

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 1989

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

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Resignation of Mr B. D. Austin

Mr SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that I have received from Mr Brian Douglas Austin his resignation as a member of the Standing Orders Committee.

Appointment of Hon. N. J. Harper

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Leader of the House) (2.31 p.m.): I move—

“That Mr Neville John Harper, member for the electoral district of Auburn, be appointed a member of the Standing Orders Committee to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr Brian Douglas Austin.”

Motion agreed to.

SELECT COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

Resignations of Hon. Y. A. Chapman and Hon. M. D. Stoneman

Mr SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that I have received from Mrs Yvonne Ann Chapman and Mr Mark David Stoneman their resignations as members of the Select Committee of Privileges.

Appointment of Mr H. W. T. Hobbs and Mr M. D. Veivers

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Leader of the House) (2.33 p.m.): I move—

“That Mr Howard William Thomas Hobbs, member for the electoral district of Warrego, and Mr Michael Desmond Veivers, member for the electoral district of Southport, be appointed members of the Select Committee of Privileges to fill the vacancies caused by the resignations of Mrs Yvonne Ann Chapman and Mr Mark David Stoneman.”

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

The Deputy Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

District Superintendents of Traffic, Granting of Permits to Allow Activities by Political Parties

From Mr Wells (30 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will legislate for district superintendents of traffic to allow similar activities for political parties currently permitted for non-political organisations.

Daylight-saving Zone, Mount Isa

From Mr Beard (240 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure the establishment of two time zones, one to include Mount Isa, in which daylight-saving time will not apply.

Public Housing Funding

From **Mr Burns** (50 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take immediate action to review funds for public housing so as not to disadvantage those most in need.

Concessional Allowances for Unemployed on Public Transport

From **Mr Burns** (30 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take immediate action to ensure concessional allowances on public transport for the unemployed.

Referendum to Determine Future of Mareeba Shire Council

From **Mr Gilmore** (236 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will ensure that a referendum be held in the Kuranda area coinciding with the next State election to determine the future of the Mareeba Shire Council.

Second Traffic Bridge Over Burnett River

From **Mr Campbell** (7 058 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will provide immediate funding for a second Burnett River traffic bridge.

Petitions received.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, 1990-91

Mr **SPEAKER** read a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that the following provisions be made on account of the services of the year ending 30 June 1991—

From the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the sum of \$1,420,000,000;

From the Trust and Special Funds, the sum of \$2,980,000,000;

From the Loan Fund, the sum of \$25,000,000.

Message referred to Committee of Supply.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

Queensland Housing Commission for the year ended 30 June 1989

Queensland Government Printing Office for the year ended 30 June 1989

Department of Primary Industries for the year ended 30 June 1989.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Orders in Council under—

Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act 1923-1988

Stock Act 1915-1989

Racing and Betting Act 1980-1989

Regulations under—

Surveyors Act 1977-1987

Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984-1986

Reports—

Trustee of the Local Authorities Debt Redemption Fund for the year ended 30 June 1989

Queensland Conservatorium of Music for the year ended 31 December 1988

Brisbane Grammar School for the year ended 31 December 1988
 Aboriginal Co-ordinating Council for the year ended 30 June 1988
 Island Co-ordinating Council for the year ended 30 June 1988
 Downs and South Western Queensland Racing Association for the year ended
 30 June 1989
 The Queensland Turf Club for the year ended 30 June 1989
 Trustees of the Albion Park Paceway for the year ended 30 June 1989.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Implementation of Recommendations of Fitzgerald Commission of Inquiry; Appointment of Mr N. Newnham as Interim Police Commissioner

Hon. T. R. COOPER (Roma—Premier and Treasurer and Minister for State Development) (2.38 p.m.), by leave: Last week I gave an undertaking to make a comprehensive statement some time this week on the Government's stance on Fitzgerald reforms and a timetable for their implementation. I am delighted to make that statement now and to correct the latest pieces of misinformation being fed to the Queensland public by members of the ALP and some of their sycophantic fellow-travellers.

First of all, let me make it perfectly—and I hope finally—clear that the commitment of this Government to the reforms proposed by Mr Fitzgerald is complete.

Mr Burns: Why don't you get Kennedy to come here and do it for you?

Mr COOPER: Let me repeat for the benefit of all the scaremongers, the whingers, the whiners—like the member for Lytton, who whines so well—the pedlars of half-truths and no-truths and all those who would wish it were not so that the commitment of this Government to the reforms proposed by Mr Fitzgerald is complete.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr COOPER: I think this fellow opposite must have almost gone mad.

I hope that that is clearly understood at last and that it has been stated clearly enough so that there is no room for deliberate or accidental misinterpretation. The reforms proposed by the Fitzgerald inquiry will be implemented—

Mr Burns: What a wimp!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Lytton for the first time.

Mr COOPER: What a has-been!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Premier!

Mr COOPER: As I was saying, the reforms proposed by the Fitzgerald inquiry will be implemented, and that includes any recommendations on electoral reform. They will be implemented because they represent a blueprint for even better government in this great State. They will be implemented to make this Government a leader in the national war against corruption. They will be implemented with speed, not haste.

But let me today make something else equally clear to every Queenslander. Tony Fitzgerald has delivered to this Government a very good report. All aspects of that report are worthy of debate; in fact, debate is demanded. As a result of debate, change is certainly possible. Any change that may take place will be appropriate and sensible.

I fully realise that that description of the way in which this Government will deal with the implementation process will seem sacrilegious to some of the starry-eyed members opposite, but it is totally reasonable and it is high time that that was said.

There has been nothing like the Fitzgerald inquiry before in the history of this country. However, I am disappointed that Tony Fitzgerald's report has been politicised

from day one, not by this National Party Government but by members opposite and their fellow-travellers. It has certainly not had a fair go.

Legislation to create the two major commissions recommended by Mr Fitzgerald will be introduced into this House tomorrow. I will outline the timetable. On Monday, Cabinet approved the Electoral and Administrative Reform Commission Bill. Today, at a special meeting, Cabinet examined the Criminal Justice Commission Bill. Both Bills have also gone before a meeting of National Party members and, at the same time, the Bills were made available to the other party leaders for the purpose of consultation and consideration. I will introduce both Bills to the Parliament tomorrow and they will then be subjected to public scrutiny and comment and further consultation with party leaders during a one-week adjournment.

I urge politicians of all parties, and the media, to fulfil their responsibilities to the State during this period by encouraging apolitical study of those Bills. In consultation with you, Mr Speaker, I will arrange for the parliamentary sittings to be extended to include 17, 18 and 19 October to allow for the normal process of parliamentary debate and decision on those Bills.

Throughout this process Sir Max Bingham, as CJC chairman, Mr Jim Kennedy, as head of my reform commission, and Mr Peter Forster, as head of the implementation unit, will be in close liaison. Therefore, by the time the election takes place, I will have ensured that the EARC and the CJC are in place and that an interim Police Commissioner has been appointed. This will represent major progress towards the implementation of the key recommendations of the Fitzgerald report.

This information was not sought, but I am delighted to provide it anyway in the spirit of open and good government and also, I must say, to set some mischievous minds at rest. The appointment of Jim Kennedy to head my Independent Commission for Change and Reform was very widely well received, but it was not universally well received, particularly by members opposite and their fellow-travellers.

Jim is a great Queenslander and a great Australian. Some of the people so determined to downplay everything that this Government does tried to undermine his suitability for such a task by describing him as a businessman, as though that somehow meant that he could therefore not be a man of conscience or wide ability. Such an assessment is clearly and plainly stupid as well as being—once again—quite political.

Unlike a lot of members opposite, or elsewhere nearby, I do not believe that being a businessman disqualifies a person from being intelligent, incisive or determined enough to make a major contribution to the State outside business. Jim Kennedy has a magnificent track record of getting things done. He did a magnificent job for Australians with his work on Australia Post, and recently he has done a magnificent job for Queensland with his review of the prisons system, which has led this State towards becoming the Australian measure for corrective services.

Even so, some have attempted to suggest that the commission he has agreed to head is a bid by me to somehow use Jim Kennedy's good name to bury the Fitzgerald reforms. That was nothing but malicious, deceitful, political, absolute bunkum. A small but very important part of Jim Kennedy's role as chairman of this independent commission does indeed involve Fitzgerald reforms, and I will now outline to the House the terms of reference of the commission. They are as follows—

1. Facilitate the establishment of the Electoral and Administrative Review and Criminal Justice Commissions.
2. Liaise with the chairman and the continuing commission of inquiry; the chairman, Electoral and Administrative Review Commission, following the appointment of the chairman of that commission; and the head of the implementation unit.
3. Progressively review all the statutory bodies and Government instrumentalities to examine their roles, structure, funding, operations, efficiency and effectiveness and make recommendations to the Premier and Treasurer for any necessary changes.

4. Examine the role, structure, staffing and operations of the Treasury Department, including its budgetary processes, and report to the Premier and Treasurer on any changes considered necessary.
5. Report to the Premier and Treasurer on any area of government which the commission perceives requires examination, change or reform and to carry out any review if so directed by the Premier and Treasurer.

Those are the terms of reference, which carry this rider: in complying with the terms of reference, the commission shall consult with and take into account community views and attitudes.

Mr Speaker, you will see that only one of those terms of reference deals directly to the letter with the Fitzgerald proposals. The rest, I emphasise, deal with the spirit of that report. I hope that helps the Government's position on the report to sink in—particularly for those who have had great difficulty in understanding it. Not only is the Government implementing the report; it is going further and taking a lead from the general sense of the report by interpreting the accountability process, which is at its heart, to other areas. The Government is going beyond Fitzgerald.

Finally, as to the progress of the implementation of the Fitzgerald recommendations as they applied to the police force—Queensland's interim Police Commissioner for the next three years will be Mr Noel Newnham, whose current position is Deputy Commissioner with the Victorian police force. The search for the right man for this challenging job was exhaustive and Australiawide. Mr Newnham is magnificently qualified to undertake the role of restructuring the force in line with the Fitzgerald recommendations. He has massive experience in policing, and already has to his credit major reforms of the Victorian police force, including the establishment of modern information and communication systems, methods to deal with corruption and a range of community-based policing initiatives. He is also an accomplished corporate planner.

I have every confidence that Mr Newnham is the right man for the job of guiding the Queensland police force to better days, and I commend his appointment to the House and to the men and women of the police force with whom he will work in implementing the Fitzgerald reforms. Detail on those reforms is in Mr Fitzgerald's report for everybody to see, and the interim Commissioner will receive whatever help he needs to carry through those many recommendations, which include, apart from a restructuring of command, the establishment of disciplinary procedures, the establishment of links with the Criminal Justice Commission and new policing strategies.

In relation to other aspects of the police reform process mentioned by Fitzgerald—an information program, to brief officers throughout the State on the impact of the report, involved members of the implementation unit and was completed on 30 August. A workshop program to train police to assist in the process of change and in the introduction of community policing strategies, which was the major thrust of the report, has been planned and will begin late this month or in November. Early workshop programs in this series will be held in areas that will become sites for community policing pilot projects. Community representatives will be drawn into this process to be part of community consultative committees which will assist trained officers to ensure that community policing does meet the needs and wants of communities.

A pilot study of community policing procedures began on the Gold Coast last month and should be completed late this month or in November. The Gold Coast community is being widely consulted, and that process will be widened this week-end when advertisements will appear in the local press seeking further public comment. Work is also well advanced on the preparation of an expression-of-interest document which will provide a brief for consultants who will shortly undertake the review of police salaries and positions. The implementation unit has also begun the task of identifying organisations and individuals who are capable of handling an independent, Statewide counselling service for police and their families. That service will be introduced as soon as possible.

These measures together are a clear indication of the resolve of this Government to get the Fitzgerald reforms in place, and I am pleased to inform the House of the great progress that is being made. No flip-flops; no backflips—none of that. There is not a sign of it from this side of the House; just very steady, determined progress, and that is what Government members are on about.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Shooting of Health Department Social Worker on Gold Coast

Hon. I. J. GIBBS (Albert—Minister for Health) (2.49 p.m.), by leave: I wish to provide for the information of honourable members some relevant details in respect to yesterday's shooting on the Gold Coast of a social worker employed by the State Health Department. First and foremost, I convey my deep regret to the family and friends of Mrs Bastock over this tragic shooting. One hopes that such an event will never happen.

I am pleased to report that the latest advice today from senior medical officers at the Gold Coast Hospital indicates that, although Mrs Bastock remains in a critical condition in the intensive-care unit, her condition is improving. The Health Department is offering every assistance to Mrs Bastock's family to ensure that they have the necessary support during their time of need. There should be no comment about the exact details of the particular incident, which is subject to police investigation and court proceedings.

The Health Department investigation into the incident is continuing under the direction of senior officers from the Division of Psychiatric Services. Today, I will not pre-empt the findings of that investigation or the recommendations that may be made. However, it is important that the public be accurately informed about the function and nature of the work undertaken by the State Health Department's community psychiatry services.

Community psychiatry services are an essential part of the integrated mental health service provided in Queensland and, indeed, in virtually all parts of the world. The service provides for the care of those patients discharged from hospital and also provides prevention and early-intervention programs to decrease the need for hospitalisation.

Queensland's community psychiatry services are equal to any provided in Australia, and the professional staff responsible for those services have drawn on experiences from interstate and overseas in the planning and development of those services. It is a well-accepted practice, wherever possible, to deinstitutionalise patients into community settings as part of the rehabilitation process. In the modern psychiatry world, it is totally unacceptable to lock up people and throw away the key. Health professionals must use their expertise and professional judgment in providing treatment and care for mentally ill people in the appropriate environment.

The community psychiatry services, including the Gold Coast service, assist the hospital-based units and aim to provide support to patients, in addition to those community-based self-help groups such as the Schizophrenia Fellowship. The community-based units provide a wide range of services to patients, including rehabilitation, crisis prevention and intervention, and home-visiting services. Statewide, approximately 5 000 people are receiving the services of the community psychiatry clinics. The majority of those people present as outpatients to those clinics.

As to the Gold Coast clinic—more than 75 per cent of services are provided in the clinic, which is based at Miami. Home-visiting services are provided only where they are determined by the professional staff to be clinically necessary. Home visiting ensures that people who occasionally do not present for outpatient services receive the necessary care and support. Without that support patients may go off their medication or relapse into ill health and, possibly, become a danger to the community.

It is important to understand that professional judgments are made by experienced, well-trained people. Yesterday's incident is the first known case in Queensland of a

person receiving a serious injury while providing a home-visiting service. All available information on yesterday's incident at the Gold Coast indicates that there was no warning that the patient posed a danger to Mrs Bastock. The patient was known to the clinic staff and was not considered to be dangerous.

Some public comments about underfunding in psychiatric services have been made since yesterday's incident. Although I believe that no room exists for politicking over that tragic event or for a relationship to be developed between two separate issues, it is incumbent upon me to indicate briefly that funding priority has been given to psychiatric services in the latest State Budget. This financial year funding for community psychiatry services has been increased by approximately 11 per cent to a total of more than \$6m.

Members of this House can be reassured that all the necessary investigations will be carried out by the Health Department into the incident at the Gold Coast and that appropriate action will be recommended.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Development of Cape York Peninsula

Hon. N. J. HARPER (Auburn—Minister for Land Management) (2.54 p.m.), by leave: On Monday a typically biased ABC *Four Corners* program peddled selectively chosen and inaccurate statements about the development of Queensland's Cape York Peninsula. That imbalanced program failed to depict the true picture of development and potential in the cape.

It would have detracted from the *Four Corners* facade to have acknowledged that last year the Queensland Government recognised the need for a Cape York Peninsula development strategy. In fact, one month ago, when I was the Minister for Primary Industries, I convened a meeting with the then Minister for Land Management and the then Minister for Community Services, Ethnic Affairs and Northern Development to discuss a policy for the development of the Cape York Peninsula area generally and, in particular, the area around the former Batavia Downs pastoral holding and the existing Sudley pastoral holding.

Batavia Downs, which was resumed in 1986, is being set apart as a reserve for departmental and official purposes under the trusteeship and control of the Department of Primary Industries. I am supportive of the establishment of a State Government research station in conjunction with private enterprise to utilise Batavia Downs for research and extension in pasture-improvement techniques that are suitable for application to the cape area generally.

