ahern, said what the result was going to be. They said that they were sure that a properly advised and properly constituted commission would come up with a proposal for a zoning system that is similar to the present system.

Mr Austin: That's true.

Mr WELLS: I thank the Minister for Finance, the member for Nicklin, for his contribution and confirmation.

When somebody such as Sir Robert Sparkes or Mike Ahern says that he is going to appoint a commission and that he already knows the result of that commission's deliberations, honourable members had better believe him. It is impossible for honourable members in this House not to observe one of the oldest tricks in politics, namely, to appoint a committee in order to get the requisite result.

Tonight on the *7.30 Report* an aphorism was quoted from sections of transcript that were taken from Cabinet records which showed that a Government Minister had said that one does not appoint a commission unless one knows the result in advance.

Mr Lee: Who said that?

Mr WELLS: I cannot remember. I think it was Mr Harper.

Mr White: No, it was Mr Gunn.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for Redcliffe for his valuable coaching.

The Deputy Premier said, "You don't appoint a commission unless you know the result in advance." That is what will happen. This Government will not appoint a commission if it does not know the result in advance. The Government will appoint to that commission the people that it wants. The Government claims that it will consult but the Bill spells out very inadequately that the Government will consult.

I draw the attention of the House to clause 2.4 of the Bill, which states—

"the Minister shall consult with the Parliamentary Committee, or, if at the material time there be no such committee, with the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly and the Leader in the Assembly of any other political party. . ."

The term "consult" as it appears in this Bill is not defined in the definitions clause, which leaves a hole in the Bill big enough to drive a horse and cart through. Clause 1.2 contains no reference to consultation. Whereas the Bill says that the Government will consult, that is not statutorily defined. Therefore, "consult" might mean anything. It might mean that the Government would do what it did when it appointed the three judges to inquire into the Vasta and Pratt matters. The Government said that it would consult with the Opposition before it appointed those three judges. But the Opposition was told about the appointments only 10 minutes before the announcement. Some consultation! That is not the sort of consultation that the Labor Party wants from the Government on this issue. The Labor Party wants real and genuine consultation.

Mr FitzGerald: A la Senator Richardson style?

Mr WELLS: No, not a la Senator Richardson.

Mr McKechnie: What's wrong with his style?

Mr WELLS: There is nothing wrong with his style.

The Labor Party wants from the Government the sort of consultation that its Ministers will be having with the Special Prosecutor. Because the Bill contains no definitions clause that sets out a requirement for adequate consultation and what that consultation will be, honourable members cannot rely on consultation as it is listed in the Bill.

Mr McKechnie: Can I ask a question? The style of consultation that the Federal Government talks about generally in Bills—would you be happy with that?

Mr WELLS: In terms of a Government that is constituted by 18 people, all of whom are under investigation by the Special Prosecutor, I believe that something even tighter than the Federal Bills would be needed.

I turn now to the other glaring defect in this Bill. It is contained in clause 5.6, which states—

“Should the Constitution (Extension of Duration of Parliament) Act 1989 not be approved by the electors qualified to vote for the election of Members of the Legislative Assembly at a referendum, the Commission must take no further action under Section 2.9 prior to an election . . .”

That is a complete and utter out and means that honourable members are debating a purely hypothetical question. That provision says, “We are not here in the world of reality. This is not realpolitik that we are engaged in here today; this is an imaginary exercise.”

Mr Lee: It sounded like it to me.

Mr WELLS: The people of Queensland will not approve the referendum. As they will not approve the referendum—and I would like the honourable member to understand this—

Mr Lee: Who, me?

Mr WELLS: Yes. As the people of Queensland, on the honourable member's advice, will be voting “No”, then this section will come into play to stop any further deliberations by this commission.

This Government will refrain from proclaiming the legislation until such time as the referendum is over and defeated. The instrument that is supposed to be set up by this statute will not exist—will not be in operation at that time. Not just that; when the referendum is defeated, this saving clause—this out clause—will have the effect that nothing further will be done.

An election will then be held on the old rigged and rorted boundaries and the Government will say that the people of Queensland did not want electoral reform. What in fact the people of Queensland do not want and what they will be saying is that they do not trust the National Party to carry out electoral reform. Nevertheless, that is the situation that we will be left with.

This Bill contains an out clause that will enable the National Party to avoid doing anything more on this legislation. This piece of paper that I am holding in my hand is an exercise in fantasy. It may be a very useful and a very pleasant fantasy, but it is an exercise in fantasy. It is not any sort of guarantee of reform.

I note that the honourable member for Mount Gravatt said that this Bill provides the concretised, ironclad guarantee of the possibility of reform. He later said that, because of the good offices of the National Party, we could be sure that this reform would take place. The fact is that it will not take place, because the referendum will be a resounding “No” and then quietly, in contrast to the resoundingness of the people's voice, the Government will simply not proclaim the legislation. If it has in fact proclaimed the legislation, it will simply invoke section 5.6 so that nothing further will happen.

This Bill is a sham. It has holes in it big enough to drive a horse and cart through.

Mr Beard: Or indeed the member for Currumbin through it.

Mr WELLS: I thank the honourable member for Mount Isa.

This legislation will not advance the cause of democracy or bring us any closer to electoral justice. It is legislation that will not even see the light of day.

Mr COMBEN (Windsor) (9.41 p.m.): When the member for Currumbin spoke earlier in this debate, he commented that the Fitzgerald report had not stated that Queensland had corrupt electoral boundaries. By inference, he tried to say that there was thus not corruption in Queensland.

Mr Beard: Didn't he say it elegantly?

Mr COMBEN: I do not know if a pig in a trough could be described as being elegant, but I did notice some similarities to it.

When the honourable member for Currumbin tried to say that corruption in Queensland was not connected with the electoral boundaries he obviously lacked an understanding of the Fitzgerald report. That report clearly outlines the connection between corruption and a Government that has been in power for too long, a Government that has contempt for the electorate, a Government that is no longer responsive or responsible to the electorate and a Government that has forgotten about Westminster.

Mr Fitzgerald clearly stated that there were a range of problems connected with government and that those problems should be addressed. He clearly said that whether a zonal system or a weighted system of any sort is needed is an issue that should be addressed. By his saying that there is a need to examine that, he is, by inference, saying that something is wrong with the present system. He is saying that at present the Government is not interested; that it has not been responsible for some time; that the malapportionment should be examined.

The Bills that were introduced yesterday, which included the one that we are presently debating, are Bills which examine what Mr Fitzgerald wants to be examined. In theory, if one listens to the National Party, one is told that all is well and that it is examining the electoral system in this State, that independent commissioners will be appointed, that they will report to the Government and that a fair system will exist afterwards. In actual fact, this Bill is a sham. It says nothing about accountability. It contains no guarantees whatsoever. It is a dishonest sham that will be a costly sham. It will involve the spending of between \$5m and \$10m of tax-payers' money.

The past record of the National Party shows that there is no reason why it should be trusted. There is no reason why the people of Queensland should be saying "Yes" to an extension of time to allow this Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill to be acted upon if it passes through this House.

The Government's past record is one of not consulting with people. It is one of ensuring that it remains in government all the time. The one thing that I say about the National Party is that it is always good at winning elections; that it rigs the boundaries, uses public money for advertising and holds elections at its convenience, as a result of which it is able to win.

At the last three State elections the National Party did not receive more than 40 per cent of the primary vote, yet it sits on the benches opposite and governs in its own right. It says that the electoral boundaries are fair and that Queensland has the same system as everywhere else in Australia. That is just not so. No other Government in Australia has ever governed with 40 per cent of the vote. It was only at the last election that the National Party vote rose to 39 per cent.

Mr White: You only got 34 per cent in Tasmania and you're governing.

Mr COMBEN: In Tasmania the Labor Party is governing with the support of a minor party, which takes Labor's vote to about 48 or 49 per cent. This mob governs with 40 per cent of the vote.

Mr McKechnie: What happened when we were in coalition? You never got 50 per cent.

Mr COMBEN: I am not arguing about whether the Labor Party received 50 per cent or not. Members of the Labor Party will take on this Government under the present boundaries and we will get 50 per cent of the vote at the next election. I am saying that the National Party governs with only 40 per cent of the vote, yet members of that party have the hide to look at other States and the Commonwealth and say that they have a gerrymander. Queensland has the worst gerrymander of any Western nation, and it still has. The malapportionment in Queensland allows the National Party to govern with 40 per cent of the vote.

This Bill and the forthcoming referendum are a grab for power. For the first time in the Western World, a Government is saying, "We want another six months. Do not put us to an election, because we want another six months." The best defence that the Premier could come up with in response to the Dorothy Dix question that was asked this morning was that the war-time Cabinet in England obtained an extension for five years. I point out that that involved a war-time Cabinet and all political leaders who were prepared to say, "We do not want an election for a while. The threat to the Empire and to this nation is so great that we need an extension." It was agreed upon. However, because the Premier knows that the National Party will get only 18 per cent of the vote, if it is lucky, at the State election and that things are so bad, he has only one hope left and that is, "Give us six months, and things might turn up." Members of the National Party are a mob of Mr Micawbers—something might turn up.

This legislation is a cynical grab for power. I do not believe that the wider community really understands what the referendum is all about. However, wherever I go I find that the people know one thing, and it is that this Government has been too long in office. They say, "In the name of God, get rid of them." That is certainly the widespread feeling in the electorate presently. I can tell the Premier that he will not obtain 50 per cent of the vote at the next election. If he can get even 30 per cent I will be surprised. If he wants to put a small wager on the result, I will see him outside the Chamber afterwards. The Premier will not receive 30 per cent of the vote, and he will most certainly not receive 50 per cent, because daily the vote is going down. Yet he wants to waste \$5.5m plus the cost of advertising, which will probably amount to \$10m.