I make mention of the Sudley pastoral holding and of the commendable efforts of Comalco in experimental pasture improvement which has resulted in two strains of legumes performing particularly well. A tremendous variation exists in the type of country from north to south, but I am most enthusiastic about the prospects for developing suitable areas of the Cape York region with assistance from private enterprise, particularly for an enhanced cattle industry.

If this National Party Government has the will—and it does have the will and the expertise—areas of the cape can be developed to again support a population of 30 000 inhabitants, which the *Four Corners* program claimed existed in the eighteenth century. Indeed, with future pastoral and mineral development and the Cape York space station, a population that is greatly in excess of that figure will be achieved in the relatively near future.

The consultant's brief for the Cape York Peninsula development strategy investigations acknowledges the increasing interest in Cape York for a variety of reasons and purposes including tourism and recreation, conservation, agriculture and grazing enterprises, Aboriginal heritage, aquaculture and mining. To provide State and local government agencies with a basis for decision-making and guidance in the development of the Cape York Peninsula, the consultant is required to assemble and analyse land-use

information and to identify scenarios of development opportunities. The study area is to include the shires of Cook, Aurukun and Torres and the town of Weipa, probably extending to include the northern part of the Carpentaria Shire north of the Nassau River. ABC reporters should be condemned for their selective portrayal of the true position on Cape York Peninsula and for their denigration of this Government at any price.

Recently, the opportunity to convert to freehold title has been afforded to only half a dozen pastoral holdings. In 1974 the negotiations on the Line Hill lease took place and more than one-quarter of the 4 195-hectare holding was surrendered to the Crown for national park purposes with a special lease issuing and being converted to freehold tenure over the balance of 3 250 hectares. In that case a 400-metre buffer zone was introduced from the coastal dunes to ensure coastal protection.

It is unreasonable to consider current prices, which are as yet largely speculative, and to relate them to that era of 15 years ago. At that time the tourist explosion that has occurred in north Queensland during the past four or five years was not predictable. Past dealings relate to the past. This Government looks to the changing circumstances and increasing land values in north Queensland when making assessments and considering applications for priority special leases.

Silver Plains, which is a large pastoral holding, was the subject of negotiations that commenced in 1982. As a result, some 68 000 hectares were surrendered for State forest or national parks and a priority special lease in two parcels of about 24 300 hectares was granted, including some 5 170 hectares in the Nesbit River area. A pastoral development holding lease was issued to the remaining area of the former pastoral holding.

The Queensland Government's record in conservation and protection of the environment is at least equal to that of any other State. The *Four Corners* program made the misleading claim that only two areas had been proclaimed as national park in Cape York Peninsula. According to advice from the Under Secretary, Department of Environment and Conservation, some 14 areas in the region that is generally regarded as Cape York Peninsula are national parks.

It was interesting that Mr Don Henry, the executive officer of the Wildlife Preservation Society, acknowledged the need for balanced and appropriate land development on Cape York Peninsula, which is exactly the track down which this Government is moving. Both on shore and off shore this Government is determined to fulfil its obligations to ensure balanced and appropriate land development.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Appointment of Mr B. Stewart as Director-General of the Attorney-General's Department; Criticism of Government by Media

Hon. P. J. CLAUSON (Redlands—Attorney-General and Minister for Heritage and the Arts) (3.01 p.m.), by leave: This morning's *Courier-Mail* reported the appointment of Mr Brian Stewart as Director-General of the Attorney-General's Department. I believe there is cause for grave concern at the direction being taken by some of the people reporting on politics in Queensland.

Some sections of the media have thrown away all regard for the finest traditions of journalism, particularly the impartial, balanced recording of the events and issues of the day. Some journalists have unashamedly attached themselves to the views of members opposite to the extent that they are not even bothering to make their own inquiries in the researching of stories.

In the past several days, the *Sun* and the ABC program *7.30 Report* have led the headlong rush to a new low point in reporting standards, focused on the manufactured debate on the concept of separation of powers. The sorry spectacle started with Mr Quentin Dempster of the ABC attempting to push the Premier into a technical discussion

of a system peculiar to the United States Constitution. Mr Dempster did not explain why a Premier of Queensland should have a deep understanding of the Constitution of the United States or, for that matter, the Chinese Constitution.

The next move came from the *Sun* newspaper when Neil Doorley, a journalist, telephoned my office. When I returned his call I explained the separation of powers and the Westminster system, which prevails in various forms in this country and in this State. The consequent front-page lead in the *Sun* on Friday bore absolutely no resemblance to what I told Mr Doorley—except that it was a complete reversal. The story totally misrepresented what I told him.

In a moment I will seek leave to table in this House transcripts of what I did say in a couple of interviews given last Friday. The same *Sun* story carried comments attributed to His Excellency the Governor. Honourable members will now be aware that the Official Secretary at Government House has written to various media organisations and other people pointing out that no-one at Government House made such comments. In other words, the *Sun* story was a fiction concocted to support a sensational banner headline.

The political independence which His Excellency properly maintains was then further attacked by Mr Dempster's program on Friday night. A reporter from the *7.30 Report* barged into a Government House function with camera on and tape rolling. The technique is well known in the television industry as the "walk-in", which is usually reserved for the pursuit of crooks and shonky salesmen.

Mr Burns: What's the difference?

Mr CLAUSON: I am interested to hear that the honourable member for Lytton refers to the Governor of this State as a shonky salesman.

It is outrageous——

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CLAUSON: As I was saying, it is outrageous that these people are prepared to so abuse the impartiality of the Queen's representative in the cause of the Opposition.

A handful of the less-senior journalists covering politics in Brisbane took up and used uncritically some of the material published and generated by the *Sun* and the *7.30 Report*, publishing in their own names stories based originally on falsehoods. It is pleasing to note that the responsible morning newspapers would have no truck with the rubbish being generated by the *Sun* and the *7.30 Report*. They saw it for what it was: that age-old last refuge of those whose audiences are slipping away—the beat-up.

The *Courier-Mail*, while hardly being a friend of the Government of this State, tries to do what a community expects of its media—it generally gives both sides a fair go. We ask for no more. Honourable members will also have noticed that current affairs programs on ABC radio have treated very fairly two extensive interviews taped with me by Debbie Fitzgerald and Anthony Fennell. I now seek leave to table the transcripts of those two interviews.

Leave granted.

Mr CLAUSON: A number of prominent journalists, commentators and academics have backed the separation of powers explanation offered by this Government. I now seek leave to table the published accounts of comments by Mr P. P. McGuinness, Mr Richard Farmer, Dr Paul Reynolds—honourable members opposite will like that—the New South Wales Labor parliamentarian Michael Egan and a lecturer in comparative government, Dr Sundhaussen.

Leave granted.

Mr CLAUSON: The message in all of the comments is basically the same: Quentin Dempster should have got it right before he started hectoring.

Mr Burns: I think you protest too much.

Mr CLAUSON: For the benefit of the member for Lytton, who is very vocal at present, I will quote from Mr Richard Farmer's article, which states—

“The Premier of Queensland, Mr Cooper, wasn't stern enough the other night with the ABC's smarty-pants interviewer from Brisbane, Quentin Dempster: there Quentin was, with his pants right down exposing his ignorance, and the Premier didn't deliver the smack the question deserved.

What's the relevance of the doctrine of the separation of powers to the Westminster system? Take this Quentin: absolutely nothing.”

I suggest that the same applies to Mr Goss and Mr Innes, and to their friends in Labor Lawyers who jumped on the Dempster bandwagon. Or did he perhaps jump on theirs?

Let me turn now to the issue of the story in the *Courier-Mail* on the appointment of the Director-General of my department. The reporter, Mr Phil Dickie, contacted me, seeking comment on Mr Brian Stewart's appointment, which he said appeared to be at odds with sections of the Fitzgerald report. I pointed out that Mr Fitzgerald had not mentioned Mr Stewart, who had been instrumental in drafting a body of legislation to assist the commissioner in his inquiry. I then listed Mr Stewart's quite impeccable qualifications for appointment, but Mr Dickie told me he did not “have enough paragraphs to include that”. I accept his story, as he was quoting from another document.

It is obviously a source of some disappointment that the *Courier-Mail* was unable to find that space, especially in view of the headline covering the story. For the benefit of honourable members—

Mr Goss interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the Honourable Minister.

Mr CLAUSON: I offer a short summary of Mr Stewart's very distinguished career. He is eminently well qualified for appointment to the position of Director-General, Attorney-General's Department. Mr Stewart has been a career public servant for many years. He is also a graduate of the Royal Australian Naval College, Jervis Bay. He has been employed in the Education Department as a secondary school teacher. He has been employed in the Probation and Parole Service as a probation officer and in the Public Defender's Office as an assistant public defender.

Mr Goss interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition for the third time.

Mr CLAUSON: Mr Stewart was also a Crown prosecutor from 1979 to 1981. He prosecuted a number of substantial fraud trials.

Mr Goss interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition for the first time under Standing Order 123A. I call the Minister and ask him to conclude his statement quickly.

Mr CLAUSON: I have only a couple of paragraphs left, Mr Speaker. On this occasion it is important to get the story across to the people of this State.

As I was saying, Mr Stewart was a Crown prosecutor from 1979 to 1981 and prosecuted a number of substantial fraud trials. As well, he was appointed to prosecute a number of police officers charged with car-stealing offences. Substantial prison sentences were imposed following convictions in each case involving those who had stolen or received motor vehicles.

Mr McLean: He is still going. He is talking about stolen cars now. What has that got to do with the Fitzgerald report?

Mr CLAUSON: I like the comment of the member for Bulimba, because yesterday his colleagues held up question-time so that not one question was asked. When his leader stood in this place and seconded the motion moved by the Leader of the Liberal Party——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Honourable the Minister! He will now conclude his statement.

Mr CLAUSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

In 1981 Mr Stewart was appointed to the constitution and legislation branch of the Solicitor-General's Office, which at that time was responsible for giving substantial advice on constitutional and international law. Mr Stewart was appointed as senior legal officer in the Department of Justice in 1984 and was appointed director of the legislation and research program some four months after the commencement of the commission of inquiry. In fact, Mr Stewart provided assistance to Mr Fitzgerald in the early days of the inquiry. An officer from the legislation and research program was the initial secretary to the commission.

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

PAPERS

Rescission of Order for Printing

Hon. I. T. HENDERSON (Mount Gravatt—Minister for Justice and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.11 p.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That the order of the House for the printing of three reports that I tabled yesterday be rescinded.”

Motion agreed to.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr GOSS (Logan—Leader of the Opposition) (3.12 p.m.), by leave: I wish to correct a misrepresentation by the Premier and the Minister for Police at a press conference today when they falsely claimed that I had been consulted on the appointment of the Police Commissioner. I want to correct the record in relation to that false representation by the Premier by telling the House what the position is.

I was advised by Mr Forster of the implementation unit last evening that the unit and other persons involved in the selection had recommended a candidate for the position of commissioner and that three people in Melbourne had been interviewed. I advised Mr Forster that I had already read the leak in respect of that in the *Courier-Mail* and that he was telling me nothing. I asked him when the Opposition or anyone else might be advised of the name of the person and of his background and he said, “When the Premier gets the green light from the Governor.”

I was not advised which person was selected. I was simply told that the selection panel consisted of Sir Max Bingham, Mr Forster, Mr Lester and a consultant that Mr Lester took with him, the implication being that Mr Lester could not make the judgment himself and therefore had to take someone along.

Government members interjected.

Mr GOSS: I simply make that point because no reference was made in the Fitzgerald report to another consultant being brought in to assist the Minister.

That was the basis of the so-called consultation. It is not consultation in good faith. It shows that the statement made to the press gallery is false and exposes the Premier's lack of good faith.

Mr COOPER: I rise to a point of order. This matter was certainly discussed very closely and at length with Mr Forster. Only yesterday it was agreed that consultation needed to take place. Because there were three candidates, or applicants, who were available for this position and had to be interviewed, naturally a secrecy provision was required. We wanted to go ahead with the consultation process. We recommended to Mr Forster that he consult with Mr Goss and with Mr Innes. Mr Forster did consult with those two gentlemen. Last night he said that he carried out that consultation on the profiles of the three people involved; that he gave a very clear indication as to which one it would be. This morning even Cabinet was not advised of the name, and Mr Forster's own interpretation was that the members of Cabinet were happy with that.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House notes the Premier's comments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.15 p.m.), by leave: Because this is a matter of great importance to the State, having regard to the enormous controversy surrounding the Fitzgerald report, I wish to make my position perfectly clear by way of a personal explanation.

At approximately 5 o'clock yesterday evening Mr Forster came to see me about legislation and during the course of that interview, at approximately 6 o'clock, he told me that it was likely that the name of the new Police Commissioner would be announced today. He described the background of the three applicants, but mentioned no names and gave no indication of names. He said that the person who was to be nominated was clearly the best of the three applicants.

Nothing occurred that could be characterised as consultation. I have detailed to the House the extent of the information given to me, which did not even include a name. I accept that the Premier does not necessarily know what a third party does.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is debating the matter.

Mr INNES: I simply say that consultation did not take place and I have detailed to the House the extent of my knowledge of this matter.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The House notes the honourable member's personal explanation.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. Route 20, Environmental Impact Study Report

Mr SHERLOCK asked the Minister Main Roads and Racing—

“With reference to my persistent questions of previous Ministers demanding an urgent decision by the Government on the outcome for Route 20 plans in the western suburbs and following the Sinclair Knight and Partners Social and Environmental Impact Study Recommendation Report of late August—

- (1) Will he end the widespread speculation and real concerns of residents?
- (2) When will his decision be announced?
- (3) Will he implement the recommendations of the report following widespread community consultation?”

Mr ALISON: (1 and 2) I thank the honourable member for his question. I am pleased to advise that Cabinet has approved the adoption of the consultants' modified option 5 as the basis for future planning and design of Route 20.

(3) This is a strategic decision which acknowledges the need for more detailed work yet to be carried out. It provides the guide-lines for development of the route over a number of years. The Government recognises that the consultants have included a number of initiatives in their recommended scheme, some of which require action by authorities other than Main Roads. Furthermore, it has been decided that Main Roads should fully examine these various initiatives recommended, where necessary in liaison with other authorities. It is also intended that there be a process of consultation with local community groups instituted to ensure community participation in the development of proposals for improvement. I propose that input be sought from local elected members as to the most appropriate process of consultation in the various circumstances which may arise. I will be forwarding advice of the Government's decision to a number of interested parties today, including members of this House in whose electorates the route is located.

2. State Bank, Establishment

Mr HYND asked the Deputy Premier, Minister for Finance and Minister for Local Government—

“What stage has been reached regarding consideration of a report on the establishment of a Private Sector State Bank and is it likely to reach fruition?”

Mr GUNN: The matter of the establishment of a significant Queensland-based bank is currently under consideration by the Government and an announcement will be made at the appropriate time. The major issues which the Government must take into account are whether such a bank is necessary to fill a vacuum in the existing market, and by doing so provide a positive benefit to Queenslanders; and, if the Queensland Government is to participate as either an equity partner or investor in such a bank, it must be certain that Queenslanders receive a return on such participation or investment.

I would stress to the honourable member that what the Government is considering is not a State bank in the sense of the Victorian and Western Australian models that the Queensland ALP promotes, but rather the encouragement of a private-sector bank with its headquarters in Queensland.

3. Home Loan Interest Rates, Federal Government Monetary Policies

Mr HOBBS asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

“With reference to the Federal Labor Government's monetary policies which continue to force up home loan interest rates—

What are the State Government's achievements in rectifying some of the damage caused by unrealistic Federal Government monetary policies?”

Mr RANDELL: I thank the honourable member for this question, because it gives me a chance to expose some of the ALP policies in this nation.

Mr McLean: Are you going to read it out?

Mr RANDELL: Yes, I will read it out, and members of the Opposition will cop it.

As honourable members know, the State Government is committed to helping Queenslanders who are left stranded in the mortgage belt by Labor Party policies—policies that members on that side of the House, if they do not aid and abet, do nothing about, and, what is worse, would adopt in the unlikely event that they became the Government in this State.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr RANDELL: Opposition members should listen to this.

As a result of these high interest rates, rents in the capital cities have jumped by up to 20 per cent. Brisbane now has Australia's third-highest weekly rental rates. In June

1983, when the Hawke Government came into office, home-loan interest rates were 12.5 per cent. In the past 15 months, they have jumped from 13.5 per cent to 17 per cent. Last month continuing financial mismanagement saw housing interest rates threatening to jump from 17 per cent to 18 per cent after the announcement of another disastrous balance of payments deficit of \$2.6 billion.