Yesterday my leader mentioned that there are 11 fundamental flaws in the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill. He pointed out that the major flaw was the lack of trust and the lack of any guarantees contained in it. Where in this Bill are guarantees of reform provided? There is only a guarantee of review which will be carried out by unnamed commissioners whose recommendations do not have to be enacted. This legislation contains no guarantees at all.

Mr Henderson: Why don't you wait until you see the amendments?

Mr COMBEN: The Opposition will await with some interest the amendments, but I am still certain that the legislation will contain no guarantee of one vote, one value, which is the standard required in virtually every other jurisdiction and Legislature in Australia.

Mr Simpson: One vote, one value is a gerrymander. Just look at the two-party preferred figures.

Mr COMBEN: The honourable member says that one vote, one value is a gerrymander. At some stage, that opinion should be aired in the media. Apparently the National Party believes that one vote—meaning, one value—is a gerrymander, and that shows a total lack of understanding of democracy on the part of this Government.

The National Party Government has forgotten the Westminster system. It was well documented in the Fitzgerald report. This Government uses public money and all the resources of Government to advertise, corrupt the system, and keep itself in power. This Government has forgotten that the Opposition exists and that there is an electorate to which it is supposed to be responsive. For years it has been said that Labor electorates do not get the better schools; that they do not get their schools painted; that they do not get the hospitals; and that they do not get a decent transport system. The reality of Queensland politics in many instances is that the safe National Party electorates are also treated with contempt—and I know because I have visited some of them—because some of the schools in those electorates are a shame.

Mr Hobbs: What rot!

Mr COMBEN: They are. The honourable member can compare some of his schools with the Enoggera State School that is situated in my electorate. The reality is that in electorates in which this Government thinks it might win some votes, it gives money.

When it comes to electorates represented by the Mark Stonemans of the National Party or any safe western electorate, it is obvious that the Government does not put any money into them. When it dropped the name "Country Party", the National Party Government forgot about country people. This Government treats country people with total contempt.

The only electorates in which this Government is interested are the marginal electorates, and they are the ones that are pork-barrelled. In electorates such as Nicklin that are extremely marginal, there are hospitals with several wards vacant. The Government undertakes capital works in that electorate, but does not provide any staff for the facilities, which is a clear case of cynical pork-barrelling. That is all that this Government knows.

Mr Simpson: You don't know where the electorate is.

Mr COMBEN: But the Opposition knows when the election will be. It will be held in the last week-end of November or perhaps in the first week-end in December.

Mr Austin: What about roadworks? You missed the roadworks.

Mr COMBEN: The Government has introduced a toll system on the new Sunshine Coast highway, but has made sure that the toll does not apply in the Nicklin electorate.

Mr Austin: Exactly. Good representation!

Mr COMBEN: For whom? The people of Queensland? No, it is pork-barrelling in marginal seats in the hope that the Minister for Finance can hold on. He knows that after November, Mike Ahern will be defeated and the National Party will have to find another leader. The Minister for Finance knows perfectly well that there are too few leaders in the National Party. Have a look at them! Where is the leadership? Perhaps the choice amounts to Mick Veivers or Brian Austin. At least Mick Veivers has some intestinal fortitude. He is still a man, and there are not very many of those left in the National Party. He was the only one who was willing to stand up to Bob Sparkes.

Mr Austin: What percentage of the vote did the Labor Party get?

Mr COMBEN: I got 51 per cent.

Mr Austin: I do not think you will be here after the next election.

Mr COMBEN: I do not think the Minister for Finance will be re-elected. I look forward to seeing Dr Ian Matthews as the Labor representative of the Nicklin electorate.

Mr Austin: What did your candidate get against me?

Mr COMBEN: The Minister for Finance is pork-barrelling in his electorate so that he can become the Leader of the National Party after the next State election.

If I am permitted, I will return to the Bill under discussion. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition referred to 11 fundamental defects. The people of Queensland are aware of the defects contained in this legislative package. The legislation refers to parliamentary select committees, but the Opposition knows very well that the 11 defects to which my leader referred yesterday will be the very issues that will cause the referendum to be defeated.

Clause 5.6, which refers to the report under clause 2.9, states—

"... the Commission must take no further action under Section 2.9 prior to an election ..."

In reality this is all a farce; the Government will not act on it. It is a sham. There are no guarantees, no one vote, one value and no guarantee of the independence of the commissioners, because in the final analysis the National Party Government will select the commissioners. No-one in Queensland has any real hope for independent commissioners and when the referendum is defeated the whole matter will be shelved. Why is the

Government trying to waste \$5.5m? The sooner this Government is sent off to another place because it has sat here for too long—like the Cromwellian Parliament—and the sooner the people of Queensland say to the National Party with all the grace that they can muster, “In the name of God, go”, the better it will be for Queensland.

Hon. M. J. AHERN (Landsborough—Premier and Treasurer and Minister for State Development and the Arts) (9.55 p.m.), in reply: I have spent 21 years in this House and during that time have listened to some extraordinary debates. This debate caps the lot. Down through the years there has been a lot of competition in terms of false arguments raised and rhetoric of unbelievable proportions. Sometimes I thought I was dreaming when I heard adult people arguing in that way, but it is something that I have come to expect. However, the problem appears to get worse in this Parliament every year.

I will go back in history and remind honourable members briefly why this legislation is before the House tonight. The Fitzgerald inquiry report recommended a review process of the zonal system in Queensland which Mr Fitzgerald said should be carried out as soon as possible. The argument was quickly drawn in the media by members of the opposition parties who stated that all this should be carried out before the election. Indeed, the Labor Party, under the authorisation of Wayne Swan, petitioned the people of Queensland in shopping centres. The petition states that the election ought to be delayed until such time as this process—

Mr Goss: That is false. You are telling another lie.

Mr AHERN: I will lay a copy of the petition on the table of the House.

Mr Goss: Do it now.

Mr AHERN: I will table it before the end of my speech. It will give the lie direct to the honourable Leader of the Opposition. I have the petition outside.

The Labor Party was petitioning the people of Queensland on this issue. Its troops were out in the shopping centres asking for the redistribution to take place. They knew darned well that it could not happen. The last redistribution in Queensland undertaken by the Federal Labor Party took 16 months. I do not know of any redistribution process that could be done quickly. Tony Fitzgerald recommended a review of the process and open and proper consultation.

Mr Goss: You were never genuine.

Mr AHERN: I now have the petition. This gives the lie direct to the whinging Leader of the Opposition. This petition calls for honest electoral reform before the next State election and states—

“We, the undersigned electors of Queensland, do humbly pray in the next State election that the electors of Queensland be allowed to vote on honest and fair electoral boundaries subsequent to investigation by the new Electoral and Administrative Review Commission, and that an election not take place until the Commission has made its recommendations to the Queensland Government and new and honest electoral laws and boundaries are in place.”

The Leader of the Opposition relaxed in his chair and blamed the petition on Wayne Swan. He told representatives of the media, “It wasn’t my idea. It was all Wayne Swan’s idea. I didn’t do that.” All the members of the Opposition know that it is not possible to implement Tony Fitzgerald’s recommendation in that period of time and people in Government around the country also know that it simply cannot be done.

This Government has decided that the only way it can be achieved is for this Government to be given extra time. The people of Queensland will be offered the opportunity to give us that time, if they so wish.

Mr Henderson: Mr Hawke even offered you the services of the Federal commission to carry out the referendum.

Mr AHERN: Yes, that is correct.

It was all to be carried out within 10 days. I thought I was listening to *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and that everyone was mad except me. Every sane person realises that it cannot be done in that time and it was gross dishonesty on the part of the Opposition to suggest that it could be carried out.

The only way it can be done is to offer the people of Queensland a choice. They will be offered that choice through the implementation of this legislation and the other legislation contained in the package. It will give an ironclad guarantee that the review will take place if the Government is given the extra six months. Who in his right mind would suggest that a Government anywhere, having been given an extension of time, would not allow that process to be carried out? That Government would be absolutely butchered if it did so. The truth is that this legislation puts in place proper guide-lines and ironclad guarantees.

The matter is absolutely clear in law. If there is the remotest suggestion by these people opposite, who are out there to mislead the public of Queensland, that there is some hidden agenda, some real reason, some loophole or some trick being fabricated here, at the Committee stage I intend to amend clause 2.12 so that in future it can be amended only by a further referendum of the people. I intend to do that in order to give a further guarantee to the people of Queensland, if they need it.

Unfortunately, these days we are not in the business of telling the truth. According to the Opposition today, it does not matter what the Government says, there is no integrity. The Opposition misleads the people and says anything it likes. It has said, "They will try to govern without a Parliament." It alleges that somehow or other that process will be allowed to take place. As if the Governor would allow that sort of thing to happen! However, that throws a doubt into the minds of the people of Queensland, so the Opposition throws it in. Today those on the Opposition benches are desperate for power, so they will say anything at all. They do not worry about truth, high standards and principles or about trying to keep the people of Queensland informed; they will tell them anything. What is being said is, "Tell them anything."

This legislative package is unassailable by any constitutional lawyer. They will all tell you that it is cut and dried. If this extension is given, this commission will carry out its task and its findings will have to be implemented. I know that those commissioners are not known at this stage, but before the referendum they will be known and working. So they will be observable and known. They are the plain facts. It is an independent review process, as the commissioner recommended, one that was not accepted by the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the Liberal Party. Oh no, they were not prepared to accept what the commissioner said. They will agree only if he agrees with them. They do not endorse the independent review process. They are not saying that they agree with Fitzgerald; they are saying, "Only if it comes down in accord with ALP and Liberal policy will we agree." To them, it does not matter about the hearings, about the integrity of the people or about the whole process, which Fitzgerald said was important; it just has to be Labor policy, Liberal policy or nothing.