The Federal Government has clearly shown that it cannot control the economy of this nation. Because of the Federal Government's appalling mismanagement, the average family has to suffer. In six years the ALP Government has bungled along and built up this nation's foreign debt from \$23 billion to over \$100 billion. Currently Australia's foreign debt grows at the rate of \$2m every hour. In the hour since this House resumed, this nation's debt has grown by \$2m. What a savage inheritance for our kids! It is an appalling indictment of the Federal Labor Government.

Mr Burns: The Bruce Highway was built by the Federal Government and you take credit for it.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member knows nothing about roads. He should listen to my answer, sit back and cop it. The honourable member does not know what he is talking about. In a most blatant example of Federal Labor Government pork-barrelling—

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member is the one who talks about pork-barrelling.

In a most blatant example of Federal Labor Government pork-barrelling, that Labor Government committed up to \$250m of tax-payers' money to try to bail itself out of electoral disaster when it made a deal with four banks not to raise home-loan interest rates. The ALP's vote-buying practices also extend to the \$100m to subsidise the airlines so they will not sack staff, and another \$60m to save Kodak's Melbourne factory. These politically inspired follies to try to keep Labor in power failed to address the real issue of economic disaster that this nation faces under Labor's farcical monetary policies, as it was only at the week-end that Australia's largest building society, St George, announced that it would raise its home-loan interest rate. So the Federal Government has not done anything.

The Federal Labor Government's policies have increased weekly rents, crippled the building industry, left hundreds of thousands of home-owners in the mortgage belt in financial misery—and Opposition members are not even concerned about it; all they are concerned about is spreading lies and getting headlines in the newspapers—and, as though that were not enough, the Federal Government has reduced the first home owners scheme nationally by \$30m from last year.

In contrast, this year's State Budget includes a minimum of \$360m for low-interest Queensland Housing Commission home loans. This will provide in excess of 7 000 households with home loans this year compared with 4 902 last year.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Considering that there have been no questions for the past two days, I order that the remainder of the answer be tabled and incorporated in *Hansard*.

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

I am aware that the Queensland Housing Commission is approving almost \$2m per day in home-ownership finance to low to moderate income-earners at a 13.75 per cent interest rate.

These home loans will help families seeking to become first-home buyers. However, the State Government also feels that it must do something to directly help existing home-buyers who are at risk of losing their family home.

For these families, the Queensland Housing Commission is administering a mortgage-relief scheme to provide emergency assistance to mortgagees whose financial distress could

force them to sell their homes. Ironically, this scheme is jointly funded by the State and Federal Governments. Queensland's mortgage-relief scheme provided interest-free loans up to \$4,000 to mortgagees to prevent the loss of the family home. Mortgage relief moneys are paid directly to the borrower's home loan account to cover any arrears and subsidise monthly instalments for six months. Mortgagees are allowed a six-year term to repay the loan. To enable homeowners to stabilise their finances, no repayments are required during the first year of the loan.

Yes, the Queensland State Government is shouldering the burden left by a Federal Labor Government. Our State National Party policies and actions are in complete contrast to those of the Federal ALP Government and the Victorian ALP Government, which have ruined both economies.

The Labor Party in Queensland would, without fail, continue with the same recipe for financial chaos that has plunged Australia into such an abysmal state of economic disaster, which has seen continual downgrading of Australia's credit rating.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Ministerial Expenses

Mr GOSS: In asking the Premier and Treasurer a question, I refer to reports that at least four current or former National Party Cabinet Ministers are to be charged with respect to ministerial expenses and cash advances, and I ask the Premier to advise the House of the standards or code of conduct of a Cooper Cabinet that apply when Ministers are summonsed or charged with a criminal offence. Specifically, are they subject to the Premier's standing them down from Cabinet?

Mr COOPER: I regard that question as entirely inappropriate at this time, and entirely improper. I will not answer any further part of that question.

Implementation of Fitzgerald Report

Mr GOSS: One wonders what the remaining five minutes is for.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr GOSS: In asking my second question without notice—and presumably without answer—I refer the Premier and Treasurer to the following statement by the Attorney-General, Mr Clauson, published on Monday—

“People are fed up with Drummond and Fitzgerald. It has all been done. Let's get on with life.”

Does the Premier repudiate that statement by the Attorney-General, or does it reflect the position and attitude of the Queensland Government on the implementation of the Fitzgerald report and corruption prosecutions arising out of the Fitzgerald inquiry and subsequent investigations?

Mr COOPER: I think I have outlined very clearly the Government's position on the Fitzgerald recommendations. I could not have been clearer in my actions today. Actions speak far louder than words. In the last six to eight days, I have given every indication clearly—not just in words but in action—of the direction that this Government is taking on the Fitzgerald recommendations. No Government could have been clearer. No Government could have taken——

Mr Goss interjected.

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

Mr COOPER: We recognise that the Fitzgerald inquiry went on for a very long time. There is no question about that. It must have run for about two years and some people could be forgiven for believing that that is the only thing that has dominated the scene for the last two years. Many other things have been going on in that time; but a

lot of people want to bring this together and get the Fitzgerald recommendations into order and into legislation. We have done that in the last week. No Government could have moved faster or with greater conviction. Opposition members will know that when they see the legislation after it is introduced tomorrow night. They will already have had briefings themselves. The consultation process will have taken place. Not only that, but also the people of Queensland will have a chance to see the legislation that is to be introduced tomorrow night. They will have a chance for the next 10 days to read it, and to see what it means and how it will affect them. Then Parliament will meet to consider it. I have extended the sittings to include 17, 18 and 19 October in order to allow clear, full and proper debate on the very matters that Opposition members have been whinging and whining about and playing political football with for the past six months.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! As this is a day allotted for Supply, that completes question-time.

At 3.30 p.m.,

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

SUPPLY

Estimates—Fifth and Sixth Allotted Days

Estimates-in-Chief, 1989-90

Industry, Small Business and Technology

Hon. H. D. J. FRASER (Springwood—Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology) (3.31 p.m.): I move—

“That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1989-90, a sum not exceeding \$440,000—Office of the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Consolidated Revenue).”

Queensland business and industry have enjoyed a year of strong and steady growth. We produced more, we sold more overseas, we employed more and more people, and our prospects remain good. All that has been achieved against a background of economic mismanagement by the Labor Party. How much better would our achievements have been had it not been for Labor’s crippling interest rates and its discriminatory treatment of Queensland!

I am a newcomer to this portfolio. Today I want to praise the work of my department, the Department of Industry Development, and my predecessor, the Honourable Rob Borbidge. I am determined to carry on their good work. This Ministry plays a vital role in the economic development of Queensland. It contributes directly to the creation of the State’s wealth and the creation of jobs, and directly to the generation of revenue to fund the services that underpin the well-being of our people.

But let us look at the record. It is a record of success that is making Queensland the envy of Australia and it is drawing more and more migrants from interstate. Opposition members cannot deny that people are leaving the Labor States to come to Queensland because they like good, conservative Government without any fiddling.

Manufacturing turn-over, according to the most recent figures available—1987-88—was \$17.4 billion, an increase of about 17 per cent. The comparable national increase was 14 per cent. There is gradual but consistent diversification of Queensland manufacturing industry, shown by strong growth in the smaller sectors of our industry such as textiles, clothing and footwear, wood products and furniture, paper and printing, and miscellaneous manufacturing. Manufactured exports rose 7.6 per cent to almost \$3.2 billion.

Employment in manufacturing has also grown strongly. In the 12 months to May, employment in manufacturing rose by almost 20 per cent. Although capital investment in manufacturing was down 6.6 per cent, it is down from a high level of investment shown by a 58 per cent increase in 1987-88. Over the past year, there has been significant new investment in the manufacturing sector, with much of that being directed at modernisation and an upgrading of capital stock. Another measure of our success is job creation. By August this year, the Queensland labour-force had increased 6 per cent on last year, compared with a 4 per cent increase nationwide, which shows that Queensland is leading Australia in the creation of jobs. Employment was up 6.8 per cent, or 82 000, compared with 5.1 per cent Australiawide. Again, Queensland was ahead of the national average.

Those figures are runs on the board. They are not the vague promises of our friends opposite with their cargo-cult views of development that appeal only to the gullible. I say clearly to Opposition members that the people of Queensland are not gullible, and they will show that at the forthcoming election.

Mr Warburton: I couldn't agree with you more.

Mr FRASER: I agree with Mr Warburton.

I warn all of Queensland that Labor's recent discovery of the profit motive and soft words for industry disguise Labor's dominance by the Socialist Left, by Ian McLean, the party president, and by Terry Hampson, the State secretary. Labor is merely hiding the dead hand of socialism and glosses over the threat of the dead weight of trades hall waiting to invade the State's board rooms.

Queensland business and industry should know that the ALP is threatening Queensland with a fuel tax and a financial institutions duty. Opposition members cannot deny that that has been reported in the national media. According to its environmental spokesman, the ALP is also on record as considering an environmental levy. Labor states that it wants to bring Queensland taxes into line with those in other States. Honourable members will not read that in the local media, but it has been reported nationally. It means that Labor's policies will cost each and every Queenslanders at least \$300 more each year. The people of Queensland must be told that very clearly. Opposition members are not telling the people of Queensland about that. They are being deceitful in the way in which they intend to raise taxes in this State.

Before turning to the work of my Ministry in detail, let us look briefly at some of the major prospects for new industry in Queensland. There is ICI's chemical complex at Gladstone, which Mr Prest would know about.

Mr Prest: It's only too true. I do know about it!

Mr FRASER: As Mr Prest would know, work is well advanced on that \$80m project.

Work is also under way on a \$50m sodium cyanide plant at Gladstone. Only yesterday, Cabinet agreed to sell the old Bulimba B Power Station as a site for a glassworks estimated to cost \$100m, and thereby create 130 jobs and produce 100 tonnes of float glass a day.

Work is well under way on the State gas pipeline to Gladstone at a cost of \$110m. That is expected to draw even more industry to central Queensland, and more particularly to the Gladstone area.

Feasibility work is under way into a bagasse-pulp plant at Innisfail, a project which will cost about \$110m. Planning is under way for a major fertiliser plant at Wallumbilla, costing approximately \$50m. Preliminary work is under way on proposed sand-mining projects in central Queensland, with a potential investment of up to \$1 billion. Work is expected to commence this year on the Kunwarara magnesia project north of Rockhampton at an estimated cost of more than \$120m. There is also the Yaamba magnesia

project estimated to cost another \$100m. What is more, two major steel-producers are both considering Gladstone as a possible site for a steelworks. I could go on and on.

They are not phantom projects. They are all projects that are either under way or under consideration. Opposition members cannot claim that those projects are phantom projects. I have detailed the projects and honourable members can check them out.

Mr McElligott: It shows Mr Prest's good representation.

Mr FRASER: Well, he does not do a very good job, because it is the Queensland Government that is attempting to bring those projects to Gladstone.

Those projects would not be possible were it not for the Queensland Government's reputation for solid and progressive management, low taxes and carefully planned and provided infrastructure. The Queensland Government can be very proud of the infrastructure that it has provided throughout Queensland. That record and our prospects should not be lost sight of in the current media frenzy spurred by the histrionics of the Opposition. That record and those prospects are due in part to the work of the Department of Industry Development.

Since it was established in 1963, DID has changed substantially. The department now embraces the Centre for Manufacturing Development, the International Business Centre and the Centre for Information Technology and Communications. As well, I am assisted by two statutory authorities: the Small Business Development Corporation and the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone. Because of the breadth of my responsibilities, I will simply highlight our key policies and programs for the next year.

The development of Queensland's manufacturing industry is essential to economic growth and rising living standards. Each new job in manufacturing creates up to five other jobs. Manufactured goods are the fastest-growing area of world trade. Diversification allows local industries to replace imports. Manufacturing will help secure the future of our agricultural and mining industries through processing and value-adding; only manufacturing can address our national crisis in international trade in the long term.

The challenge for me, as Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology, is to accelerate our progress in developing a more diverse and stronger manufacturing base in Queensland. It is really a twin challenge. We must improve the productivity and competitiveness of our existing industries and we must encourage the creation of new firms as the basis of new industries.

In meeting this twin challenge the Government is pursuing a strategy which has a number of thrusts. It is encouraging the growth of enterprises which generate higher value-added products and services—industries which are world competitive and export-oriented. It is also encouraging each of the regions in Queensland to develop their own individual potential.

The Government's industry development strategy will be successful if it continues to pursue programs which encourage the private sector to exploit new commercial opportunities, create a productive business environment—something members of the Opposition know nothing about—and provide value-adding infrastructure, which acts as a catalyst for growth.

This past year DID celebrated 25 years of service to Queensland. It has been a good time for us to review our past and to preview the future.

The Government is confident that it has in place an effective range of programs and services which seek to upgrade management skills, encourage the adoption by industry of the best technologies, foster entry by Queensland firms into new national and international markets and promote the development of new industries in the regions of Queensland.

The benefits of these programs are rarely front-page news, but for individual firms there are real benefits. Those benefits are in the following forms—

- fewer defective products; and

- less waste of materials, reduced inventories of stock.

In this day and age of very high interest rates, which have been imposed on us by the Federal Labor Government—

Mr Veivers: Socialist policies.

Mr FRASER: That is right. Hard-nosed socialist policies are beating small-businessmen out of existence. Most businesses are forced to reduce their inventory of stock.

Other benefits are as follows—

- improved staff and customer relations;
- productivity increases;
- significant reduction in lead-time for new production lines;
- increased flexibility in operations, including reduced floor space requirement; and
- increased market share and new market opportunities.

Mr McElligott interjected.

Mr FRASER: I am going all right but, like everybody else in Australia, I am battling to make a quid.

Individually, these benefits are significant only to the firm. Collectively, it is these benefits that allow profitable industries to develop. The Government's efforts are greatly appreciated by the firms and industries that are benefiting from its endeavours in Queensland.

Mr Davis: Is the rumour true that Boeing are going to relocate out here?

Mr FRASER: I will not answer that question.

Programs to facilitate the establishment of new industries through assistance with infrastructure and co-ordination of planning and regulatory requirements resulted in ICI's decision, as I mentioned earlier, to invest \$80m in a new caustic soda/chlorine plant at Gladstone—Mr Prest has not been able to get the smile off his face. Colgate Palmolive is going to expand to the Gold Coast with a new \$20m facility. Fisher and Paykel, New Zealand's largest white-ware manufacturer, is going to establish a \$25m plant at Cleveland to produce refrigerators.

Mr Veivers: Well done! Well done!

Mr FRASER: Yes. That is how one gets runs on the board.

The Fisher and Paykel project was a direct result of one of the department's trade promotional visits to New Zealand. That is where this Government is doing something for Queensland, which is more than members opposite can offer the people of this State.

In the next 12 months this Government will be building on the success of its existing programs and it will be taking exciting new initiatives. A top priority will be the launch of its Centre for Manufacturing Development within DID. This centre will bring together, as an advisory service to industry, our expertise in manufacturing skills, manufacturing technologies and business-planning. That would be foreign to members opposite. They would not know what business-planning was. That centre will now be the focus for programs and financial assistance provided to industry through the joint Commonwealth/State National Industries Extension Service.

Since 1987 more than 400 individual firms have become eligible for direct financial assistance in the form of consultancy subsidies amounting to \$2.25m to hire private-sector specialists.

The date of 1 July 1990 is particularly important for industry. The State's purchasing policy imposes a deadline of 1 July 1990 for suppliers of manufactured products to the State Government to have in place an adequate quality control system. In 1989-90 the

Centre for Manufacturing Development will provide for even greater resources to assist and advise firms and Government agencies to meet the 1 July 1990 deadline.

Mr Davis: Why did GMH leave the State—any idea?

Mr FRASER: Because of the policies of the Federal Government. I am glad the honourable member asked that question. The Federal Government drove that company out of Queensland.

The department, through its International Business Centre, will continue to seek out overseas investors with the potential to start up new manufacturing and processing business in Queensland and to bring new finance or technology into existing businesses. This activity, as it did last year, will range from large-scale projects, such as the proposed Taiwanese steel-mill and the Fisher and Paykel plant, to smaller-scale businesses suitable for new business migrants. Either way, the results enhance significantly the internationalisation of Queensland industry.