What happens here is cut and dried. What has happened in this House during yesterday and today has given this piece of legislation the good, old-fashioned smear—"Confuse the people about it, lie about it and say what we can about it so that people will be doubting and confused and will therefore vote 'No'." Members opposite are hypocritical in the extreme in voting against a real, guaranteed, ironclad possibility of independent electoral assessment and reform in this State. They have done handstands and back flips about the implementation of an independent group, the members of which will be known and whose recommendations must be implemented. That is the offer.

Mr Burreket: That has confused all those Labor Party people who signed the petition calling for the extension of Parliament while the electoral review was on.

Mr AHERN: That is true, and the Labor Party's hypocrisy is revealed.

When all of this campaign of disinformation is rained upon the public of Queensland, they must be bemused. When I see people of reasonable reputation out there telling lies—lie after lie—it appals and sickens me. When this sort of thing is allowed to go on, I ask: where are the standards required of members of Parliament? Here at least is a process which is recognisable, absolute and guaranteed, yet tonight we have had the man who would pretend to be Attorney-General saying to the House, “The trick is that they do not intend to proclaim this until after the referendum.” What a nonsense! Again, what a deliberate attempt at misleading! For Heaven’s sake, this process has to commence. Under the legislation, these commissioners have to be appointed. They have to begin their work before the referendum. How could the Government then decide not to proclaim the legislation? What a nonsense!

The whole lot of it is just a great disappointment to me. This real opportunity, which confers considerable benefits on Queenslanders, has required substantial discipline by my party to face the prospect of having to sit there and accept the decisions of the independent referee. However, because of the issues raised in the Fitzgerald report, it has been accepted by us. This has all been done, and done honestly and securely. It is a reputable process to the nth degree. It is as good as human beings can do it.

Mr Hamill: What about a register of political donations?

Mr AHERN: I am proud to stand here, but it sickens me to hear upstarts like the honourable member for Ipswich trying to criticise and reflect on the process. He would not know what it is all about.

Mr Hamill: You have your cronies on boards such as the QIDC and they are there as directors of slush funds.

Mr AHERN: Tomorrow I will tell the honourable member a bit more about slush funds, because I have some information on some of his colleagues. I tell the Leader of the Opposition and others that it will be about Transport Workers Union slush funds and others. I have some very good information. I am pleased that the issue of cash withdrawals from slush funds was raised.

This Government stands before the people of Queensland and offers them before an election a complete opportunity of an electoral process of review according to Tony Fitzgerald’s recommendation. If they do not wish that, an election must be called on the existing boundaries. The Opposition, which has claimed that all of this process as laid down by Fitzgerald could be done before an election, stands condemned in the eyes of anyone who knows anything about it. It could not be done in the time. The process will be carried out within a short time-frame. People will work on week-ends and holidays to ensure that it happens—and happen it will, if that is the wish of the people. I will be arguing strongly in favour of it.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 43

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

NOES, 38

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Committee

Hon. M. J. Ahern (Landsborough—Premier and Treasurer and Minister for State Development and the Arts) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1.1 to 2.1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2.2—

Mr GOSS (10.17 p.m.): It is significant that in respect of this clause, which deals with the composition of the commission and the requisite consultation that must occur, the Premier's response did not deal with any of the concerns expressed about consultation and the inability of the Opposition and the people of this State to trust the Government when it comes to consultation. Previously, the Government has broken the spirit of the Fitzgerald report in relation to the process of consultation. Earlier this year in this Parliament, the Government broke its promise of consultation on the composition of the Parliamentary Judges Commission of Inquiry into Judges Vasta and Pratt. The Opposition has bitter experience of the Government's breaking its word given in the Parliament. As a consequence of that, the Opposition knows that it cannot trust the Government.

Tonight in his comments in relation to this whole shonky package, the Premier gave it away in the same way as the member for Mount Gravatt gave it away last night when, in a Freudian slip, he exposed the true agenda. The member for Mount Gravatt said, "Here is an ironclad guarantee for possible reform." I will repeat that. He said, "Here is an ironclad guarantee for possible reform." What a joke! All the National Party wants is an ironclad guarantee of some more time to enable this desperate and corruption-battered Government to try to climb out of the muck that is of its own making.

I want to make reference to the concept of trust and to a note of warning that I sounded this morning to the people of this State in relation to a deliberate campaign by some members on the Government side and in the National Party organisation to sabotage the balance of the EARC reforms. Of course, within 24 hours of this Premier presenting the draft Bill yesterday in the House, he appeared before the press gallery and said, "We are going to severely curtail Tony Fitzgerald's Bill in relation to the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission."

Mr Ahern has exposed himself as a Premier who cannot be trusted to follow through with the Fitzgerald legacy. He went before the press gallery tonight and said that he is going to severely qualify the powers and recommendations of Tony Fitzgerald, as set out in the draft Bill. Why? Because he is being rolled by a powerful group of Ministers and a powerful group in the National Party organisation. The Premier is so beleaguered that he has got to crack and crumble and sell \$24m worth of public money invested in the Fitzgerald inquiry down the drain.

Today the National Party and its Premier flushed the bulk of the EARC reforms, as recommended by Tony Fitzgerald, right down the toilet. The National Party double-crossed Tony Fitzgerald. It double-crossed the people of this State. This morning I warned people that it would occur, and this afternoon, under pressure, the Premier did it.

Honourable members heard more lies about the petition. The Premier said that the petition called for the election to be delayed, for the Government's term to be extended. Of course, it does not say that, and he was embarrassed and caught out when he had to read it. The petition states quite clearly what could have happened. If the Premier was genuine, he would have reformed the boundaries before the scheduled 1989 election. The Opposition will keep telling the people of this State all the way down to 14 October, and all the way down to 2 December when it sweeps the Nationals out of the way, that if the Government was genuine, it would have implemented the reforms. However, the Government was always determined to go to the people on a corrupt electoral system.

As the Premier knows from independent polling, including the A.G.B. McNair poll and the National Party's own polling, the people of this State will condemn the

Government for those corrupt electoral laws and they will condemn it for the corruption and cronyism that has been revealed daily——

Mr Ahern: In the unions.

Mr GOSS: And more of which will be revealed tomorrow in relation to the ports and the corruption in the Queensland Industry Development Corporation. There will be more revelations tomorrow.

The Premier prattles on about the unions. Who could forget—or should I say who could remember—that blistering attack that the Premier delivered today?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the honourable Leader of the Opposition that clause 2.2 relates to the composition of the commission.

Mr McLean: Fair go.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member has no right to interject when I am referring a matter to the Leader of the Opposition. I would like the Leader of the Opposition to make his comments more relevant to the clause under discussion.

Mr GOSS: Unfortunately, I responded to the interjection from the Premier. At your request, Mr Chairman, I will come back to the Bill and try to resist the temptation to respond further to his interjections.

In relation to one of the fundamental reservations raised by the Opposition and I think the people of this State—that is, the question of trust—it is most important, in the light of the argument that the Opposition has put forward, that the people of Queensland realise not only that the Government cannot be trusted but also that it cannot be trusted because of the intervention of powerful cronies such as Sir Robert Sparkes.

Today honourable members heard the Premier deny the role of Sir Robert Sparkes in influencing decision-making, but after they walked out of the Chamber they heard broadcast over the media leaks from the party room about Sparkes standing up and telling the Premier that he had to vote against daylight-saving. The Premier telephoned Sir Robert Sparkes and got his instructions. It not only makes a joke of Sparkes; it also makes a joke of the Premier.

Mr AHERN: I rise to a point of order. I deny that, and it has got nothing to do with this particular clause at all. Mr Chairman, I ask you to bring the Leader of the Opposition back to the contents of the clause.

Mr GOSS: I am about to conclude.

In conclusion, I think that this clause highlights and focuses on many of the reservations of the Opposition in relation to trust and the reservations that it has in relation to consultation in particular, which I outlined in detail yesterday. The Liberal Party has foreshadowed an amendment to the concept of consultation. I think that the members of the Liberal Party are a bit optimistic in thinking that it will be accepted. Even if it were accepted, we still rely on those people in relation to consultation and trust. It is one thing to put it into the legislation. Although this is not a criticism of the amendment itself, as all honourable members know, basically it comes down to the way they operate in practice, and their track record is not good. In short, the Opposition has fundamental problems with the concept of trust and consultation. The members of the Opposition do not hold great hope for the proposed amendment in this debate or in practice down the track, but we have no problem in supporting it.

Mr INNES: I move the following amendment that has been circulated in my name—

“At page 3, line 25, after ‘Minister’ insert—

‘subject to the provisions of clause 2.4 (2)’.”

So that the amendment is understood by honourable members, I foreshadow that I will also be moving an amendment to clause 2.4 that will add a subparagraph (c) to clause 2.4 (2), which will state—

“Obtain the unanimous concurrence and consent of the persons so consulted to the proposed nomination.”

The proposal is to put something effective into this concept of trust and the process of consultation. The average person would believe that “consultation” means some effective attempt to get some meeting of minds and some concurrence. That is not our experience and it is not the track record of dealing with the Government. Regrettably, one has to attempt to put these specific provisions obliging the Government to seek the concurrence of the Liberal Party and the Labor Party, and, in the future, any other party that has more than three members in the Chamber so that the people in whose confidence the faith of the electoral system and administrative review in this State is placed are absolutely acceptable to all the political groups in this Chamber as people of eminence, quality and qualification.

The Fitzgerald report required that the opinions of those people be acceptable to all parties. I refer to the process of consultation that has been foreshadowed. The appointment of the initial tribunal last year has been rightly referred to. It was an experience of there being no consultation, for whatever reason. As to the presentation of this legislation—last night I recounted the farce that that process of consultation became. No warning was given that two Bills would be presented. In the 24 hours that have elapsed since the presentation of the Bill, the Premier said, “Which Bill do you mean? Which of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bills are we talking about?” Confusion has arisen because of the Government’s actions. A single Bill was converted into two Bills. The draft Bill is Mr Fitzgerald’s Bill; the Bill before the Committee is not Mr Fitzgerald’s Bill, it is the creation of a National Party Government that wants to give an appearance to its intent and promise of electoral reform. Frankly, the members of the Liberal Party are not satisfied with that approach. We are disturbed by the confusion in the minds of the members of the public created by the Government’s own action. We dislike the use of Fitzgerald’s name to umbrella and muddy the twin package.

The Liberal Party believes that the legislation is monumentally defective, which is the reason why we voted against it at the second-reading stage. One of the ways in which the deficiencies are significant—no doubt Mr Fitzgerald does not recognise it because he does not have the bitter experience that we have had in this Chamber when dealing with these matters—

Mr Elliott: He is not as cynical as you are; that’s the difference.

Mr INNES: He has not experienced the Government’s complete lack of trustworthiness.

Mr Elliott: You are a good one to talk about trust. Ask Bill Knox.

Mr INNES: I think that, by the time the election comes, the honourable member will find that the people of Queensland also lack trust in the National Party Government, which is why 92 per cent of the people say that the present Government is not effective and that they have no confidence in it.

Mr Newton: Come out to my electorate.

Mr INNES: I have no doubt that the average papaw would vote for the honourable member.

The legislation is a simple attempt to stitch up and make absolutely clear that the commission must have the confidence of all parties in the Chamber. Indeed, any future commission must have the confidence of all parties in the Chamber.

Mr GYGAR: This clause goes to the core of the whole debate. The Premier has put forward a structure that proposes that there will be full and independent inquiry

and that the people of Queensland—the Parliament—will then be bound by the results of that inquiry. He has even foreshadowed an amendment to double entrench the results of that inquiry by referendum so that that cannot be altered except by referendum. However, the whole system rises or falls on the confidence that the people of Queensland can have in the persons appointed. That is the core of the whole issue. If the whole system is going to be rigged, because of these mechanisms, the rort gets worse, not better. Therefore the task of the Premier and that of his Government is to convince not only this Assembly but also the people of Queensland that he is fair dinkum. The challenge for him here tonight is to give a single good reason why the amendment as proposed should be rejected by the Government, unless the Government intends to rort the system. The Liberal Party does not want a rort. The Premier says that he does not want a rort. The Liberal Party challenges the Premier to accept the amendment.

The proposed amendment is quite clear-cut. It does not impinge upon the powers of the commission as proposed by the Government or upon the legal process that is to be followed to implement the recommendations. The proposed amendment merely assures the people of Queensland and the members of this Committee that the commissioners who will be appointed will have bipartisan and tripartisan confidence and support in their task. If that does not occur, the whole edifice will crumble. When the commission meets, it is essential that everyone is prepared to accept the umpire's decision. If one side is appointing the umpire, complaints must be expected. A neutral and independent umpire who is acceptable to everyone should be appointed. The proposed amendment means just that; that, by instituting a process of concurrence with and consent to those appointments, the umpire will be acceptable to everyone.

The Premier has said that the persons whom the Government proposes to appoint will be persons of eminence, neutrality and great respect in the community. If that is so, those persons will have no problem meeting the criteria. If it is not so, honourable members are in trouble, the Government is in trouble and the process is in trouble.

Mr AHERN: The reflections that have been made by members opposite are not unexpected. Those members are in total opposition to the whole issue of electoral reform in Queensland. This is an attempt at smear and reflection on everything that this Government tries to do. By using fear tactics, Opposition members will try to confuse people. That is what it is all about.

As Tony Fitzgerald recommended in his report, there will be consultation. Mr Fitzgerald understood that the Government must make the final decision, and a fair reading of the report makes that necessarily clear. By saying to everyone, "I am sorry, but I don't agree. I don't agree with anybody", the Labor and Liberal Parties could subvert the process indefinitely. I suspect that that is what the agenda is all about—to delay.

There will be consultation. Unless there is public acceptance of the persons who will be undertaking the process, the whole exercise will not work. Happily, the public will not have to rely on what the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the Liberal Party says. The members of the commission will stand on their own merits. Either they will be people of integrity or they will not.

The talk around the Parliament is that the Liberal Party really fears a totally independent review of the electoral system in this State because, if that occurs, the Liberal Party will lose two, three or four seats. Honourable members know that that is being said, and it is not far wrong, either.

There will be trust and consultation. My Government believes that there is trust. As Mr Fitzgerald said, the issue is finally up to the Government, because the Government has to make the decision. Every effort will be made to consult, but for good and logical reasons the Government must appoint the commissioners.

Mr McLean interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already warned the honourable member for Bulimba.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 38		NOES, 42	
Ardill	Palaszczuk	Ahern	Katter
Beanland	Prest	Alison	Littleproud
Beard	Santoro	Austin	McKechnie
Braddy	Schuntner	Berghofer	McPhie
Burns	Sherlock	Booth	Menzel
Campbell	Smith	Borbidge	Muntz
Casey	Smyth	Burreket	Neal
Comben	Vaughan	Chapman	Nelson
D'Arcy	Warburton	Clauson	Newton
De Lacy	Warner	Cooper	Perrett
Eaton	Wells	Elliott	Randell
Gibbs, R. J.	White	Fraser	Sherrin
Goss	Yewdale	Gamin	Simpson
Hamill		Gately	Slack
Hayward		Gibbs, I. J.	Stoneman
Innes		Gilmore	Tenni
Knox		Glasson	Veivers
Lee		Gunn	
Lickiss		Harvey	
McElligott		Henderson	
Mackenroth	<i>Tellers:</i>	Hinton	<i>Tellers:</i>
McLean	Davis	Hobbs	FitzGerald
Milliner	Gygar	Hynd	Stephan

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 2.2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2.3, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2.4—

Mr INNES (10.43 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“At page 4, line 24, after ‘Chairman’ insert—

‘and

(c) obtain the unanimous concurrence and consent of the persons so consulted to the proposed nomination.’”

The effect of the amendment is that it requires the unanimous concurrence and consent either of the leaders of the various parties to the appointments or of the all-party committee, if that is in place.

I will now respond to some of the comments made by the Premier. Even under the Premier's administration, the experience relating to the politicisation of appointments is significant. Whether I am misguided or not, I believe that the change of the directorship of the QIDC was an act of gross politicisation. It involved the removal of competent, qualified, independent people and their replacement with people of less competence and fewer skills in highly relevant areas. The people who replaced them had impeccable connections with or actually held office in the National Party. That is completely wrong. That is precisely the sort of thing that Fitzgerald warned about—the politicisation of significant positions in statutory authorities as well as in the public service.

I think of the harbour boards, which have been rearranged in the Premier's time. I am aware of the removal of people who in the past might have had Liberal persuasions and who represented their local areas or their local authorities. I saw the removal of Labor Party persons from Labor councils. I think that nobody from Townsville remains on the Townsville Port Authority, but that people from Thuringowa of impeccable National Party connections have been appointed instead. Systematically, the boards and statutory authorities of this State have been cleaned out.

Mr FitzGerald: The Liberal Party turned it into an art form.

Mr INNES: The Government certainly turned it into an art form.

For the purpose of my argument I can cite two simple illustrations. Even today I have heard of a former public servant being savagely attacked. As I recall that public servant, he was not disgruntled or embittered at the time when he wrote a letter to the Premier complaining of something. Whether he was misguided or not is a matter to be determined. Whoever leaked the information, he certainly had apparently made no public statements about the evidence he gave in front of the committee. His reputation and his veracity, which clearly can and should be determined by the committee—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chamber will come to order. The clause under discussion will be debated with the Chamber in silence. There is far too much audible conversation.

Mr INNES: The reality is that the reputation of a witness before one of the committees was savagely attacked without any report having yet been presented by that committee. Today, honourable members heard the reputation of a professor of government apparently attacked with falsehoods when a political opportunity arose to use falsehoods against a certain individual. This is the style and character that people have come to expect from this Government. It savagely denigrates anybody whose position, standing or statements do not suit it. This is why the Liberal Party is so insistent that the crucially important matter of appointments to the commission should be made with concurrence.

Mr Elliott interjected.

Mr INNES: A contribution to the debate is being made by a person who has the distinction of having been sacked from a National Party Cabinet, which is a very rare distinction. The member for Cunningham insists on bringing it to the attention of the entire Chamber as well as to the attention of the State.

Mr Elliott interjected.

Mr INNES: I can remember being in the party room with the member for Cunningham.

Mr Elliott: And I can remember you, too.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must warn the member for Cunningham that the subject-matter under discussion must be adhered to.

Mr INNES: Would honourable members believe that the member for Cunningham was trying to do the bidding of Sir Robert Sparkes? He said, "But, but, but, Sir Robert Sparkes said . . ." The Premier of the day said, "Sit down, Tony. I've got something on you, and if you don't sit down, I'll spill it." And he sat down.

The reality is that the crucial findings of the Fitzgerald report were a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet style of the National Party Government—a style which the report states involved secrecy and a decision-making process which was at an unacceptably low level. The report called for public information and revelation of more information as a basis for accountability and of understanding by the Parliament and the people of Queensland of the whole decision-making process.

Mr Fitzgerald said in relation to electoral reform that the opinion of the commissioners must be the opinion of people acceptable to all parties. He specifically stated that the opinion of the people who will set up and conduct this commission must be such that it would be acceptable to all parties. As the member for Stafford has rightly pointed out, what objection can the National Party Government have if it believes that that involves the appointment of people whose opinions will be acceptable to all persons, not just to the National Party, which can denigrate people proposed by other parties, or people who do not happen to suit this Government's political fancy?