Mr Veivers: You are going to streamline DID, aren't you?

Mr FRASER: The honourable member is right. It has been streamlined and we are striving to streamline it further.

In trade development, DID's International Business Centre will continue to support initiatives of the private sector industry organisations, and a highlight will be a combined QCI/MTIA trade and investment mission to Europe, which I propose to lead and which will lead to new business links for Queensland companies within what will be after 1992 a unified European market of 320 million people.

Mr Milliner: When does that trade delegation leave?

Mr FRASER: That is how confident I am—the delegation will leave next year.

Mr Milliner: I wouldn't book the passage if I were you.

Mr FRASER: The honourable member should not worry about it. I will pay for it myself if I lose. Does the honourable member know what happens to people who get overconfident?

Mr Milliner: What?

Mr FRASER: They get a shock.

Following the May 1989 signing of the sister-State relationship with Shanghai municipality in China, the International Business Centre, through the Queensland/China Council, will pursue individual opportunities for joint trade and investment activity between Queensland and the major industrial centre of Shanghai. Queensland is the leader in establishing business links and a sister-State relationship with Shanghai.

A major contribution will be made to improving the business climate, through satisfying the increasing demand for access to Government information. In this respect there are a number of initiatives I would like to highlight. The Queensland Business Licence Information Centre will become operational this year. This centre will reduce the cost to the business community of obtaining State Government licence information. It will provide a single point of access to State Government information on business licences, permits, approvals and registrations. More or less, it is a one-stop shop. It will be a great innovation for members of the public and the business people of Queensland. In addition, the public access system will allow dial-up access to various Queensland Government databases. We have now put in place the facility to enable the Queensland business community to access Government information—initially, that relating to land and corporate affairs—from the convenience of their own premises. In 1989-90, we will be devoting a major effort to accelerating the adoption, the adaptation and the creation of advanced technology by all sectors of the Queensland economy.

In co-operation with the four universities in south-east Queensland, DID is promoting the technology quadrangle. Researchers at each university have complementary

strengths gained over many years of research and development activity within those organisations. The universities, coupled with a network of technology parks, other research centres and industrial parks, offer an environment in which technology, resources and information are shared and expanded to create a basis for further exploration and utilisation.

A major effort will be directed towards encouraging the establishment of infrastructure which will place Queensland industry in the forefront of twenty-first century development. DID is acting as the catalyst for the creation of a fibre-optic network initially linking the key research centres of south-east Queensland. Accessible through this network will be supercomputing facilities. This is a key initiative that will contribute to the development of the State.

Another important initiative that is under detailed investigation is the construction of a business incubator and research centre on the Mount Gravatt research park. In addition to promoting the commercialisation of research and development, the centre will become a vital link in the State's innovative network.

The availability of industrial land is also an important part of the State's industrial infrastructure. The Crown industrial estates program will therefore continue to be an important departmental activity. Since 1963, more than \$143m has been spent on the provision of industrial land and factory buildings in Queensland. In no uncertain way has this attracted major manufacturing institutions to this State. A total of 65 industrial estates and three technology/research parks have been developed. More than 2 500 individual manufacturers have benefited from this program.

The main emphasis for estate development in 1989-90 will be on areas of high demand, particularly in the greater Brisbane area, Cairns, the Gold Coast, and, once again, Gladstone. A review of the program's operations will focus on the increasing financial commitment required to continue it in its present form. The options available to enhance the benefits of industry development and reduce net costs will be examined. Our value-adding challenge involves not only encouraging industrial development but also ensuring that the potential of the central, northern and western parts of Queensland are also developed. The predominant growth in Queensland is expected to continue to take place in the south-eastern corner of the State.

By the year 2010, the region from Noosa south to the New South Wales border and west to Toowoomba is expected to be one vast urban region with a population of about 3 million. However, the Government's commitment to decentralised development remains intact. This is being pursued through its regional development program. In the next 12 months, the program will be enhanced through—

- The activities of regional development bureaus.
- Expansion of the network of Small Business Development Corporation offices. Two new offices will be established this year. Earlier, I mentioned that it is proposed to establish these offices in Mackay and in the Sunshine Coast region.
- Expansion of the remote commercial television service.

Northern development will receive a boost through the Government's strong commitment to the enterprise zone based on Townsville and Cairns. It is important to acknowledge that, as the responsibilities of the Ministry have broadened substantially in the last few years, a heavier workload has fallen on DID. However, the Department of Industry Development remains a small, dynamic and well-managed department. I pay a tribute to the Director-General of Industry Development, Mr Peter Ellis, and his senior staff on the way that they are handling the management of DID. This reflects deliberate departmental policy of utilising the services of the private sector. That is what it is all about with a free-enterprise Government—Government departments and the private sector work hand in hand for the good of Queensland. The department is funding bodies outside Government to perform functions and to deliver programs.

On the Government's behalf, these multiplier agencies are being contracted or partially funded to promote innovation, entrepreneurship and quality, to encourage

import replacement, to stimulate regional development, to reward enterprise, to promote Queensland overseas, and to provide databases. Both the Queensland Confederation of Industry Ltd and the Metal Trades Industry Association have been contracted to provide services.

Through the department's regional development program regional development bureaus are funded to take the initiative in promoting growth in their areas by using their special expertise and knowledge. That program-delivery policy has enabled DID to remain streamlined and effective.

Close and direct links with industry are essential. The Queensland Manufacturing Advisory Committee and the Queensland Science and Technology Council have both been reconstituted this year. My department's other advisory bodies include the Queensland/China Council, which is doing a magnificent job in holding and promoting links with China; the Advisory Committee on Remote and Regional Communications; the Queensland Business Executive of the Year Committee; and the State Executive Committee on NIES, which is the National Industries Extension Service. I am looking forward to working closely with members of those bodies.

Officers of DID are continuing to work closely with the Premier's Department to facilitate the development of the Cape York spaceport and the Brisbane international aerospace development zone, which is centred around the old Brisbane domestic airport. Both of those projects provide further opportunities for the State's existing manufacturers and will attract new industries to Queensland.

The Centre for Information Technology and Communications—CITEC—has been fully integrated into the Department of Industry Development where it enhances the overall thrust of the department in its pursuit of rational economic growth. As one of the finest information technology services provided to Government in Australia, CITEC plays a very important role in maximising the efficiency and the effectiveness of all State departments that use its services. Perhaps just as importantly, CITEC provides a launching pad for the generation of information technology innovations and for the training of top-class computer scientists who, in turn, move to the private sector where they help improve productivity. Really, CITEC is an incubator for training people for computer-based and technology-based industries.

The provision of some key services to the Government is a particularly important responsibility of the Ministry. Those services include the provision of computer services, telephone services, radio services, television studio services and electronic access services to Government-linked databanks. All of those functions assist the Government to operate efficiently and effectively. This year, one of the Government's priorities will be to strive for greater improvement in the provision of those services.

During the past few years a rapid expansion of the responsibilities of the Ministry and of the functions of DID has occurred. A Ministry that can respond to change was needed, and that has been achieved. The upheaval in China and the effect of the Australian airlines strike demonstrates the need for flexibility. Policies have been reassessed, resources have been reallocated and programs have been adjusted to meet changing priorities.

As Minister for Industry, my mission is to stimulate the growth of a world-competitive, high-value-added and diversified industrial base in Queensland. If Queensland can achieve that it will be a much stronger place. My mission is central to the Queensland Government's economic development strategy, the priority of which is the creation of a broader and deeper economic base by greater expansion of the manufacturing and services sector, better utilisation of technology and a more international business perspective. Because of the objectives that the Industry Ministry pursues and the functions that it performs, it is central to the future growth of Queensland.

A major challenge for the Government and for me as Industry Minister is to diversify and strengthen Queensland's manufacturing base. With the expert support of

DID I am confident that the Ministry is well placed to meet that very important challenge for Queensland.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I desire to inform honourable members that, on the Vote proposed, I will allow a full discussion on all of the Minister's departmental Estimates (Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds).

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

Mr SMITH (Townsville East) (3.57 p.m.): During the early part of the presentation of his Estimates the Minister got a little bit excited, probably because this is his first major speech in this Chamber relating to his portfolio. Apart from the unnecessary jibes at this side of the House, most members would agree with what the Minister said. However, I intend to discuss a couple of issues that he mentioned.

The Minister spoke about the support of the business sector. Increasingly there is support in Queensland from the business sector for an alternative Government in Queensland. At the Federal level, 70 per cent of businesses support the Federal Government rather than a Liberal/National coalition. If I were the Minister I would not get too carried away with enthusiasm on that aspect.

The Minister mentioned fuel tax, which does not come within his portfolio. A future Labor Government will not introduce a fuel tax.

The Minister mentioned his project book. Over the years I have seen quite a few project books but I have not seen the one that is due to be released this year. A couple of years ago some of the projects that were listed as goers were phantom projects with no possibility of them ever getting off the deck. In fact, some of those project books have been dishonest, although I concede that in recent years they have improved. I will be interested to see this year's production.

I found it fascinating that the Minister mentioned the International Business Centre, which is quite a worthwhile concept. However, within the Premier's Department the office of international business has been set up virtually in opposition to that centre. It is clear that some sort of conflict exists. The roles of those respective offices have not been properly delineated. Quite frankly, the Minister has to get his act together.

The Minister also mentioned regional development. I think he would have to be honest and say that the suggestion of a formal regional development policy originated from this side of the Chamber, and it was presented before the Government's document *Queensland 2000*. The Opposition was well down that track.

The Minister also mentioned the business environment. If he did his homework—and I thought he would be the type of man who would—he would know that one of the key recommendations of the Savage report was a review of business regulations. Undoubtedly, the business community is unhappy with the existing regulations. They have not been considered or reviewed for many, many years. A review is long overdue. The community will certainly not be happy until that problem is addressed.

Yesterday in this Assembly the Minister made a ministerial statement about the facility that enables the public to have computerised access to Government information. I commend the Government for that. That is certainly the way to go. It enables information to be obtained via a phone link. In this day and age, with the high cost of travelling and the difficulty some people have moving around, that facility will certainly be a great asset to those who want to access that information through their own computer screen.

However, I would point out that the Government could have introduced other services more quickly. For instance, I refer to the Western Australian Government, which has been instrumental in sewing up the services of Viatel for use in that State's TAB agencies. Punters in Queensland who want to place a bet on events can do so

through the Viatel service, which is run by the Western Australian equivalent of the Queensland TAB.

In preparing to respond in this Estimates debate, yesterday I read for the first time the debate on the Estimates of this department that took place four years ago, on 10 October 1985. What saddened me was that, had I chosen to do so, with the alteration of a few paragraphs, names of people and organisations, my four-year-old contribution would still be an appropriate statement of response in 1989. Incidentally, I will be dealing only with the Industry part of the portfolio; my colleague Mr McElligott, the member for Thuringowa, will discuss Small Business.

The reason my remarks would still be appropriate is that little has changed in terms of Queensland's industrialisation. Having made that observation, I chose to take the positive view of Queensland's industrial potential, although it is certainly obligatory that I make some reference to some unfavourable past and continuing matters. I also mentioned some of these aspects in my contribution to the Budget debate last Wednesday.

I acknowledge that the annual report was provided in advance of the Budget debate. That was appreciated. I am also conscious that it is the twenty-fifth anniversary of this department. Unfortunately, over most of that period, the department has been inflicted with less than competent Ministers. However, I do acknowledge that positive changes did occur during the periods of custodianship by Mr Ahern and, later, Mr Borbidge, who was always courteous in briefing me on what was happening.

Mr Fraser has hardly had time to get his feet under the desk, so I am not able to pass any judgment on his stewardship. However, I hope that in the short period prior to the election, after which I hope to assume ministerial responsibility for the department, he will make a positive contribution, particularly as he will not be shackled with the bottle-neck caused by the Cabinet Budget Review Committee.

Again referring to the 1985 Estimates debate, I drew attention to the Government's contractual arrangements at the time with the Sperry organisation relating to the supply of personal computers. I described those arrangements as a disgrace. Mr Ahern took exception to my remarks. However, I want to place on the record that I was correct and that the Government is still bleeding financially from the cost of maintaining some Sperry equipment.

The cost of components such as motherboards and power supply units is about five times that of comparable equipment readily available from alternative sources. Non-Government users have learned to repair Sperry equipment with clone components to keep the costs at a tolerable level.

Since the 1985 Budget, when the Opposition pointed out the inappropriateness of the computer-acquisition policy, the Government has largely adopted the Opposition's suggestion and the computer industry in Queensland is fairly healthy, although I understand some new problems have arisen with respect to what is known as period tendering.

In reading the 1985 Estimates debate, I found it interesting that, with the exception of discussion on the then Q-Net, most Government speakers were more comfortable with the Small Business element of the portfolio than with the Industry and Technology sectors. It is also rather interesting that Q-Net was not a goer for the Government. The Opposition knew that would be the case, and it said so. The Government did not get it right to the extent that it was initially sold to the Parry organisation, which could not handle it, and it finished up with Bond. In commercial hands it seems to have some chance of survival. In fact, recently I inspected the facilities. I believe it has a contribution to make.

For those dedicated readers of *Hansard* who would like to compare the consistency and direction of the policy of the Opposition with that of the Government, I suggest that their reading of the 1985 debate on these Estimates would be most instructive. As something of an aside, I point out that on page 1831 of *Hansard*, Mr Cooper—not then a Minister—was moved to say that the department was administered by a switched-on

Minister who was, of course, Mr Ahern. That remark demonstrates that some people are consistent and some are not. Mr Innes also made a remark during that debate, predicting that by 1989 unemployment would be running at 18 per cent. I notice that he is not in the Chamber.

I also noticed that the catchcry of the day was "Enterprise Queensland", which has been replaced in 1989 by "Queensland 2000". Unfortunately, the outcomes are similar, but I will refer to Queensland 2000 later. It is my view that the problem of the paucity of our industrial and technological base is of such magnitude that it really deserves a bipartisan approach to avoid loss of community confidence.

During the recent Budget debate, I quoted 1986-87 statistics, which are the most recent available. The *Quality Queensland* document refers to 1985-86 figures and, for convenience of reference, I intend to cite them. In chapter 2, headed "The Queensland Economy in the changing World", the graphs and figures show quite clearly that the GSP was roughly parallel with the GDP, while the population growth of Queensland outstripped the national growth rate. The Minister has already made a point about that.

The bottom line is that the growth in the labour-force greatly exceeded the creation of new jobs, hence the relatively high unemployment rate. During that period Queensland had 16.5 per cent of the Australian population but only 13.6 per cent of the job-intensive manufacturing sector as defined under the traditional classification. When the manufacturing activities associated with the processing of agricultural and mineral products are removed, Queensland was shown to have only a 5 per cent GSP in engineered products and non-durable goods, that is, in the diversified manufacturing sector.

The reality is that for many years in the future the Queensland economy will continue to be driven by the three sectors of agriculture, mining and tourism. With the possible exception of tourism, they will provide a declining source of income as a percentage of total income. The facts of world economies are that resource-rich nations, with the exception of North America, are largely not the wealthy nations. The honour of wealth lies increasingly with Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, which are generally resource-poor nations. It is also worth noting the relative success of high technology manufacturing countries such as Switzerland and Sweden, not to mention countries making up the EC.

The matters that I have raised are well known to people in the Government's administrative section, whose responsibility it is to monitor and report on the economy. The private sector is face to face with the problem on a daily basis—a fact that is recognised by the Labor Party. Studies have been undertaken and recommendations have been made to Government on how to address that problem, but little has been done. Some examples are the 1987 *Queensland Future Directions* document and, for that matter, the expensive *Queensland 2000*, which was produced a little later than the economic directions document that had come from the internal resources of the Opposition.

There is ample evidence to indicate that there exists within the public service the knowledge—and, indeed, the enthusiasm—to put in place a workable strategy to make Queensland less dependent on its traditional asset base and more export oriented, particularly in areas where there is a natural advantage of being able to add value by processing locally produced commodities such as copper, aluminium, coal, beef and sugar, etc.

In the community there is a private sector that will undertake and exploit opportunities, provided that it is convinced that the Government of Queensland is committed to a change in emphasis in its economic priorities. It certainly does nothing for the confidence of a private sector when people such as Doug Rowell are seen not to have the confidence of the Government of the day. Mr Rowell is a former Director-General of the Department of Industry Development who subsequently headed QIDC. Apparently he was removed because of his view that manufacturing and technology were vital to the future of the State and needed to be given priority and, more importantly, funding. The direction that QIDC has taken in recent times and some of the appointments to the board indicate

that it may as well have remained as the Agricultural Bank in name, as in the great majority of its activities it is exactly that in practice.

It is quite clear to me that Treasury is non-innovative and prefers the money-market to strategic investment in areas that in time will provide productive export capacity through manufacturing and technologically based services. It is also clear that the abolished Cabinet Budget committee—and, to a lesser extent, the economic planning committee—were dominated by Treasury to the detriment of Government support for the manufacturing sector. In turn, that resulted in DID's being starved of funds.

When one looks at DID's budget, at first glance it appears to represent a sizeable outlay, but the fact is that most of those funds are pre-committed. Only a few million dollars are available for discretionary outlays. As I have already mentioned, it also seems clear that the Premier's Department has overlapped DID in some areas. Proper delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the department has to be undertaken.

At the Federal level, the Treasurer is an up-front Minister who is seen to be able to argue his case in Cabinet, in Parliament and in the community at large—particularly the business sector. In Queensland, that simply does not happen. Everything happens behind closed doors with apparently little debate taking place in Cabinet.

I am pleased that in a Goss Government, the Premier will appoint a separate Minister as Treasurer and will allow that Minister to concentrate on optional investment strategies. I am confident that that will result in support of manufacturing and technologically based industries that are prepared to gear themselves for the global market and, in particular, the Pacific rim market. The creation of a State bank will also assist that objective.

All the evidence shows that, whereas the private sector will provide productive capacity, it will only do so in the appropriate environment. Earlier I mentioned business regulations in this context. That also means that the infrastructure must be put in place by Government. The cost of services that are provided must be affordable, especially the cost of land, electricity and water.

It will also be necessary for the Government to provide seeding capital in some industries in the full realisation that not all projects will be successful. Obviously, pitfalls experienced by State Governments in Victoria and Western Australia must be avoided. There remains a proper and responsible role for Government to provide judicious support.

The former Premier delighted in talking about the State of Victoria swimming in a sea of red ink. Undoubtedly some failures have occurred, but there have been many positive outcomes that have greatly enhanced Victoria's industry base. I would also point out that the income per capita for Queensland compares most unfavourably with that for Western Australia in spite of the fact that it has a resource base similar to Queensland's. Of course, that indicates a branch-office mentality in Queensland.

Government support need not be only direct financial support. Assistance can be provided through Government purchasing policies and through assistance with international marketing and staff-training programs. The Government could start by ensuring that it buys Queensland-made transformers. I am told that at Rocklea there is the capacity to build very large equipment. Apparently the transformers have in fact been built but time and time again the company involved has been passed over while the Government favoured other interstate producers. That is certainly a worry.

In terms of marketing assistance, Mr Goss has outlined the direction a Labor Government would take in providing support by attaching professional marketing representatives to overseas embassies and by working closely with Austrade. When people look to the success of Japan and its huge trading corporations, I doubt if many understand the role played by Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

It is certainly both necessary and appropriate for Government to signal to the private sector the market goals that it wishes to achieve. Successful establishment of any

industry will always be determined and governed by the market-place. Queensland is indeed a small market. Nevertheless, this State has a climate similar to that of the west coast of America. It is attractive to people from other countries and those who live in other Australian States.

I have no doubt that Queensland's population as a percentage of Australia's population will increase dramatically and provide an expanded local market that over a period will assist manufacturers that are starting up new ventures. Federal Governments of both progressive and conservative persuasion are seen not to offer Queensland a great deal of support in its manufacturing endeavours.

Understandably a central Government views any situation from a national perspective and is more comfortable with the concept of providing support to traditional manufacturing areas. As a Government, Labor would not be prepared to be confined by any Federal Government's perceived concept of agriculture, mining and tourism as the limit of this State's activities. A Goss Government would not, however, be particularly enthusiastic about new ventures competing in a national market that is well served by existing industry. Clearly its preferred support would go to those industries that indicated a commitment and a capacity to compete successfully in the global market.

The acquisition and management of industrial estates in Queensland has not been without problems. Those areas of contention have been well canvassed and I do not intend to re-plough that field. I wish to reinforce the Labor Party's stated policy of giving a high priority to ensuring that land suitable for industrial and manufacturing purposes is readily available to genuine potential users. There is no doubt that in the future manufacturing will provide new challenges, particularly because product runs are likely to be shorter due to an ever-changing and sophisticated market-place. If manufacturers are to remain successful they must adjust to being in a position to produce new models and designs quickly. In other words, they will need to develop an enhanced capacity for flexibility.

In Britain collaboration between universities and industry is now a major item on the academic agenda and an accepted form of co-operative effort. In 1981 British universities received approximately 80 per cent of their funds from Government. Today those universities receive only approximately 55 per cent of their income from Government, and well over half of Britain's universities are now associated with some kind of business or science park. A few of those have yet to prove commercially profitable for the university concerned, but all of them are symbolic of the desire of universities to be seen to be associated with new companies formed to exploit technological discoveries. In some instances, such companies have been created by working or former members of staff. These companies have been greatly encouraged by the Government's decision to give universities any intellectual property rights that might arise as a consequence of their carrying out research with Government funds. That does not happen in Queensland and must be addressed.

I notice with interest that the previous Premier announced support for the acquisition of a supercomputer that would be essential if Queensland is to seriously address the concept of the use of advanced technology for both information-processing and industrial design. My information is that there are only approximately three or four such installations in Australia, with at least one being operated by the Federal Government and the others located in Adelaide and Melbourne. There is a big lead-time required to establish these installations. Previously I mentioned the growing association of tertiary institutions with technology parks and I understand that that is the situation in Adelaide. There has been some discussion and planning towards a technology quadrangle in south-east Queensland consisting of the four universities, and clearly the acquisition of a supercomputer would advance that concept. It is equally clear that a supercomputer would be extremely expensive and the potential users would need to assure themselves of its financial viability. I believe that DID could play the role of co-ordinator of all interested parties, including the academic institutions and industry, to put together a package that would

see the Government as no more than a small-percentage holder in the facility and, preferably, having no financial interest at all.

One area of technology that is far more relevant today than it was in 1985 is the use of fibre optics for high-integrity communication, and part and parcel of any super-computer facility would be the interconnection of users through a fibre-optic network. There may well be a legitimate role for the State Government to undertake some responsibility for the acquisition, installation and management of the interconnecting infrastructure necessary to service a shared-use facility.

Time expired.

Mr WHITE (Redcliffe) (4.18 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I join in this debate on the Minister's Estimates. At the outset I congratulate him on his appointment. After serving with him on the Public Accounts Committee, I have come to know him better and wish him well in his portfolio. Being a successful businessman, he will add some gusto to this very important department of the State Government.

At the outset of any discussion on a department that is so important to this State, honourable members should recognise what the basis of the economy of this State actually is. The three major pillars of the Queensland economy are agriculture, mining and, in recent years, the development of the tourist industry. It is all very well for members to speak of new technological developments and sunrise industries—and I encourage those industries—but these three major industries must be adequately serviced.

I will refer to each industry one by one. The coal industry has been a bonanza for this State. It has added greatly to the wealth of this State and nation and has been a great job-creator due to the spin-off benefits that have flowed from the industry. It is fair to say that the development of the export coal industry from the late 1960s was the catalyst that brought industrial development to this State. During the 1960s and 1970s, with the opening up of new open-cut coal mines throughout the State, this industry further advanced the industrial output of this nation. If the members of the Liberal Party have one criticism of the Government, it is its inability to respond to criticism of the imposition of very high rail freights, which have been a great disadvantage to that industry. The export coal industry soaked up many of the unemployment problems created as a result of the modernisation and mechanisation of what back in the early days was a labour-intensive industry.

This is a very important industry, but the Government has not been sensitive to its needs. It would be a great pity if the development of further mines in this State was held back. I am conscious of the necessity of revenue for the provision of Government services, and, as I understand it, the revenue flowing from the coal industry is something of the order of \$1 billion. One does not need to be a genius to work out that, if another couple of major coal mines are established, they will be great revenue-producers, not only through rail freights and royalties, but also through things such as pay-roll tax and stamp duty, which are great sources of revenue in this State.

Agricultural industries, and particularly the sugar, wheat and wool industries, seem to be going pretty well on the export market, although the price of wool is down slightly. Nevertheless, over the last 12 to 18 months commodity prices have generally been up.

Mr Yewdale: How is the chemist industry going?

Mr WHITE: The pharmaceutical industry is going very well, with the exception of its relationship with the Federal Labor Government. Like all Labor Governments, that Government has no sympathy whatsoever for small business or professionals. It is totally committed to the corporate State: big business, big Government and big unions. I thank the honourable member for his interjection. I say to him that small businesses that are not part of the Accord are part of the growing silent majority in this country. I put all honourable members on notice that in a couple of weeks' time 250 pharmacists and their employees will be door-knocking in the marginal Labor seats of this State.

Opposition members can rest assured that that is just the beginning of what the pharmacists will be doing to the Labor Party. Because of the stupidity of the Federal Labor Government, Mr Sciacca and Mr Gary Johns, who have marginal seats round Brisbane, will feel the heat from that sort of activity. The honourable member for Everton should not stand in this place from time to time and bleat about his party's interest in the small business community, because his party's claim to have such an interest is a complete and utter falsehood.

Mr Milliner: Did your pharmacy go on strike or did you scab?

Mr WHITE: The honourable member knows how I feel about strikes. I do not believe in them; I have never gone on strike; and I do not intend to go on strike, as distinct from the members of the Labor Party, who have a great propensity for encouraging people to strike. One has only to recall the electricity strike to remember the activities of the Labor Party in Queensland. Who voted against the Electricity (Continuation of Supply) Act? Which was the political party in this State that wanted to turn off the lights? And that leads me to the policy of the Labor Party.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WHITE: Opposition members are getting very restless because the truth is coming out and it is hurting. Look at the Labor Party's industrial relations policy, which has a significant impact on industry and commerce in this State. Legislation has brought lower prices for electricity and the stability has attracted industry to Queensland because it knows that it can turn on the power and that there will not be any industrial disputation in the electricity industry.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WHITE: I thank Opposition members for their interjections and for reminding me that an important part of our economic prospects for the future is the way in which we handle industrial relations. We have only to look at the activities of Mr Hawke and Sir Peter Abeles, those wonderful cohorts. Who would have thought that the Leader of the Labor Party and former president of the ACTU would be paying out to his mates an enormous amount of tax-payers' money to bludgeon the pilots into oblivion? He is the man of reconciliation and of consensus—the man who stood in 1983 and said to the people of this country, "I promise you reconciliation and consensus." But he is the most divisive Prime Minister that Australia has had. The whole weight and political muscle of the Federal Government are being used to bring down a small group of pilots.

What about letting the pilots sit down with management and working out a productivity system? What is wrong with the pilots getting an increase in their wages and improving their conditions if they can lift productivity and, at the same time, not push up prices for the travelling public?

Mr Milliner: They didn't want to do that. Don't you know that?

Mr WHITE: I am pretty aware of what is going on, and what it is all about is bludgeoning the pilots and looking after Hawke's friend, Sir Peter Abeles. That is what it is all about. What a disgraceful situation!

The so-called Labor Party is discriminating against people who want to get better conditions. How is the Labor Party doing it? It is doing it in concert with the magnates in this nation. What a disgrace for a political party to say, "We are here to look after the little people." What a lot of garbage! The Labor Party sold out its principles so long ago that it is not funny. Once upon a time I respected the Labor Party because it believed in something; it believed in democratic socialism. Today, it is a different world. It is State capitalism and corporate statism. That is all that the Labor Party is about these days.

I must take this opportunity to comment on the way we in the Liberal Party see the future of industry and commerce in Queensland. We believe very strongly in the

further development of a flourishing private sector. Look at the progress that this State has made since 1957 when, fortunately, it got rid of the Opposition's predecessors in the Labor Party who had contained Queensland as the Cinderella State. All we had was agriculture. With incentives and the creation of the right atmosphere and political climate, we have created the attitude that this is a can-do place. It has been since 1957 and, if my colleagues have anything to do with it, it will continue to be.

The Liberal Party believes that the development of this State is best achieved by the Government creating the right climate for the private sector to grow. I refer, for instance, to lower taxes and charges and an efficient and accountable public service, a public service that is responsive to the needs of industry and commerce. At the same time, our strategy also recognises that the Government has a role to play in channelling the expansion of the private sector towards specific community objectives such as decentralisation, which has been the heartland of our economic policy for many years. What other State has a better record of decentralisation? Why should we not encourage it and develop it in the future so that, in our new direction for the economy of this State, decentralisation will play a key role?

These major policy initiatives will be implemented as a matter of urgency because we believe that, in this present day, people need to have their confidence in the State restored so that stability in Government and encouragement to the private sector come back to this State. One of the things that has crept into the economic decision-making of Governments in recent years has been the making of one-off decisions instead of the development of a long-term strategy.

As I said previously, in recent years the three major industries of the State have done very well. As I just mentioned, at present tourism is having its problems. However, it is important that we further encourage development of added benefits to primary products.

Part of the way to encourage industries, particularly of a manufacturing nature, is to maintain a policy of quick decision-making and the right economic climate. That should be put together with a positive policy of industrial relations that gives the workforce, manufacturing industry and the whole gamut of the economy a choice. If people wish to negotiate private contracts, voluntary employment agreements and so forth, they should have that choice.

I find it rather strange that the Labor Party, which professes to be looking after the interests of the worker, does its damndest to stop employees from getting a better deal through voluntary employment agreements. The legislation, which the Liberal Party supported strongly in this Chamber, is working. I hope that it is adopted on a national basis. There is no doubt in my mind that centralised wage-fixing is a disaster for a State such as Queensland. As we have known over the years, the flow-ons from decisions in the metal trades industry have been a terrible detriment to industry and in many respects have led to the closure of manufacturing industries in this State simply because they do not have the capacity to carry those extra costs.

The industry sector in this State has to develop a further long-term plan. A strategic development plan for each industry sector will be drawn up by the Liberal Party economic task force consisting of business representatives and senior public servants. There is nothing new or sensational in that; nevertheless, it must be set in place and worked on continuously. Strategic development plans will also be developed for public sector activities, with the close involvement of private sector representatives.

Under a Liberal Government, policies and resources will be directed towards furthering the aims and objectives of industry. The tendering system will be revised to ensure that Government contracts are let in a fair and equitable manner so that in the future allegations of favouritism and so on are not part of the scene.

Some type of assistance or preference—if I could use that word—should be considered in the letting of contracts. I do not believe that the only factor to be considered in Government contracts is the price; other factors must be considered, not the least of

which is the investment by companies in this State and the number of jobs that they create.

One development that has been a bone of contention with people in the private sector is the economic discrimination between the rural sector and such parts of the private sector as people involved in manufacturing, in service industries and in retailing, where land tax is not paid. People on the land can pass their property down to members of their family without paying stamp duty. I say "Good luck" to the people on the land who receive those benefits. However, I find it abhorrent and a form of economic apartheid that there is one rule for the businessman who is a farmer and a different rule for people who are in business in coastal towns and other towns in Queensland.

In future, we must level out the playing-field and have the same rules for everybody. I do not need to remind honourable members that recently an investigation into drought relief was conducted in this State. Although members of the Government will no doubt have some argument about different aspects of that investigation, it highlighted to me, as a person who has been in business for a long time, that people in business on the land receive many benefits that people in business in other sectors do not receive. That is economic apartheid. It is wrong and it must be stamped out.

Mr Perrett: I will tell your Liberal candidate about that. I bet he will duck for cover out at Barambah.

Mr WHITE: He will be happy to stand up and say, "There is one rule for you, Mr Perrett, and there is another rule for the business sector in the main street of Kingaroy." The honourable member should not try to pull that one on. If he wants to play that game, there are a lot more votes in and around the townships than there are on the rural properties.

If a benefit is to be given to the farmers, it should be given to the other sectors of the business community as well. One sector should not be discriminated against. If Governments can provide assistance to people on the land, that is their good luck. However, let us have the same rules for all.

Mr Gately: What you want to remember is that they provide the food for your tummy, that rural sector.