People who are generally acceptable to all political parties are required to fill these positions because their opinions become the law of Queensland, according to the amendments that are proposed and the legislation that is put before the Parliament. In the opinion of the Liberal Party, the National Party Bill, as opposed to the Fitzgerald Bill, is fatally flawed, and that is one of the flaws. The Liberal Party asks the Government to correct the flaw to make this legislation less unacceptable.

Mr GYGAR: Let me make quite clear what the Premier is doing. This Bill is not merely about the first committee; it is about the committee that will operate for as long as it lasts, and all of the appointments that will have to be made. This Bill is not only about the appointments that will be made by this National Party Government this year but also about those that will be made by a new Government, whatever political colour it might be, that will govern this State next year. That certainly will not be a National Party Government.

The Premier should think a little about the future. Would it not be good, just for a change, to bring in some laws that are fair and equitable, no matter which party is in Government? Would it not be good to bring in laws that impose checks and balances on an Executive of any political colour? Has it ever occurred to the Premier that, although this legislation might be a smart alec trick to pull now, it may not look very smart this time next year when other people are appointed by other Governments that are of a political colour that is perhaps not to the Premier's liking?

What is wrong with this amendment? Absolutely nothing, because it guarantees to the people of Queensland and to the members of this Parliament—to everyone—openly and publicly that all persons appointed to this commission now and for an indefinite period will have cross-sectional support from every segment of the political spectrum in Queensland. For Heaven's sake, what has the Premier to fear?

Mr AHERN: I have listened to the honourable member and am touched by his emotion. I draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that there are two Bills; one is the Bill under determination, the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill, and the other is the draft Electoral and Administrative Review Commission Bill that was tabled in this Chamber yesterday.

Mr Innes: It is very confusing.

Mr AHERN: Is it confusing the Leader of the Liberal Party? Heaven help me if he is ever the last lawyer on earth; I will never hire him if he is unable to understand that there are two Bills.

In each Bill clause 2.4 is identical. The draft Bill was drafted by the Fitzgerald commission implementation unit, and the second Bill was drafted along the lines of the model suggested by the commissioner. Clause 2.4 has been lifted directly from the draft Bill into the second Bill; there has been no change. That is the answer. The clause has been inserted in this way because the commissioner has determined that this was the practical way to do it, and for good reason.

Amendment negatived.

Clause 2.4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2.5—

Mr SCHUNTNER (10.56 p.m.): A moment ago the Premier made much of comparing the document titled "Draft Bill" with the Bill that this Chamber is now debating, and, in doing so, he stated that clause 2.4 was taken straight from one to the other—a direct lift.

I invite the Premier to have a look at clause 2.5 and explain to this Chamber why there has been a very significant change in clause 2.5. Clause 2.5(3)(f) deals with someone who is removed from office by the Governor upon the address of the Legislative

Assembly. In the draft Bill there are a significant group of words after that section that have now been omitted, namely—

“... approved by the Assembly consequent upon a recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee supported by all or a majority of that committee, being a majority other than one consisting wholly of members of the same political party in the Assembly.”

That means that, if the select committee comprises four National Party members, two Labor Party members and one Liberal Party member, no-one could be removed from that commission unless a majority of that committee agreed, not simply the four National Party members.

Those words were inserted in that clause to try to obtain the kind of unanimity that Mr Gygar and Mr Innes referred to. I ask the Premier why those words were removed. If he wanted to achieve the kind of acceptance across a wide spectrum of the community that he refers to, those words would be included in the legislation, because they affect the appointment of the chairman of the commission as well.

Mr AHERN: The change was made because, under this particular draft, the tenure of the members of the commission was more secure than the tenure of a judge. When the Government drafted the legislation it was thought appropriate that the tenure should be equivalent to that of a judge. The clause is reasonable. It is better that it be in line with provisions relating to people of similar stature within the community.

Mr INNES: Mr Chairman!

The CHAIRMAN: I call the Leader of the Liberal Party.

Mr Randell: Oh, no.

Mr INNES: Mr Randell is complaining.

The reality is that this Chamber is faced with a Bill and a draft Bill. The draft Bill and the primary Bill that is under debate tonight assume that the same structure is in place. They both deal with the same commission and the same parliamentary committees. However, there are no transitional, saving or repealing clauses and the very practical question arises: how do the two hang together? I suspect that the two were drafted totally independently—one by the implementation unit and the other by the National Party Government. The two do not hang together. Normally there would be a transitional provision in the second Bill stating how that Bill relates to the draft Bill; whether it amends, saves, repeals or replaces the first Bill. This is not there.

As the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha has rightly pointed out, it is significant that, when the primary question of the tenure of the people appointed to the commission is dealt with, there is a difference between the two Bills. I ask: which Bill will take precedence, and how will the second Bill gel with the draft Bill? There was no further contact with me from the time I made some trenchant submissions at short notice 10 days ago until after these Bills were introduced into the Chamber from the implementation committee. The whole process of consultation went down divergent paths, and the Government and the implementation unit were each doing something different.

The two do not hang properly together. They cannot have been drafted properly together, because there would have been transitional provisions. The member for Mount Coot-tha rightly identifies something which is a very significant difference between the Bill we are debating and the Bill that is intended to replace it, was never intended to be passed or which at one stage was supposed to be attacked not only by interest groups but also by the Premier himself.

Mr Hamill: Stillborn.

Mr INNES: Yes. We are getting through to it.

As an exercise in logic, if there has to be unanimity to dismiss somebody, why is unanimity not necessary to appoint somebody? Is it not a simple matter of relevant logic? If the commissioner thinks it is relevant to require unanimity to dismiss, surely there should be similar unanimity to appoint. Perhaps Mr Fitzgerald believes, as any reasonable person of goodwill might believe, that the word "consult" would mean an effective process, but, from bitter experience, we know it does not.

Mr AHERN: What the honourable member is suggesting is quite nonsensical. I will deal with the issue of tenure of office. Under clause 2.5 (2) (f) of the draft Bill, the tenure of office is more secure than that of a judge.

Mr Innes: So?

Mr AHERN: So! It establishes Parliament's role in the matter. Surely, Parliament in its totality has a much better perspective than a parliamentary committee. What is in the legislation is the parliamentary committee as well as the Parliament. Surely that is unreasonable, unwieldy and unwise, so the Government has determined that the stature of this person is better compared with that of a judge. In case at some future time an unsuitable appointment is made and a decision has to be made to terminate the office, that is not an unreasonable course. That has to be foreseen; it may well happen. It has happened in this State before in relation to a Supreme Court judge. That mechanism has had to be used. So it is reasonable and thought wise by us.

When it is reflected upon—rather than a lawyer trying to think of every argument against everything and putting it all at once, which is what the honourable member for Sherwood always does—it will be seen that, when the stature of the Parliament is compared with that of the commission, the provision in this Bill is better than that in the draft Bill.

What was the other point?

Mr Innes: Where are the saving or transitional provisions?

Mr AHERN: This is Government legislation, but in many respects it mirrors the draft Bill. However, the idea is that, when the draft Bill is determined in respect of all its contents, it will then simply be instituted to replace the Bill before the Committee.

Mr Innes: You can't do that.

Mr AHERN: Yes, it can be done. I am advised by the Parliamentary Counsel here that that is perfectly appropriate and right. If I am to depend upon his advice or that of the honourable member, I will choose the former.

Mr INNES: It is very easy to say that one will be replaced with the other. The reality is that the draft Bill is the Fitzgerald Bill. The Premier criticised me for departing from Fitzgerald, but the very moment I used an argument against the Premier, he departed from Fitzgerald. The Premier tabled Fitzgerald's draft Bill with its clause 2.5 (2) (f), which said that there had to be unanimity on the committee to sack somebody, so I am asking how both things come together. If the commission is set up under the Bill before the Committee, where the draft Bill says anything about that commission, does that commission become the commission that has been established by the Bill before the Committee?

Mr Lickiss: Or they would have to be reappointed.

Mr INNES: Yes, or do they have to be reappointed?

The draft Bill does not contain the saving provision, an appointment provision or a deeming provision.

Mr Schuntner: It is different legislation.

Mr INNES: Yes, it is different legislation.

Might it be that the draft Bill contains completely different terms relating to the appointment of commissioners?

Mr AHERN: I am advised that the final Bill as it is presented to the Parliament will contain any necessary transitional or machinery matters that are taken on board in the course of the review process during the coming weeks.

The member asked how they come together. The answer is: very well, and it will all work.

Mr INNES: Slowly the truth emerges. If one keeps going long enough, one finally gets the hang of things. What is perfectly clear is that this Bill before the Committee has nothing to do with the implementation committee and Fitzgerald. It is National Party Government legislation. It is the one that has been produced to this Assembly. The draft Bill that I have corresponds with the sort of document I saw ten days ago—a single Bill that set up both electoral reform and administrative reform.

Because the Government committed itself to a timetable and because it thought of this great stroke of genius, the referendum, it called Parliament together to get the referendum going and it had to come up with something to give the appearance that it is fair dinkum and genuine about electoral reform. The reason the two Bills have incompatible and inconsistent provisions and no transitional provisions is that the one before the Committee is the Government's work and the draft Bill is Fitzgerald's work. The Government's Bill is political in intent, political in its conception and politically flawed.

Mr AHERN: What a load of pompous nonsense that is! It is pomposity in the extreme. Clearly, the real agenda of the Leader of the Liberal Party is to delay this process so that it cannot be carried out within the time prescribed.

It has always been said that this Bill is the Government's Bill in order to expedite the electoral review process. I never sought to say that it is anything else. It is brought forward to allow more time for consultation on the other legislation, as the commissioner required at page 144 of his report.

Clause 2.5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2.6 to 2.8, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2.9—

Mr INNES (11.09 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“At page 6, omit lines 21 and 22.”

The amendment relates to the part of the clause which states—

“(d) the 89 electoral districts into which the State and each zone (if any) should be divided;”.