Mr WHITE: I will completely ignore that remark. Mr Gately is doing a first-class job of talking his way out of this establishment. He has done enough without my adding to his departure from the Chamber.

Mr Beard: What about Kodak? \$60m to keep them afloat.

Mr WHITE: As the honourable member for Mount Isa reminded me, there is another rule for Hawke and Kodak. Why should Kodak receive \$60m?

Mr Beard: Is it Brian Howe's electorate?

Mr Hobbs: The banks.

Mr WHITE: Is it Brian Howe's electorate? Why should the banks get a hand-out and not the building societies?

Mr Booth: What about Kodak?

Mr WHITE: The honourable member for Warwick obviously missed my reference to Kodak.

If we are to have a system of helping industry and commerce, whether it be rural, manufacturing, service, technology or whatever, we must have the same playing-field. We cannot have the policies that the National Party has supported for years to the detriment of other sectors of the community. At a Federal level, the Labor Party is doing the same thing. As I have said in this Chamber many times, when it comes to

economics I often find it difficult to determine the difference between the economic policies of the Labor Party and the policies of some members of the National Party.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (4.38 p.m.): I support the Minister in the presentation of his Estimates and congratulate him on his elevation to the Ministry.

As other members have already said, the Minister has an enormous amount of drive. One only has to listen to him when he is speaking to realise that. I have noticed that, on a couple of occasions since Mr Fraser's elevation to the Ministry, members opposite have been at the receiving end of his tongue. I congratulate him on his forthrightness and his ability to handle members opposite.

Mr Milliner: A whitewash.

Mr STEPHAN: No, it is not a whitewash.

Mr Milliner: No. I called him a lightweight.

Mr STEPHAN: I think that the Minister has a bit more weight than does the honourable member, even though he is expanding a little bit around the middle. The Minister is certainly able to handle himself, and it is most important that he be able to do that.

Mr Smith stated that the Labor Party has no intention of introducing a fuel tax. I was very pleased to hear that. Perhaps this is an opportune time to remind members of the Opposition what their Federal counterparts have been doing and the sorts of taxes that they have been introducing. By introducing new taxes the Federal Government has been able to skim off an enormous amount of money from industry and from people generally.

In 1988-89 sales tax revenue increased by 14.4 per cent to \$8.6 billion. That is not a bad effort. In 1988-89 the excise on petroleum products increased by 4.5 per cent to \$5 billion. That is \$5 billion over and above the previous figure. In 1988-89 primary industry levies increased by \$105m, made up of a \$48m increase in wool levies, a \$36m increase in livestock slaughter levies and a \$5m increase in milk levies. That is not a bad effort either.

I cite those examples because members opposite are saying that the Federal Government is not going to introduce any new taxes. Tertiary education fees have been increased substantially. Those fees have risen to \$1,800 a year per student, to be indexed from 1 January. Members of the Opposition are not on very solid ground when they claim that the Federal Government is not introducing new taxes.

At a time when first home owners need more assistance than ever in trying to buy a home, and despite Hawke's 1987 election promise, the Federal Government has seen fit to reduce the benefit payable under the First Home Owners' Scheme by \$1,000. New taxation arrangements in respect of superannuation funds will provide the Government with \$1.4 billion in additional revenue by 1990-91 and are likely to adversely affect lump-sum superannuation pay-outs.

Mr SMITH: I rise to a point of order. Quite clearly the honourable member is not debating the subject-matter under discussion. I realise that he has little to contribute. However, this debate has nothing to do with the department or the annual report of the department and the honourable member's comments are therefore irrelevant.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Burreket): Order! There is no point of order. I have been listening to the Estimates debates over the last few days and I have observed that most of the speeches have not dealt strictly with the subject-matter of the debate.

Mr STEPHAN: I point out that taxation has a detrimental effect on industry and business in this country. It is an indication of the mentality of members opposite that they think that taxation has no bearing on industry, which is part of the Minister's portfolio. That may not be the way in which Mr Smith looks at it. However, Mr Smith

himself mentioned the fuel tax. I was commenting on what he said was the policy of the Labor Party. I can understand how difficult it is for him to realise and to accept the amount of tax that Australians are in fact paying, which is all brought about by his colleagues in Canberra.

I turn to the department's objectives and the way in which it is developing its policy generally. Some of the department's objectives are to foster an environment conducive to the growth and development of Queensland's manufacturing and traded services sectors; to encourage and facilitate viable local, national and international investment in Queensland's manufacturing and traded services sectors and to promote awareness of existing and potential benefits of information technology in both the public and the private sectors. If any of those objectives can be achieved, that will make a big difference to the future of industry in this State. There are challenges ahead for the department, just as there are challenges ahead for the Government and industry generally, which the department represents and supports.

In the pursuit of its objectives of creating greater economic activity and the social benefits of more efficient and competitive manufacturing and services sectors, the Government may act as a catalyst in encouraging industry to adopt new business practices. From time to time the Government offers to give advice and assistance to industry. In many instances, that advice and assistance has been very much appreciated and very helpful. In fact, the department has helped some industries and small businesses over a depression in their cash flow.

Another of the department's objectives is the development of a co-ordinated program to encourage Queenslanders to buy locally made goods through advertising, promotion and provision of point-of-sale material and the development of these products. Some of these goods are sold as new products. If one goes back into the history of the macadamia nut industry, one finds that it started off as a bauple nut; it then became a Queensland nut; and now it is called a macadamia nut. That nut is being grown and developed. The nuts are being processed in factories and put into various sales outlets. One such factory has opened in Gympie during the last six months. It is showing an enormously competitive spirit and a great deal of confidence in the future of the industry.

Problems are encountered in the operation of industrial estates. Although the industrial estate at Gympie is not very large, a couple of businesses on the estate are presently encountering financial difficulty. Although an offer has been made for businesses to purchase buildings on the estate, they wish to obtain freehold title to the land. Banks are hesitant to provide substantial loans if title to the land cannot be obtained. As honourable members would be aware, should the need arise, banks require some guarantee of the funds that have been provided by them. That is one problem in industrial estates that should be addressed.

Recently, my ALP opponent in Gympie referred to the needs of the Gympie area and what he claimed the Labor Party had identified as problems that were holding back economic growth in Queensland. He said—

“Its positive policies will stimulate economic development and job creation throughout the state.”

Sometimes I wonder how far forward he is looking and what, in fact, he means.

When I look at the development and the growth in population that is occurring in Queensland, it makes me wonder whether Opposition members realise the number of people who are coming to Queensland from other States. They should understand that each year between 35 000 and 40 000 people come into Queensland.

Mr Milliner: They're going out.

Mr STEPHAN: They are not going the other way; they are coming into Queensland. The honourable member cannot expect to attract another 35 000 or 40 000 people to Queensland—

Mr Yewdale: Your roll is going down.

Mr STEPHAN: My roll has not gone down. Since the last election, the number of persons enrolled in the Gympie electorate has increased by almost 3 000. I do not class that as going down. The number of people on the roll in Gympie has not increased to the extent that the number of voters enrolled in electorates in tourist areas has increased. However, I point out that the number of persons on the Gympie electoral roll has increased.

I wonder how many voters on some electoral rolls are phantom voters. When new editions of the State electoral rolls are released, I send out letters of welcome to the newly enrolled electors. It is surprising how many of those letters are returned to me, "Address unknown" and "Unknown at this address".

Mr Milliner: What do you do with them?

Mr STEPHAN: I notify the electoral office accordingly. I am not the only person who has made that comment; similar comments are made throughout Australia, particularly in Queensland.

Mr Prest: I bet you mark them off and say, "Here's a couple of ghosties."

Mr STEPHAN: I know that Mr Prest is laughing about it. He seems to have a good idea of how it is done. It is certainly a matter of great concern. They are phantom voters. However, they are not affecting the roll to a large extent.

Mr Hynd: The CJC will sort it out.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to return to his speech.

Mr STEPHAN: Yes. There is no doubt that the CJC will sort it out. It will have an effect and make us realise that what is done must be done legally. It will ensure that anybody who is enrolled is a real person and that phantom voters are not being placed on the electoral roll.

As I said, Queensland's population has grown. People are not coming to Queensland because of the sunshine, the sand or the surf; to a very large extent, they are coming to Queensland because of its environment, the financial environment and the industrial environment that is being offered.

Mr Hobbs: And the good Queensland Government.

Mr STEPHAN: And the good Queensland Government, as the honourable member says.

The ALP candidate for Gympie made the comment—

"Expansion of our financial infrastructure will increase capital resources for investment."

I turn to the Opposition's policy on interest rates. I suppose that Opposition members are fairly proud to increase interest rates to industry and to discourage any increase in productivity.

Mr Milliner: What is your answer on interest rates? You are criticising them.

Mr STEPHAN: Of course I am criticising interest rates. Why would I not do that when they are increasing to 20 per cent and 24 per cent?

Mr Milliner: What is your answer?

Mr STEPHAN: There is no reason for the high interest rates.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: The Opposition's colleagues are trying to keep interest rates artificially high. It is a fallacy that it is working; it is obvious that that is not working.

European countries, such as Germany, and Japan have interest rates of between 4 per cent and 5 per cent. It is very strange indeed that the Opposition's friend in Canberra thinks that interest rates in this country should be increased to 17 per cent, 18 per cent or 20 per cent. How in the world can Australia compete when interest rates are so high, and how can the people live in such an environment?

Let me deal further with the reduction of incentives by the Federal Labor Party and how Queensland must combat that. In 1988-89, export incentive programs have been cut by \$77.7m. In the 1988-89 Budget, revenue from primary industry levies has been increased by \$105m. Export inspection charges to primary industries were massively increased in the August 1983 Budget. Charges in the 1988-89 Budget increased by \$19m, costing industries a total of \$77m in one year. I suppose Opposition members are very proud of that. As to depreciation allowances—changes were made to depreciation allowances, costing industry, notably mining and agriculture, \$90m in 1989-90 and rising to over \$1,000m by 1990-91. That is not a bad effort if the Federal Government wants to scoop in some extra funding.

The superphosphate subsidy for farmers initiated by the conservatives in 1963 was abolished by Whitlam in 1974. It was reinstated in 1976, and abolished by Hawke Labor, at a cost to producers of \$37m in 1988-89, in the August 1988 Budget. Reductions in agricultural machinery bounties are another example of the damage that has been caused to industry.

I turn now to youth unemployment. The Labor Government has not made significant inroads into combating Australia's unemployment problem, particularly amongst young people aged between 15 and 19. Overall unemployment in May 1989 totalled 6.3 per cent, but youth unemployment was 4.2 per cent. Although that is an improvement on the shocking levels of 24.4 per cent and 19.8 per cent for January 1988 and January 1989 respectively, it remains unacceptably high.

Mr Milliner: How many new jobs have they created?

Mr STEPHAN: Quite a few new jobs have been created in Queensland.

Employment growth in Queensland is reasonably satisfactory when compared with that of other States. As at April 1989, 1 260 700 persons were in full-time or part-time employment in Queensland, which was an increase of 74 400 workers or a growth rate of 6.3 per cent since April 1988. A total of 24.8 per cent of all jobs that were created in Australia during that 12-month period was created in Queensland, which was not a bad effort when one considers that Queensland has only 16 per cent of the national population. In the other States, employment-growth figures were as follows: in New South Wales employment growth increased by 1.8 per cent; in Victoria it increased by 4.4 per cent; in South Australia, the increase was 5.2 per cent; and in Western Australia employment growth increased by 7 per cent. Tasmania experienced a drop in employment growth of 2.6 per cent. The national employment growth average was 4.1 per cent.

I turn now to exports. During February, Queensland accounted for 19.1 per cent of Australia's exports. For the nine months to March 1989, Queensland's exports were valued at \$6,000m or 6.8 per cent higher than the figure for the same period during the previous financial year. The national increase in exports was 2.5 per cent. During that period Queensland accounted for 20.3 per cent of exports. Because Queensland is doing its bit, it can hold its head high.

From time to time the department has assisted the small-business community. The small-business mediator who has been operating in Queensland has been able to assist small-businessmen who, at times, pay a fairly large percentage of their takings in rent.

I congratulate the Minister and support his Estimates.

Mr Davis: Why do you congratulate him? He has only been here for a couple of weeks.

Mr STEPHAN: Although Mr Fraser has been a Minister for only a couple of weeks, that in itself is not a bad achievement.

Mr McELLIGOTT (Thuringowa) (4.57 p.m.): It is disappointing but not surprising that, in the run-up to the State election, members of the Liberal and National Parties are coming up with the old furphies of socialism, reds under the bed, new taxes and all of those sorts of things.

Mr Booth: It is true, though, isn't it?

Mr McELLIGOTT: I will deal with the truth in a moment. During the presentation of his Estimates, the Minister unfortunately got down to that level.

As the member for Townsville East has already stated and as Wayne Goss has said repeatedly, a fuel tax will not be introduced by a State Labor Government. It is a furphy for the National Party to try to spread that rumour. The subject of fuel tax was raised with me at a local government conference and at a small-business conference that I attended last week-end. Members of the National Party are going around this State claiming that a fuel tax is part of the Labor Government's policies. I repeat that no fuel tax will be introduced by a State Labor Government.

The Minister mentioned economic mismanagement at the Federal level.

Mr Fraser: Financial institutions duty tax.

Mr McELLIGOTT: Let us put to rest the financial institutions duty tax.

The National Party continually peddles the economic mismanagement by the Federal Labor Government but it never attempts to provide a solution. Surely the National Party does not expect members of the public to believe that the Hawke Labor Government is deliberately increasing interest rates because it likes to hurt people. The strategy of increasing interest rates has been adopted by most thinking commentators as being the only realistic way in which consumer spending in this country can be dampened.

On behalf of members of the Opposition I make this commitment: if the National Party can provide me with an alternative solution that will resolve Australia's current economic problems, I will undertake to pass on that solution to the Treasurer, Mr Keating, and the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke. Although Peacock and Hewson have no solutions, the National Party continues to peddle that rubbish about economic mismanagement. If it provides me with the solution I will ensure that the appropriate strategies are adopted.

Mr Milliner: They haven't got them.

Mr McELLIGOTT: It is clear that they have no solution.

The Labor Party's performance shows up very clearly in the polls. One would expect that a Federal Government that is presiding over interest rates of 17 per cent would be trailing the Opposition by a large margin, but it is not. At this stage the Labor Party is ahead because the people of Australia have enough sense to realise that Peacock and Blunt have no alternative strategy. In fact, people realise that the economy would be in a much worse condition if Peacock and Blunt were in control of this country's purse-strings.

Mr Fraser interjected.

Mr McELLIGOTT: If the honourable member gives me the solution, I will pass it on.

Mr Fraser: You can fix the economy easily—deregulate the labour market. That's the solution and you guys won't do it.

Mr McELLIGOTT: "Down with the workers!" That's the solution.

The other argument from members opposite is that Government expenditure should be cut, but in the next breath they say that Canberra should be giving this State more

money for roads, health care services and so on. They do not know what they are talking about, but they get down to those generalities.

During a speech in Melbourne recently Mr Tony Fitzgerald, QC, was moved to say that Queensland was back to normal. In that context I want to raise a matter that indicates to me that Queensland certainly is back to normal. The Minister should pay attention to this because I want him to answer it when he replies.

Firstly, I read from a newspaper clipping that announces—

“Caboolture’s new airfield will ‘come of age’ with a grant of \$100,000 from the Department of Industrial Development which will allow the airstrip’s main runway to be completed.

The grant, which was prompted to assist the transfer of the Melbourne-based Airepair Pty Ltd to set up full operations, will be spent on the major runway to allow full aircraft operations.”

That is fine. I believe that that sort of assistance can reasonably be given to interstate companies to relocate to Queensland. But on digging deeper, it is found that the project to carry out the \$100,000 improvements to the Caboolture airstrip was awarded to local earth-moving contractors, Alzino Brothers. On reading a copy of the membership list of the Caboolture branch of the National Party, I find that the Alzino brothers are in fact life members.

Mr Fraser: What’s wrong with that? Have a look at your mates in Canberra. What about Sir Peter Abeles? He gets 10 million a week out of it.

Mr McELLIGOTT: I want to make the point that there is no reason why members of the National Party should not be awarded jobs by the Government. But I ask the Minister to answer this: why were no tenders called for the work? Why did the DID advance \$100,000 to life members of the National Party to carry out work in a National Party-held electorate without going through the normal process of calling tenders? This is what people in the National Party do not understand. This is what Fitzgerald is on about. If the Government is going to award projects of that value to friends of the National Party, it should at least go through the procedures to give the appearance of fairness, responsibility and accountability.

Mr Fraser: Do you know whether they called for quotes?

Mr McELLIGOTT: No tenders were called. The contract for \$100,000 was given to the Alzino brothers, who are life members of the National Party.

I now refer to the Wynnum Manly Yacht Club. That club was in trouble, so it approached National Party Senator Boswell to assist in raising a State Government loan, which was subsequently granted. In return for that favour from the National Party, the Wynnum Manly Yacht Club makes its clubhouse available for private functions by the National Party free of charge. The normal rental for the clubhouse is \$100. The National Party has been using it for several years at no charge.

Mr Gately interjected.

Mr McELLIGOTT: The honourable member can excuse it. If that is the way the National Party wants to do business, the people of Queensland will reject it at the polls. The people of Queensland will not cop that sort of rubbish and they will show that at the coming State election.

I now turn to the subject of small business. When any member of the Opposition is given responsibility for a portfolio—I am the shadow Minister for small business—none of us is an expert. We might like to claim that we are, but I do not. As I moved around small-business organisations and spoke to small-business people to improve my knowledge about this matter, it seemed to me that no level of government really understands the small-business sector of our community. We all make platitudes about it being the main employer of labour—which of course it is—the main contributor to

our economy and so on. All of these things are true, but I do not think any of us fully understands what needs to be done to assist small business. If honourable members want to interpret that as a criticism of the Federal Labor Government, that is fine.

I clearly believe that it is a sector that government does not understand. A lot of attention needs to be paid to it by all levels of government. Having said that, I acknowledge that it is very, very difficult to talk to the small-business sector. Small business operators say that Government does not talk to them; that it talks to big business and does not consult with them.

I pose the question: who or what is small business? It is so diversified. It varies from the local shop-keeper on the corner to the local panel-beater to the local paint shop. All small business operators have different needs and aspirations. It is very, very difficult to talk to them and determine some sort of opinion about which direction the Government should be taking.

The other point is that, as a general rule, small business operators would resent and reject any sort of Government controls. They want to operate in a free-enterprise situation; they want to compete on a level playing-field, as the cliché is these days. It is very, very difficult to know how small business can be assisted at Government level. If I have the time later, I would like to outline some of the propositions that we in the Labor Party have for the small-business sector in Queensland.

At this stage I want to raise a matter that was brought to my attention at the recent GREATA 89 conference, which was organised by the Queensland Retail Traders and Shopkeepers Association. It was a small-business conference and trade fair. The trade fair was quite spectacular. It gave distributors an opportunity to display the sorts of goods that they make available to retailers throughout the State. One of the things that struck me as I went through that trade fair was that at the display headed "Meadow Lea" was a complete range of different brands of margarine which the average person would believe to be in competition with each other. It is clear that all the brands are owned by the one organisation.

As a result of that discovery, I carried out some research and I found an article in the publication *Retail World* dated 27 July 1988 which was headed, "Giants now dominate both sides of the food industry". The article stated—

"A spate of takeovers and mergers has seen control of food manufacturing in Australia concentrated in fewer and fewer hands in the past five years.

The trend is not yet as marked as it has been in retailing, but it has been sufficient to cause independent wholesalers . . . to ring public alarm bells in the past six months.

Their concern . . . is that cosy deals struck between major suppliers and the chains are making things tough for the independents.

At the same time, smaller suppliers are being squeezed out by spiralling co-op advertising charges and new line fees."

It cites the Victorian Prices Minister, Peter Spyker, as saying that suppliers with a wide range of brands, supported by "massive saturation advertising" can virtually control the market. The article states—

"In its Annual Reports, *Retail World* publishes a list of companies which control more than 50 per cent of a market category. At the end of last year, the list had grown to 52—21 up on 1983.

That means 68 per cent more market categories are now dominated by a single supplier than five years ago.

The industry giants include Amatil, Cadbury-Schweppes, Colgate-Palmolive, Goodman Fielder Wattie, Effem Foods, Nestlé, Petersville-Sleigh, Reckitt & Colman, Southern Farmers, and Unilever.

In the second tier are Arnott's, Best Foods, Bowater-Scott, Campbell's Soups, George Weston Foods, Heinz, Johnson & Johnson, Kellogg's, Kimberly-Clark, Kraft and Plumrose.

Between them these 21 companies control more than 40 per cent of the Australian grocery trade, and only four of them are not subsidiaries of overseas corporations.

. . .

Unilever's takeover of Bushell's in February—Unilever subsidiary Rosella-Lipton already owned the top-selling Lipton brand, and the latest purchase gave it Lan Choo, Tetley, Billy, Goldenia and, of course, Bushell's.

This, together with Lipton, made more than 70 per cent of the tea market.

. . .

Cadbury-Schweppes is in fact the archetypal takeover specialist. For years, its turnover and profits have soared as it has gobbled up company after company including Pascall, MacRobertson, Fry and Cottee's, the latter in July 1984.

Cottee's had been floundering since the Cottee family sold it in 1966 to General Foods of the US, even though it had some strong brands in Cottee's cordials and toppings, Maxwell House coffee and Tang powdered drink mix.

Cadbury picked up Hepburn Spa mineral water in February 1985, and in 1987, it acquired Beatrice, Woodroffe Bottlers and the Kia Ora brand.

The moves gave Cadbury 63.7 per cent of the boxed chocolate market, 26 per cent of mineral water and 23 per cent of soft drinks."

Members may be interested to know that there is now no Australian-owned soft drink company. The article continues—

"The competition proved too fierce for Beecham, which in 1986 sold its soft drinks and Deep Spring mineral water business to Amatil, already by far the biggest bottler of soft drinks in Australia.

The acquisition in February this year of Coca-Cola Bottlers North Queensland from Rheem Australia lifted Amatil's share of the Australian Coca-Cola market to 83 per cent."

The small-business retailers are telling me that the old concept of competition in the supermarket is a figment of the imagination. As I said earlier, when people look at the various brands of margarine or even soft drinks in supermarkets, they assume that the brands compete against each other to determine price. Of course, all the products are owned by one organisation. There is no realistic competition.

The situation is worse than that because small-business retailers are severely disadvantaged. I am informed that the attitude adopted by these giant corporations towards the small-businessman who operates the corner store is becoming more and more aggressive. Apparently those companies are demanding better results in return for the supply of their products. It is a major problem being faced by small industry throughout this country. I do not know what the solution is. I presume that the Federal Government has a responsibility to prevent take-overs by giant overseas corporations, but something must be done if this Government is serious about the concept of locally owned and locally operated small-business organisations.

The Labor Party supports the Small Business Development Corporation. The manager in Townsville is Peter Roberts. In my opinion, he does an excellent job. He is working as hard as he can to provide obviously needed assistance to small business. On previous occasions I have made the point that the Small Business Development Corporation needs to be provided with more resources. It certainly needs more staff so that its officers can go out into smaller communities and assist people who live in smaller towns such as Ingham and Cardwell. Small-business operators in provincial areas are having difficulty surviving. Clearly, some of their problems relate to management, budgeting and purchasing. The staff of the corporation could provide valuable assistance to them.

I direct another question to the Minister in the hope that he will respond to it in the course of his reply. The total number of staff is set out in the annual report as being 49 as at 30 June 1989. The various classifications are set out and seem to me to indicate an imbalance in favour of head-office appointments. It seems that there are insufficient staff to actually work in the field with small business operators to try to improve results. I will not examine the classifications in detail but merely point out that at management level there is a general manager and executive assistant. The business advisory service has 10 administrative assistants—whatever they are—a services co-ordinator and a telephonist. In addition, there are managers at Brisbane, Cairns, the Gold Coast and Townsville. There are also officers involved in training and education, communications, information and data services, and computer services. Whereas all those things may be desirable, I ask the Minister to comment on whether changes to the staffing arrangements of the corporation could be examined to provide more field officers who can actually assist small-business people.

The policies of the Labor Party indicate its affinity with small business. Most people who begin small businesses come from working-class backgrounds. Rightly or wrongly, most Australians seem to want the opportunity to have a go on their own at some stage in life. There is no philosophical or political barrier between the Labor Party and small-business operators. As I mentioned earlier, the Labor Party in Government would try to create an environment in which small-business people can succeed if they are prepared to work hard for long hours and do everything necessary to ensure that the business succeeds.

One of the key planks in the Labor Party's platform is the introduction of a small business development and growth program. It is designed to improve access to effective support services throughout this State. It will include increased funding for the Small Business Development Corporation to enable it to extend its offices into regions throughout Queensland and appoint additional staff. The Labor Party will establish an extension service to operate from Small Business Development Corporation offices and extend into outlying areas. It will also introduce planning schemes to assist firms with growth prospects to develop strategic business plans. The scheme will be delivered through various organisations that have obtained prior approval from SBDC and local development organisations.

The Local Government Association of Queensland will be asked to undertake a study of the role local authorities can play to assist small business. It seems to me that some of the planning decisions made by local councils are critical to the success or otherwise of small business. I recognise that problems can be caused by interference with a free market, but I do not necessarily suggest that that should be done. I point out, however, that in my own local authority area the council is loath to interfere with, for example, oil companies that are seeking to establish more service station sites. When I have queried local authority officers about this matter, they have simply asked, "What is the point of knocking it back? The oil companies take us to the Local Government Court and invariably win on appeal. We spend tens of thousands of dollars in rate-payers' funds trying to defend our position." They take the easy way out and approve yet another service station, which adds to the problems experienced by existing stations. This applies right throughout the small-business community.

Councils are approving more and more rezonings to create more shops and retail outlets which must be to the detriment of existing organisations. A classic example on the Gold Coast is the development of the giant Harbour Town project, which will clearly detrimentally affect existing businesses at Surfers Paradise and other areas of the Gold Coast. I would like the Local Government Association to set up a task force to find out if there is any way in which councils can assist to create an environment in which small-business people can work hard and make a dollar.

I have one final comment regarding retail shop leases. I do not know if this Assembly will be given the opportunity to debate the proposed amendments to the Retail Shop Leases Act. It has been before the House on a number of occasions. This legislation is

so riddled with anomalies, inconsistencies and faults that it ought to be scrapped and started again. I will certainly make that point during any debate of this legislation. Clearly, this Government has failed dismally in its only real attempt to assist small business. There is a huge amount of work to be done at all levels of government to assist small business. I hope that when the Goss Labor Government takes office later this year it will put in place policies that will assist small-business people to go about their business and achieve the success that they set out to achieve.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (5.17 p.m.): I am pleased to take part in the debate on this Minister's first Estimates and wish him well. In his opening remarks he stated that, as Minister for Industry, he had a mission, and that he would try to pursue that mission to the benefit of industry in general. If this State has a Minister with a goal, it has a better chance of getting some improvement. He began by talking about fuel tax and was taken to task on that subject. My electorate is situated inland and fuel tax is a very important part of industry in the region.

Mr Davis: Things were all right up there when I went up to Warwick. There's nothing wrong with your people up there. What are you talking about?

Mr BOOTH: I am talking about the fuel tax imposed by the Federal Government. It is a rip-off. Queensland could have roads that are three times as good if the money taken by the Federal Government in fuel excise was returned to the State. I was not knocking the local people who sell fuel. They are good dealers and I have dealt with them for approximately 40 years without any problems.

The huge amount in fuel tax that is being ripped off Queensland by the Federal Government is a problem for country people, whether they are involved in primary or secondary industries. My electorate is tied more to primary industries than to secondary industries, but secondary industries do play a part. For example, the electorate of Warwick has a very good meat industry that should be maintained, but this industry must use road transport, which is handicapped by the huge amount of money taken by way of excise which is not returned to the State Government to maintain roads. This fuel excise represents another cost to that industry. Primary industries play the biggest part in my electorate, but wherever possible secondary industries are being established in the region. Some primary products can be processed in the area, which is a great help.

This Government has not achieved everything that could have been achieved for small businesses, but I urge the Minister to look at the Small Business Development Corporation to find out if more can be done to stimulate small business in electorates such as Warwick. People do not have unlimited time to be away from work, but perhaps it is possible to hold three or four-day schools once a year to help people who have started in business and are finding the going fairly hard.

Nowadays it must be difficult to start in business. I paid approximately 6 or 7 per cent interest when I started in business. Today people are forced to pay up to 24 per cent interest, which is staggering. They have to not only pay back the principal for new capital equipment over four or five years, but also the total interest paid over four years amounts to the same as the principal. I do not think many members would ever have had to face this staggering problem.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BOOTH: I know it is tax deductible, but that does not mean that people can pay it. The honourable member should have been in my office the other day and seen the number of people who are distressed because they are unable to pay their interest bills. It is easy for the member for Brisbane Central to laugh about it. It is not good and I cannot believe that the honourable member would not be sympathetic towards those people.

We are repeatedly told by the Treasurer, Mr Keating, that the idea of high interest rates is to dampen down the economy. That is the first time in my life that I have ever

heard that dampening down the economy is in the best interests of the nation. There must be better ways than that. If restrictions are placed on imports there will be problems and black markets will develop. However, we would be better off with some restrictions on imports than this infernal idea of high interest rates and the suggestion that it will dampen down the economy and in some way benefit Australia. The only people who benefit from high interest rates are those with huge amounts of money to lend and they are not always interested in what is best for the country.

I worry about some of the other things that are creeping into Federal policy decision-making. It must have been surprising to everyone to know that Kodak was to be given a \$60m grant. The honourable member for Redcliffe spoke about everybody wanting a level playing-field. The people competing with Kodak will not be on a level playing-field; they will be playing against a company that was granted \$60m. That is scandalous and very little explanation has been given about why it was granted.

The Government has created an excellent industrial estate in the Warwick area. I doubt whether better industrial land could be found anywhere else in Australia. Even so, there has been difficulty in attracting industry to establish there. Although they might be having some difficulties, the people who are there seem to be doing quite well. I feel that bodies such as the Small Business Development Corporation could give encouragement to people to establish on industrial estates. The type of industry that seems to do best on them manufactures, for instance, furniture which is not too heavy to transport. A company that manufactures anything that attracts a heavy transport fee has difficulties. I would like more consideration given to the type of industries that are most likely to prosper on industrial estates.

I would not say that the contribution of the honourable member for Townsville East was not constructive, but he did not seem to have any innovative ideas to put forward. I think he could have made better use of his time.

It was wrong of him to criticise the increase in our population. The Government has had to face many problems in finding jobs and in providing amenities and housing for the additional 2 per cent to 2.5 per cent of population annually.

I want to say something about regional development. Many inland towns have problems with freights, and the cost of freights should be subsidised.

Mr Davis: What about the road permit fees that you got rid of? That was going to be the reason for subsidies.

Mr BOOTH: Road permit fees only added to the problem. What the honourable member for Brisbane Central said is quite ridiculous.

As I said, both rail and road freights should be subsidised. The man who started a wool company in my area had some freight subsidisation but the first application by the gentleman who took the company over was rejected and he has had to do without subsidisation. Fortunately, he is a battler and has not given up, but he is finding difficulty in keeping going. He is a great help to the town because he employs between 40 and 60 men. The Government should be able to assist him by providing some freight subsidisation.

I want to deal now with what was said by the honourable member for Redcliffe. He had his usual whinge about level playing-fields and he said that we should reintroduce land tax on farms. I am happy that even the gentlemen in the Opposition have not suggested anything like that. I am certainly pleased that the honourable member for Redcliffe does not have much say in what goes on because the reintroduction of that tax would not do Queensland much good.

Mr Milliner: No new taxes over here.

Mr BOOTH: Well, that is good news. I thought that Labor had a whole heap of them up its sleeve. However, I do not think that Labor will get the opportunity to find out whether it would introduce such a tax or not. I do not want land tax, death duties or probate duties put back onto the farming community. I cannot see any reason for

death duties or probate duties to be re-enacted. I am not too sure that the Liberal Party would not reintroduce those taxes if it had the opportunity. I saw property after property and farm after farm sold to pay probate and death duties. That is not nice to see. Fortunately, I did not have to pay such a large amount that it finished me but many families were torn apart by death duties and probate duties.

Mr Milliner: The answer to that problem is don't die.

Mr BOOTH: I suppose that is correct. It has been said that if a person wants to get anywhere in the world he should not die, but the clock keeps ticking and we cannot fight that.