If anything indicates that political direction has gone into this document from the Government, it clearly is the insertion in this clause of a requirement that there must be 89 electoral districts and the insertion of a similar requirement into the alleged Fitzgerald draft. Honourable members will recall that the Liberal Party has opposed every attempt by the Government to increase elected representative bodies. It opposed the increase in the Brisbane City Council, which the National Party and the Labor Party supported. It opposed the increase in the size of the Federal Parliament, which the National Party and the Labor Party supported. It opposed the increase in the size of this Parliament and on that occasion at least was supported by the Labor Party. The National Party has gone for big government three out of three, the Labor Party two out of three and the Liberal Party zero out of three. It is astonishing that the Premier talks about comprehensive and total electoral review, yet he does not look at the number of electoral districts and the number of representatives of Parliament. The Liberal Party believes that there are seven too many members in this Parliament. It believes that 82 members could still do the job. It might be that fewer members could do the job.

In New South Wales, each member represents approximately 40 000 people. The Liberal Party does not advocate that we go back to that figure. The effect of this legislation is that not only will Queensland be frozen at 89 electoral districts, but, according to the amendment that the Government will move later, in future it will require a referendum to change those districts in this Parliament.

The Premier is so cute and smart and rubbishes me and my legal talents. However, every day we see a new bungle from his Government. He has the full resources, yet we still see stop and start with regard to legislation. The Government never quite gets it right. We never know exactly how many Bills are coming down. We never quite know whether the Bills say what the Government's decision will finally be. I do not know how the Government back-bench members feel. They cannot have any sense of certainty about the legislative program or the planning and tactics of the Government. There is never a clear line, a clear approach or clear-cut legislation.

The Liberal Party does not believe that 89 is any magic figure into which this State's electoral districts should be converted. Surely the electoral commission should look at the number of electoral districts, the way in which they are divided, what resources might apply to what number of persons and whether the job can be done?

Mr Elliott: Do you suggest more or less?

Mr INNES: We will be consistent and vote the way we voted a couple of years ago. We were happy to oppose the increase in the size of the House from 82 members. We are prepared to go back to 82 members. However, if we have electoral review, let the commission look at one of the primary tasks that should be reviewed: the size of the Parliament itself and any recommendations it might have as to how the Parliament should grow in size according to the increase in the population of the State. That is one of the basic facts that any proper and full electoral review would take into account.

The Liberal Party opposes the obligation that the review commission be required to look at a Parliament of 89 seats. If I have absorbed the intent of the legislation—I think I have, even though I have been given no notice once again of this further referendum provision—it is even more extraordinary that the Government should inflict upon the State, before it has seen the recommendations of the review commission, a freezing of the State into 89 electoral districts and the requirement of a referendum to change that number.

Mr GOSS: At the outset of my remarks on behalf of the parliamentary Labor Party yesterday, I also indicated its concern and its objection to this stipulation of 89 seats and the way in which that effectively removed the complete independence of this commission in terms of a full review and a full examination of what the result should be.

The Bill makes approximately 18 references to zones. Why are the number of seats prescribed? What about the Hare-Clarke system and so on? There is so much more that could be in the legislation, but why in the general review that is to be carried out—

Mr Ahern: Are you suggesting a Hare-Clarke system?

Mr GOSS: No, I am not. This morning on the radio, after I followed the Premier and tried to prop him up a bit in relation to saving the rest of EARC—but without success, unfortunately—I said that a lot of people do suggest that system. I do not. However, a lot of people do and they are entitled to be considered.

All these things could and should be out in the open. What we are concerned about is why this particular number of seats has to be specified. The Opposition also believes that the Government is creating problems by foreshadowing this amendment at the end of the legislation, which, once again, as the member for Sherwood has pointed out, has been thrust upon us. It is quite a complex amendment, I think, and one that requires more consideration than honourable members are able to give it tonight. It is some sort of referendum or double-entrenchment proposal, which I think is going to create problems.

I suspect that it does create the problem that the member for Sherwood has adverted to, that is, it locks in the 89 seats.

I was going to make those comments at the end of the debate. However, it is relevant to make them at this stage. I think it is a serious problem that the Government has got to address. If the Government was genuine about trying to make this work and get the referendum passed, it would allow a bit more time, and it might even come back tomorrow. But the Government is not going to do that, because it is not genuine. It is the old National Party jackboot tactic: ram it through, and it does not matter whether it works or not.

Mr BURNS: I, too, would like to comment on this clause. At the outset I point out that the Nationals' former coalition partners, the Liberals, just do not trust the National Party at all on this whole issue. After living together for years, there is just no trust between those two parties—no trust whatsoever. That is an indication of what would probably happen if the stage was ever reached again at which Queensland had a coalition. What sort of a State would Queenslanders have and what sort of an administration would this State have when there is such bitterness and hatred and the trust is just not there?

Under the Federal redistribution proposals, some provision is made for submissions that are made by political parties or individuals to be published. I believe that that should have been done in this instance, too. Clause 2.9(3) states—

“In discharge of its function in accordance with subsection (1) the Commission must initially cause to be advertised state-wide notices calling for submissions . . .”

The clause also states that, upon receipt of the submissions, the commission must furnish a report by 12 December 1989. I believe that there should be attached to that report, as part of that report, a copy of the submissions from the political parties and the individuals involved. It is the one way of knowing whether the commissioners have been truly independent or whether they have acted on the initiative of a political party or on the initiative of a particular group. I believe that, if people are to have some trust in the system, such a provision should have been contained in this legislation.

The Opposition does not trust the National Party on this issue. It has learned that the Liberal Party does not trust the National Party at all on the issue. I believe that the only way the people could trust this particular form of reporting would be for them to see what the parties and individuals place before the commission.

Mr HAMILL: I just want to elaborate on the remarks made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition with respect to the procedure that is to be followed by the commission following the receipt of submissions in writing.

I recall that in the process that has been adopted for Federal redistributions, all the submissions that are made are indeed made public and members of the public are given the opportunity to comment on the submissions that have been brought before the Commonwealth commission.

Mr FitzGerald: What's the difference?

Mr HAMILL: There is a great deal of difference. I will tell the honourable member for Lockyer what the difference is.

The great difference is that we would not go through the sham that we have continually gone through in Queensland in which the Government's submission is delivered virtually under lock and key to the commissioners, who have been hand-picked by the Government to effectively implement the Government's submission. There is no opportunity under the current arrangements in Queensland for the public to have any opportunity to view the submissions of those who would make a submission to the commission unless those parties take the trouble themselves to make public their submission.

The member for Aspley grotesquely misled the House this evening when she said that the National Party held a press conference to make public its submission to the last redistribution. No such public disclosure was made. The Labor Party made public its submission. I think that the Liberal Party also made public its submission, but the National Party certainly did not, and for very good reason. The reason it did not is that it was a set-up and that it did not want to place its proposals, its arm-twisting, its leg-pulling, before the public gaze.

Mr Beard: Why would she say that if they didn't?

Mr HAMILL: Because the honourable member is quite fond of misleading the House.

So the proposition which is before us is again flawed. The Leader of the Opposition has identified many other flaws in the legislation.

Furthermore, to prescribe the size of the House to the so-called independent Electoral and Administrative Review Commission is also another grotesque abuse perpetrated by the National Party. It is as grotesque as the existing Electoral Districts Act, which purports to give the so-called independent redistribution commissioners—these are the hand-picked ones who are supposed to be independent—the discretion to draw lines on the electoral map when the existing Electoral Districts Act has virtually drawn all the lines for the Government already. The zonal boundaries are already drawn. It was known, for example, that Chillagoe was going to be in a seat based on the Tablelands, not because the electoral commissioners thought that it might be appropriate to do that, but rather because the Government had already drawn the boundary lines and prescribed the number of seats that had to be allocated to each parcel of land. The discretion was not given to the commissioners.

The other aspect of this proposal which I find even more disquieting is not so much what is in it as what has been left out of it. If one refers back to that part of the Bill that sets out the definitions, one sees that the electoral system is defined. It goes on in great detail and talks about the splitting-up of the State into divisions. The words “zones” and “districts” appear. Procedures such as voting, absentee and postal voting and counting the votes are mentioned. It also talks about the exclusion of fraud and other misconduct.

If the Government was really and truly earnest about putting in place a system of review, what one should see but does not see in this Bill is all of those other elements of Mr Fitzgerald's report which relate to the conduct of elections in Queensland, and surely most significant among those must be Mr Fitzgerald's prescription for a register of political donations. It is not only the electoral system that lies at the root of corruption in this State and is causing so much community disquiet but also the fact—and it is a fact, and Fitzgerald has found it to be a fact—that—

Mr Ahern: That's not in this clause.

Mr HAMILL: I know that it is not in the clause. If the Premier had been listening to what I said, he would know that I said that the acts of omission are a very disconcerting feature of this clause. The National Party is not sincere in seeking electoral review. The Premier is not sincere.

Mr Ahern: You're out of order.

Mr HAMILL: He is the Chairman; you are the Premier, but you will not be the Premier for much longer.

Mr AHERN: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is not speaking to the clause.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already mentioned this evening that I require relevance in this debate. I ask the honourable member to make his comments relevant to the clause under discussion.

Mr HAMILL: As I was saying before I was rudely interrupted by the man who would like to remain Premier but will not—as I was saying to clause 2.9—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The words that the honourable member has just uttered are irrelevant to the clause. I ask him to confine his remarks to the clause.

Mr HAMILL: As I was addressing myself to clause 2.9—the immediate functions of the commission—I reiterate that what is contained in clause 2.9 is disconcerting enough because of the discretion that is removed from the so-called independent commission. It is also disconcerting because clause 2.9 is flawed by the omissions from it—omissions that members of the Opposition would not have expected to occur if we could have trusted the oft-stated comments by the Premier that Fitzgerald's recommendations were going to be adopted "lock, stock and barrel". That is why clause 2.9 is defective. It is further illustrative of the fact that the Bill is defective. It is further illustrative of the fact that the National Party has not, will not and cannot regain the trust of the people of Queensland, who will throw out this Bill and this Government and its referendum.

Mr AHERN: The making of public submissions is a matter on which the commission is in no way constrained. The commission can certainly do that.

Mr Hamill: Well, why isn't it in the Bill?

Mr AHERN: Because it does not need to be.

Whether there should be 89 seats or not is an interesting question. It is also in the recommendations from the implementation committee. I remind honourable members that that number is contained in the legislation.

Mr Innes: It wasn't in the first draft.

Mr I. J. Gibbs: Yes, it was.

Mr AHERN: It was in the one that went to the honourable member.

Mr I. J. Gibbs: Have a look when you go home. I can show you one now if you like.

Mr AHERN: It is surely a decision of Parliament as to how many seats it should have and the system of election that should be ascribed to it. It is a decision that ought to be known. For the purposes of expedition, it needs to be known early. If there is a suggestion that a review process might decide, for instance, that Queensland, instead of having 89 seats, might have 30, that will create massive disruption. Disruption would ensure that any referendum process is obviously nullified, because one could not have that exercise done in the time available. If it is left to the commission to determine, say, that we have a Hare-Clarke system—a multiple-number electorate system—or something like that, it is all quite nonsensical. This is a basic question that ought to be determined by a Parliament, and it is. It is a completely sensible decision to take up front, particularly when one is in a process of expedition in order to get the decisions made in time for implementation, if approved by referendum, before 7 July next year.

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

AYES, 43		NOES, 38	
Ahern	Hynd	Ardill	Palaszczuk
Alison	Katter	Beanland	Prest
Austin	Littleproud	Beard	Santoro
Berghofer	McKechnie	Braddy	Schuntner
Booth	McPhie	Burns	Sherlock
Borbidge	Menzel	Campbell	Smith
Burreket	Muntz	Casey	Smyth
Chapman	Neal	Comben	Vaughan
Clauson	Nelson	D'Arcy	Warburton
Cooper	Newton	De Lacy	Warner
Elliott	Perrett	Eaton	Wells
Fraser	Randell	Gibbs, R. J.	White
Gamin	Sherrin	Goss	Yewdale
Gately,	Simpson	Hamill	
Gibbs, I. J.	Slack	Hayward	
Gilmore	Stoneman	Innes	
Glasson	Tenni	Knox	
Gunn	Veivers	Lee	
Harper		Lickiss	
Harvey		McElligott	
Henderson	<i>Tellers:</i>	Mackenroth	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hinton	FitzGerald	McLean	Davis
Hobbs	Stephan	Milliner	Gygar

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 2.9, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2.10 and 2.11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2.12—

Mr INNES (11.35 p.m.): The first paragraph of clause 2.12 states—

“In discharge of its function prescribed by section 2.9 with a view to reporting by 31 March 1990, the Commission must allow the number of electoral districts in the State to stand at 89.”

For the reasons that I have just expressed, it is obvious that the Liberal Party's objection to that provision still stands.

My veracity on the issue of the number of seats was brought into question by the Minister for Health and the Premier, who stated that the draft that was sent to me contained a fixed number of seats. If they doubt my statement, I challenge them to meet me and the Leader of the Opposition behind the Speaker's chair to look at the draft that I have in my possession to verify that no number at all is nominated. Does the Premier or the Minister for Health accept my challenge, or will they withdraw the statement?

The Minister for Health—supported by the Premier—said that the draft that I received contained a fixed number of seats. I am prepared to have that draft inspected in the presence of the Leader of the Opposition—who also received a draft—to confirm that no number appears. Is the Minister or the Premier prepared to accept my statement that my draft contained no such number?

I wish to preserve the confidentiality of the draft, but in view of the intractability of the Minister for Health and the Premier I will read out the relevant provisions.

Mr Mackenroth: Page 15, he reckons it is.

Mr INNES: It is page 14. Clause 2.11 states—

“Investigation of Legislative Assembly electoral system. (1) The Commission shall forthwith investigate the Legislative Assembly electoral system and shall furnish a report concerning the following matters by 31 March 1990—

- (a) whether the State should be divided into any and if so how many and what zones of representation;

- (b) the name or other means of identification of each such zone (if any);
- (c) the number of electoral districts into which each zone (if any) should be divided;
- (d) the electoral districts into which the State and each zone (if any) should be divided;
- (e) the name or other means of identification of each such electoral district;
- (f) the distribution of electoral districts throughout the State and each zone (if any);
- (g) the location of the boundaries of each electoral district and each zone (if any);
- (h) the compilation of electoral rolls of the electors of each electoral district.”

That is a full and total reading of the only draft that was sent to me before the Bill was introduced into this Chamber. Because of the non-preparedness of the Minister for Health and the Premier to accept my statement, I was forced to read that clause into *Hansard* to confirm my credibility. That non-preparedness is yet another indication of the lack of trust that can be placed in the Minister for Health—the Minister for the Lewis land rezonings—and the Premier.

Clause 2.12, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2.13 to 5.5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5.6—

Mr AHERN (11.40 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“At page 14, line 29, delete—

‘Act’

and insert—

‘Bill’.”

This amendment more accurately describes the Constitution (Extension of Duration of Parliament) Act 1989 as a Bill, as it cannot become an Act until assented to by the Governor following the passage of the referendum.

Mr GOSS: The amendment moved by the Premier is technical and inconsequential.

I now turn to the clause itself, which is why I have risen to speak. The Labor Party indicated its concern about and its opposition to the provisions of this clause when I spoke on behalf of the parliamentary Labor Party yesterday. The question has not been properly answered as to why, on the failure of the referendum, this process should stop. We all know that the referendum will fail. I do not believe that the Premier has given an explanation as to why he wants to stop the whole process when the inevitable occurs, as he well knows it will occur. As far as we in the Opposition are concerned, the process of reform, the so-called ironclad guarantee, is not there. It seems to us that the truth is much closer to the statements made by the Premier and the member for Mount Gravatt than what we are talking about as an ironclad guarantee for a possible review.

Mr AHERN: Perhaps I should answer that up front. If a referendum of the people determines that there should not be an extension of the Parliament for six months to enable an electoral review process as contained in this legislation to proceed, that process would then take longer as it would not be done in accordance with the time restraints that are placed on it.

Surely members of the Opposition can comprehend that the time between the conduct of the referendum and the time when a State election would be held would be almost entirely taken up with election campaigning, with political point-scoring, with honourable members of the Opposition trying to denigrate the process all of the time and trying to score points off it. There is no doubt at all that there would be a genuine

endeavour by the opposition parties to subvert, prostitute and use the process for their own ends.

I have been around long enough to know that the opposition parties would be not only tempted but also guaranteed to use for their own political ends the hearing process that was going on during this period. It is logical, fair, reasonable and right that during the time of the election campaign all of this process be suspended. That is a sensible thing to do until such time as the outcome of the general election is known.

Mr INNES: As has been indicated previously, Liberal Party members find this provision totally unacceptable. We do not see any reason at all why the electoral review process, which is allegedly or supposedly to be in the hands of independent and apolitical persons, should not go on. There are many things that that commission could do. It need not be dealing with public hearings; it could receive the written submissions. On behalf of my party, I certainly undertake that—

Government members interjected.

Mr INNES: Rubbishing any party that has been prepared to openly disclose submissions that it has made in the past, and is prepared to make in the future, does not fit well in the teeth of people who have refused to disclose submissions made to their own captive electoral commissioners. Members of the Liberal Party will certainly undertake to make submissions to the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission. Clearly, many other people in this State are also prepared to do that and the process will be able to go on.

The precise point of the Liberal Party in this exercise is that the electoral review process should go on, irrespective of referendums and State elections. As I understand it, all parties are supposed to support the establishment of a genuinely independent commission and the work of that commission. Allegedly there is no distinction being made with regard to all the Liberal Party's support and preparedness to put submissions before such a commission.

Mr Gygar: They still have to report by 31 March.

Mr INNES: The commission still has to report by 31 March, but there is every reason why it should proceed—unless, of course, another agenda is involved in this exercise.

Perish the thought that the referendum is really meant to fail. People in the National Party such as Sir Charles Holm and the Deputy Premier, Mr Gunn—perhaps not the Premier—have expressed some satisfaction with polls that suggest that the referendum will be defeated because they suggest that that shows that people are not interested in electoral reform. I totally reject that.

From the word go, the Liberal Party has been unashamedly against the referendum. Unashamedly, members of the Liberal Party are in favour of electoral reform. We will do anything to hasten or facilitate the progress of electoral reform.

Let me point out a very practical implication of this provision and of the extraordinary two-Bill situation. I understand that interviews are about to be conducted involving people who are prospectively the chairman or members of the commission. I wonder what is said to them when they ask when they will be appointed and what they will do. At the moment, the only concrete proposal before them is a Bill that will allow them to embark upon electoral reform. If they are people who are responding to a professional challenge involving effective electoral and administrative reform, obviously they would want to know precisely when they can start, what they will have to do, and what their charter will be.

If this Bill is passed—and, on the numbers, it probably will be—they can only be told that they might start at some time in the weeks ahead and that their job might well finish on 14 October; that they will still be commissioners, but they will have nothing to do. They can also be told, "Oh, we have another Bill that will allow you to do

something else at some time in the future, but we are not certain of the terms that it will contain and we are worried about its powers." To use the vernacular, what a hell of a way to do business.

Mr Ahern: What a nonsense!

Mr INNES: No, it is absolutely practical. The Premier's response to everything is to flap his hands and say, "What a nonsense!" The questions I ask are absolutely straightforward, practical questions. When the people involved say, "When do we start? What do we do?", what are they told—that they can start on the Government's Bill on electoral review, but that it may well cease on 14 October by force of the Government's own laws? It is this Government's law that will stop the commission's work on 14 October and any work that is being carried on under the provisions of this Bill, which is the only legislation that will be passed for several weeks to come. However, those people will still be commissioners and they will still draw a salary; they will simply have no job.

There is no concrete conclusion drawn about the Bill that will be presented in the future. Already, after only 24 hours, the Premier has been involved in the process of rubbishing its terms, saying that it will be changed, and saying that the Government will be very careful to look into all relevant matters. No assurance can be given to anybody who is approaching an interview in respect of the position of a full-time or part-time commissioner as to what his job will be after 14 October, or whether he will have anything other than a salary.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That clause 5.6, as amended, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 43		NOES, 38	
Ahern	Hynd	Ardill	Palaszczuk
Alison	Katter	Beanland	Prest
Austin	Littleproud	Beard	Santoro
Berghofer	McKechnie	Braddy	Schuntner
Booth	McPhie	Burns	Sherlock
Borbidge	Menzel	Campbell	Smith
Burreket	Muntz	Casey	Smyth
Chapman	Neal	Comben	Vaughan
Clauson	Nelson	D'Arcy	Warburton
Cooper	Newton	De Lacy	Warner
Elliott	Perrett	Eaton	Wells
Fraser	Randell	Gibbs, R. J.	White
Gamin	Sherrin	Goss	Yewdale
Gately	Simpson	Hamill	
Gibbs, I. J.	Slack	Hayward	
Gilmore	Stoneman	Innes	
Glasson	Tenni	Knox	
Gunn	Veivers	Lee	
Harper		Lickiss	
Harvey		McElligott	
Henderson	<i>Tellers:</i>	Mackenroth	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hinton	FitzGerald	McLean	Davis
Hobbs	Stephan	Milliner	Gygar

Resolved in the affirmative.

Insertion of new clause—

Mr AHERN (11.59 p.m.): I move the following amendment to insert a new clause—

"At page 14, after clause 5.6, insert—

'5:7 Section 2.12 not to be amended except in accordance with this section.
(1) The provisions of section 2.12 are not to be amended except in the manner provided by this section.'

(2) A Bill for a purpose within subsection (1) of this section must not be presented to the Governor for the Governor's Assent or be in any other way assented to until the Bill has been approved by the Electors in accordance with this section.

(3) On a day not sooner than two months after the passage of the Bill through the Legislative Assembly, the question for the approval or otherwise of the Bill must be submitted to the electors qualified to vote for the election of members of the Legislative Assembly according to the provisions of the Elections Act 1983-1985, or any Act amending the same or in substitution therefor.

Such day must be appointed by the Governor in Council.

(4) When the Bill is submitted to the electors the vote must be taken in such manner as the Legislature prescribes.

(5) If a majority of the electors voting approve the Bill, it must be presented to the Governor for Assent.

(6) The provisions of this section extend to any Bill for the repeal or amendment of this section.' "

When this new clause 5.7 is inserted in the Bill it will reinforce my Government's commitment to this process of electoral reform, because it seeks to entrench the redistribution to be carried out by the commission by ensuring that clause 2.12 of the Bill cannot be amended without a referendum to provide such an amendment. This clause represents yet another affirmation of my Government's utter determination to see through the process of reform that will be implemented as a result of the Fitzgerald commission.

I understand that the opposition parties have some very serious concerns about this clause. As I understand their concerns, the real reason is that they are not interested in what the commission comes up with; they have their own ideas about redistribution in this State. That is the real agenda; the real reason why.

There has been a suggestion that, after an extra six months is given, the Government could simply repeal the Act, repeal a section of the Act or introduce another Bill. It will now be written into the law that this section cannot be amended except by further referendum of the people. This is a further gesture to the people that the National Party Government is absolutely fair dinkum.

Mr GOSS: I repeat the reservations I expressed previously about this provision that has been urged upon us by the Premier on a couple of bases. I do not feel that I have had enough time—and many other members of the Opposition feel the same—to consider the implications of this clause.

Government members interjected.

Mr GOSS: I know that there are many expert constitutional lawyers on the back bench, but I ask them to stop their desperate babbling for a minute.

I would like to see an opinion from the Solicitor-General, the Acting Solicitor-General, or someone else with some qualifications, as to what there is to prevent this legislation being amended at some time in the future. The Premier says that that is the case, but I would like to see some opinion as to the legal and constitutional basis that binds any future sitting of this Parliament or any future Parliament from amending prior legislation of this Assembly. I do not think that can be achieved on the basis of what the Premier has put forward. This clause does not in fact achieve what the Premier says it will achieve. It is only a token entrenchment or guarantee. The Opposition is not prepared to accept the clause until it is satisfied, and it is not so satisfied.

Mr McKechnie interjected.

Mr GOSS: The honourable member for Carnarvon says that Mr Fitzgerald recommended this. He can concentrate on dealing with Mr Drummond and the tax commissioner. That will keep him well and truly occupied.

Irrespective of the strength of the guarantee or entrenchment—

Mr McKechnie: What about the transport super scheme?

Mr GOSS: What about it? I have no interest and no concern whatsoever. This is the killer punch that we will get tomorrow. It will be like the killer punch that we got earlier today. Government members are talking about the TWU superannuation scheme. What they will try to do is allege that I have something to do with the Transport Workers Union. What a joke!

Mr McKechnie: You are involved in the super scheme.

Mr GOSS: Of course I am involved in it. I am the independent arbitrator between the union and the employers. I agreed to accept an appointment to a position created by National Party legislation. I have accepted an appointment to arbitrate between employers and unions, a position created by the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask all honourable members, including those who are interjecting, to return to the clause under discussion.

Mr GOSS: The point on which I was about to conclude is simply that, to the extent that this entrenches anything—as far as we are concerned, that is unclear—it also entrenches the provision of 89 seats, in respect of which we have already recorded our objection.

Mr INNES: As the Committee will recall, we took exception to the provisions to which this relates being confined to a review of 89 seats. Part of the referendum proposal now relates to the freezing of the obligation to review the entire system in the State to the basis of 89 seats. We find that totally unacceptable and repeat our objection to it.

I turn to the constitutional problems. It is a haggard way to do business. With all of six hours' notice, we are presented with a very significant piece of legislation proposing, I think, the third referendum double-entrenching provision that is on the statute-book of Queensland. That is the spirit of consultation! Without any prior warning, we got the legislation yesterday.

The constitutional doubts or queries that I raise are in relation to the way clause 2.1 (2) operates and the way in which a Government can be bound to a report that has many facets—the way in which elections are conducted, as well as electoral boundaries and the way in which a report is alleged to repeal other legislation. That seems to be perhaps the more significant constitutional point. Is it effective legislation that purports to give reporting powers to another body that itself then has the power to revoke and to repeal legislation of this Assembly? That is something on which I believe that some heavyweight research and constitutional opinion could be obtained.

If one goes back to that primary problem, clause 2.1 (2), one then asks: what does the referendum attach itself to? If it attaches to something that is not constitutionally effective, then it is of no effect itself. This is a haggard way to do business. One would never give advice to a client on the basis of an hour's notice on something of comparative rarity and some significance. I do not purport to have the conclusive answer at this stage. It certainly is a matter that deserves some attention but, from our point of view, it has the primary flaw in that it appears to further limit the review to the basis of 89 seats, which we have already said we find totally objectionable.

Mr HAMILL: I wish to echo the concerns expressed by the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party. In a proposal such as this where the Parliament purports to bind itself to a particular course of action, we tread upon some fairly dangerous constitutional ground.

Mrs Nelson interjected.

Mr HAMILL: I hear the incessant babbling of the member for Aspley. Not for one moment do I think that the member for Aspley understands the potential enormity of what this Assembly is embarking upon this evening.

I would have thought that it would be only fair for the Premier to tender some legal advice from the Government—perhaps we should even hear from the Attorney-General, a man learned in the law—to explain the detail and the implications of this provision.

Mr Beard: You just woke him up.

Mr HAMILL: I suspect he is still mulling over Oliver Cromwell.

Is the Parliament purporting to put in place some sort of manner and form provision? Is it invoking the Colonial Laws Validity Act in some way? The Premier is nodding his head. I do not know if that is because of tiredness or because he actually concurs.

I believe that it is incumbent upon the Premier and his law officer to explain to all members of the Assembly exactly what are the implications of this provision.

Mr Innes: The Attorney-General is dreaming.

Mr HAMILL: Methinks the Attorney-General might be dreaming about the briefs he is hoping will come his way when he has to earn a living outside of this place.

I am very eager to hear of the legal advice that has led the Government to embark upon this course of action. It is incumbent upon the Premier to make that advice clear. We ought not to be put into a position in which the Parliament is being asked to vote on a proposition which is inadequately explained, which is inadequately understood and when the consequences of the provision have not been made clear to all members of the Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question is that—

Mr HAMILL: Mr Chairman!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Does the honourable member wish to speak again?

Mr HAMILL: Yes, I do. From the Premier's strange silence on this issue, one can only conclude that he does not have the legal advice for which we have asked. In this day of supposed accountability and openness in government, when we can be reminded of one of the Premier's opening statements when he assumed the Premiership, that he was going to restore the Westminster system to the floor of the Queensland Parliament, let it be noted that, when members of the Parliament asked him for the legal advice and the background information as to why the Government wants to pursue a particular amendment—an afterthought which was not in the Bill that was initially introduced into the House yesterday—he sat mutely and refused to give us and, through us, the people of Queensland a proper explanation as to why the Government deemed this amendment to be so appropriate to this clause.

Amendment agreed to.

New clause 5.7, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Ahern, by leave, read a third time.

The House adjourned at 12.12 a.m. (Thursday).