I agree with what the honourable member for Thuringowa said about lack of competition, particularly in supermarkets. Some of the company take-overs worry me. I believe that lack of competition will cause many problems. We have difficulty in knowing from one day to the next who owns a particular company. One day we will realise that these take-overs have caused considerable damage to the economy of Australia, particularly when the necessary money is borrowed off shore. That is not in the best interests of anybody. It is a difficult problem, but we should examine it.

In Queensland, small business comprises 96 per cent of all business. When that figure is compared with a figure of 94 per cent for Australia, it can be seen that Queensland has a higher percentage of small business. Those figures indicate the large part that small business plays in the economy of this country.

The honourable member for Thuringowa said that most Australians, whether they be electricians, farmers or carpenters, want to go into business on their own. To use the catchcry that has been used frequently in this Chamber, we should have a level playing-field for people who want to go into business on their own. One of the playing-fields that is stopping people from going into business on their own for the first time is the high interest rate that Opposition members think is so good. Opposition members and Mr Hawke are hooked on high interest rates.

Mr Davis: Where is this level playing-field? I've heard it about 25 times this week.

Mr BOOTH: I have heard it nearly 100 times this week. It is a new word.

I turn now to the airline strike that is damaging the economy of Australia. None of us thought that it would continue for seven weeks. Although I believe that the Prime Minister has acted foolishly, I do not blame the Federal Government entirely. The stand-off by both sides is one of the craziest things that I have seen. If they will not go into the ring to negotiate voluntarily, we should be able to force them to talk. They are pulling down not only transport and tourism but also the economies of many towns of Australia. When one industry gets into difficulty, the problem flows through to other areas.

When the strike started, a taxi-driver told me that he would take three weeks' holiday until the matter was resolved. I thought that that was a good idea. If he is still on holidays, it will be a long holiday. When he made that comment to me, I thought the dispute would be over in three weeks or a month. However, there looks to be no end to this stand-off; it could still be going at Christmas. When the dispute is resolved, how do we get the tourists back to Australia?

When I was overseas, I came to the conclusion that many people would visit Australia if the distance was not so great. However, some of them are prepared to endure the long flight because they believe that Australia offers tourist attractions that are not available in other parts of the world. At the end of the airline dispute, it will take a long patching-up exercise to convince people that it is worth while visiting Australia on a holiday.

Travel agents who have spent huge amounts of money to develop overseas tourism industries find themselves in a serious financial position. One travel agent told me that

he could go broke. That is crazy. Surely, Australians believe that they must co-operate so that business can prosper.

In this Chamber, we promote the people whom we represent because we believe that they should be given an opportunity. The stand-off has been the craziest thing that I have seen. I hope that things will improve in the next week or two and that the parties will start negotiating in an attempt to settle the dispute.

Mr MILLINER (Everton) (5.34 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to speak in the debate on the Estimates and to congratulate you, Mr Temporary Chairman, on your elevation to such a high office after being in this Chamber for only a couple of years as the member for Barambah. Where will it end? One never knows. Because of the way in which the Ministry keeps changing, you may be offered a higher position.

I endorse the comments made by both Mr Smith and Mr McElligott in their contributions to the debate. Prior to entering Parliament, I was a small-businessman.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr MILLINER: Mr Davis was a very successful small-businessman in the service station industry and in the taxi-cab industry. When he was involved in service stations, he started to discount petrol in Brisbane. Everybody in town knew Brian Davis, the motorists' friend.

Mr Davis: Or Digger.

Mr MILLINER: Or Digger; that is right.

Mr Davis made a tremendous contribution to that industry. Today, we are still seeing the benefits of his contribution.

Mr Davis: That's enough, I think.

Mr MILLINER: Is that enough?

As Mr McElligott said, most people have the ambition to get out and have a go. I am pleased that I had that opportunity. I was reasonably successful. Everybody should have that experience. When I was self-employed, I faced the many problems that confront small-business people.

Mr Hynd: The trade union movement.

Mr MILLINER: If a small-businessman is prepared to work in with the trade union movement and adopts a sensible attitude to industrial relations, no problems occur. It is the arrogance of people such as some Government members that causes problems in the industrial relations field.

I was interested in the contribution of the speaker from the Sparkes-led National Party coalition partner, the Liberal Party. Mr White bleated about the Kodak company. It is well known that Kodak was rationalising its operation and was going to move off shore, causing a loss of approximately 500 jobs in that industry. The benefit of an industry such as that conducted by Kodak in Australia is that those 500 jobs help to create more jobs in associated industries. The 500 jobs could multiply into approximately 2 000 jobs. No-one likes to see jobs lost in any industry. It is interesting that previous speakers have been critical of the Federal Government in providing financial assistance to Kodak to remain in Australia.

Mr Davis: And then crying out for a subsidy.

Mr MILLINER: They want subsidies for everything else. The Federal Government also subsidises industries in Queensland such as the film industry.

Mr Fraser: It wouldn't have any relevance that Kodak happens to be in the electorate of Wills?

Mr MILLINER: No, it would not, just as the fact that the film industry is located in the Minister's electorate would have no relevance.

What I am saying is that Governments have a responsibility to protect jobs wherever possible. I repeat that the film industry in this State is being subsidised.

Another member mentioned the Caboolture Airport. A grant of \$100,000 was provided to enable the building of an airport at Caboolture. I do not know whether honourable members have been to Caboolture and had a look at that airport. However, I regularly drive past it on the Bruce Highway. That airport has a nice airstrip for the Caboolture Aero Club. That is about all it is used for. Members of the Government talk about the industrial park that is being built alongside that airport and the benefit that that airport will be to that park. To be quite honest, that is a joke.

Mr Davis: A Tiger Moth would be the only thing that would be able to land there.

Mr MILLINER: That is about the only aircraft that could land at that airport.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr MILLINER: I would not think so.

The Government talks about the provision of subsidies to industry. Quite obviously, Governments have a responsibility to protect industry and the jobs that are created by industry.

I was interested to hear Mr White's attitude to the pilots strike. It appeared to me that he was in fact supporting the pilots. I share the concern that the member for Warwick expressed about this pilots dispute. Everyone knows that one of the problems with this dispute is the attitude of the pilots. It is ridiculous for people involved in any industrial dispute to resign. That is what happened in this instance. When the pilots took that step and resigned from the companies, they were no longer in a situation in which they were able to negotiate.

I was very interested in the contribution by the member for Redcliffe, who supported the pilots and the campaign that they have embarked upon. What Mr White was obviously doing was embracing the Federal Liberal Party's policy on industrial relations. Everyone knows what will happen if that policy is ever implemented. It would result in a massive wages break-out, which would have a devastating effect on the economy of this country.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr MILLINER: I think it might have.

When one considers the Liberal Party's policy on industrial relations, one realises that it would be an absolute disaster for this nation and this State. I sincerely hope that people such as Mr White will prevail upon their Federal colleagues to change their industrial relations policy.

There is no doubt that the Federal Labor Government has been able to embark on an industrial relations policy that has brought stability to the industrial relations scene throughout this nation. Under the Accord there has been a sensible approach to wages and the problem of a wages break-out has not arisen. In the 1970s, when Fraser was in Government, Australia was in a dog-eat-dog situation in which the rich and the powerful were able to achieve their aims but those who were in less fortunate positions and did not have that sort of clout were not able to achieve their aims.

The pilots are a classic example of workers in industries who have strength. There is no doubt that the pilots have got strength. Pilots are a skilled group of people. They are licensed by the Government to carry out the duties that they perform. It is quite obvious that if the pilots are united, they can cause a lot of problems, and at present they are causing a lot of problems. It is disappointing that the pilots have adopted the attitude that they have and that they have refused to have this dispute resolved a lot quicker than it might have been.

I suggest that with the final resolution of this dispute we will see the pilots back at work in a situation that will not jeopardise the overall wages policy of the nation. I sincerely hope that that occurs, and I hope that it occurs very quickly. As the member for Warwick indicated, because of this dispute, many small businesses are hurting. No-one likes to see businesses going broke. No-one likes to see the life-savings of business people placed at risk.

I was also interested to hear the comments of the member for Gympie, who complained about the state of the electoral roll in his electorate. He said that a lot of the letters that he writes to new constituents are returned with the notation, "Not known at this address". Yesterday honourable members heard the member for Stafford make the same sorts of allegations. However, he went a bit further and claimed that it was the result of political manipulation.

I believe that all members of this Parliament are experiencing difficulty with the electoral rolls. There is no doubt that problems exist. Last week I was embarking on a direct mail campaign and I found that the roll in Everton is in a similar condition. The state of the electoral rolls is an indictment of this Government. I do not believe that anybody is rorting the rolls, as has been claimed by the member for Stafford. I believe that the State Government should embark on a clean-up campaign of the electoral rolls to ensure that they are accurate. However, I will not go into that at the moment.

The Minister indicated that he has a mission. I think his mission is probably impossible, like the one in that television series. That reminds me of another interesting fact. The company that produced the television series *Mission Impossible* received fairly substantial subsidies from this Government so that episodes for that series could be filmed in Brisbane. I am told that the plot for that series was to try to find an honest Cabinet Minister in Queensland.

Mr Davis: I watched every episode and I never found one.

Mr MILLINER: I would not expect that the honourable member would have.

The company that produced that television series has now moved interstate. I believe that episodes are now being produced in Victoria.

Mr Stephan: What other comedy do you watch?

Mr MILLINER: I only watch serious programs. The only comedy that I watch is the Cabinet Ministers in this place of a morning. The honourable member must admit that they are a joke. Unfortunately, they are a sad joke.

Mr Smith raised the question of Q-Net and pointed out that it has been discussed in previous debates. Over many years I have questioned the viability of Q-Net. I believe that the Government was wrong in embarking on the Q-Net project. Subsequently, members of the Opposition were proven right because the Government eventually sold Q-Net. There is no doubt that at that time Telecom could have provided the service that Q-Net was going to provide. Telecom could have provided the service better than Q-Net could have done. Mr Smith indicated that parts of the Q-Net network have been sold to the Bond Corporation. That raises questions about where Q-Net will ultimately finish up.

All honourable members know that the Bond Corporation is in difficulty. There is no doubt that in the near future a fire sale will be held and various components of the Bond Corporation will be sold. Already the brewing operations of Bond Corporation have been partly sold. One wonders where Q-Net will finish up. When Q-Net was established, I said that it would not be a viable operation. I have been proven correct. Before the Government embarks on any such projects, a great deal more thought should be given to them instead of racing off and doing things simply for the sake of doing them.

Over the years, we have heard a great deal about technology and technological change. Members of the Opposition have always believed that there is a place for

technology in Queensland. When Mr Ahern was Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology, he took a great interest in technology. He acknowledged the benefits to be gained from attracting technology to this State.

Mr Smith: His predecessor, Mr Sullivan, didn't know much about it.

Mr MILLINER: The honourable member is right. Mr Sullivan did not have a grasp of that aspect of society. However, to Mr Ahern's credit, he had a grasp of technology and he tried to do something about it. Unfortunately, I do not believe that it was a success.

Technology parks have been established. I do not think the establishment of those parks has attracted the industries that the Government thought it would attract to this State. That is unfortunate. The Government has not played a proper role in supporting those industries.

Many companies in the computer industry have found themselves in difficulty. Often, computer companies are established and appear to be very successful operations. However, all of a sudden they develop liquidity problems. They are then placed in the hands of a receiver. A couple of computer companies come to mind. One company, Hartley, was a very successful computer operation. Because it became too large, it encountered a cash-flow problem and was unable to meet its commitments. Unfortunately, it went into liquidation. Mr Hartley is an extremely talented computer person. I believe that he has returned into business and that he is now operating successfully.

Another computer company, President Computers, has gone into liquidation, which is a common problem with computer companies. Governments should be considering ways and means of assisting many high-technology companies that have started up, have appeared to be successful, but, owing to the pressures caused by liquidity problems, have found themselves in the hands of a receiver. In the future, a strategy should be developed to assist computer companies. There is no doubt that they have the potential to make a major contribution to this State.

The Queensland Government should be attracting industry to this State. Members who have spoken in this debate have condemned the Federal Labor Government. Senator Button should be given credit where credit is due. There is no doubt that Senator Button played a major role in restructuring many of the larger industries in this country. The steel industry is one example. Through his efforts, Senator Button was able to play a major role in restructuring that industry. Unfortunately, the restructuring of the motor industry has not been as successful as the restructuring of the steel industry. I do not believe that that has been Senator Button's fault; it was the manufacturers' fault.

Mr Davis: I think Senator Button will go down as a great man.

Mr MILLINER: Senator Button will be remembered as a great man. Mr Hawke will also be remembered as one of the greatest Prime Ministers that this country has ever had.

Mr Davis: He is a personal friend.

Mr MILLINER: I know that the Prime Minister is a personal friend of the honourable member. Whenever Mr Hawke visits Brisbane, he speaks very highly of him.

Mr Davis: He opened my service station when I had the cut-price petrol.

Mr MILLINER: Mr Davis is right. He opened Mr Davis' service station when he embarked upon a career in the retail petrol field. As I said earlier, Mr Davis was commonly known as the motorists' friend.

Mr Stephan: He went broke the next week.

Mr MILLINER: Mr Davis was an extremely successful businessman. He did not go broke.

Mr Fraser: He is getting embarrassed.

Mr MILLINER: I know that it is embarrassing Mr Davis, so I will not deal further with that subject.

The technological field could be developed. It is an area in which employment could be created. If employment can be created, it will be to the betterment of this State.

The member for Gympie referred to the employment prospects in Queensland. It is amazing how National Party members claim credit for things, but they will not give credit to other levels of government.

Mr Stephan: What about employment growth?

Mr MILLINER: Mr Stephen is referring to employment growth. He says that all the employment growth in Queensland has been achieved solely by the National Party State Government. What a lot of bunkum that is. One has only to look at the nation. The Federal Labor Government has provided in excess of 1.5 million jobs. The honourable member referred to youth employment. For various reasons, that has caused major problems. Youth unemployment has decreased. However, it is not as low as Opposition members would like it to be. The reduction in youth unemployment is not the result of anything that the National Party has done; it is the result of the overall economic performance of the Federal Labor Government. The honourable member should acknowledge that. I am very disappointed that he will not do so.

Mr Stephan: What about interest rates?

Mr MILLINER: Let me refer to interest rates. The honourable member whinges and whines about interest rates and says how terrible and how high they are. Opposition members agree that interest rates are far too high. But Government members will not put forward any constructive ideas to lower them; all they want to do is whinge and whine about them. If they are fair dinkum, they would acknowledge that, economically, Australia has a problem. Everybody else acknowledges that.

Mr Hynd: We acknowledge that.

Mr MILLINER: Everybody acknowledges that. The economy has been overheating and it needs to be dampened down, otherwise Australia will finish up importing more products than it has imported previously. Interest rates are already far too high, but the National Party will not put forward one constructive idea to lower them.

Mr Burreket: Make the labour market more competitive.

Mr MILLINER: How can that be achieved?

Mr Fraser: You could do it with VEAs.

Mr MILLINER: The Minister says, "VEAs." What a joke!

Voluntary employment agreements are robbing the workers and have not been as successful as the Government believed that they would be. As people wake up to VEAs, more and more of them will opt out of them. There is no doubt that VEAs are the greatest con this side of the black stump, and the Minister knows that. It is about time that he admitted that, was honest with the workers and said, "Look, we are trying to con you." However, this Government will continue to con people into VEAs. Under many voluntary employment agreements workers receive less wages than they would be receiving if they were working under awards.

Mr Fraser: That is not right.

Mr MILLINER: Of course, it is right. The Minister knows that.

It is about time that the National Party acknowledged that VEAs exist only to exploit the workers. It is about time that it got back into the industrial relations network.

Time expired.

Mrs GAMIN (South Coast) (5.54 p.m.): Today it gives me great pleasure to commend the Queensland Government's work to support industry and small business. I pay tribute especially to my colleague and fellow Gold Coaster, the Honourable Bob Borbidge, who is now the Minister for Tourism and Minister for Environment, Conservation and Forestry. Mr Borbidge has made a major contribution to the development of business and industry in this State.

I turn now to the growth of small business on the Gold Coast. For more than 20 years I was part of that small-business scene. I hope that there are still some small businesses left by the time we get the chance to throw out the Hawke Government in the next few months.

All honourable members would be aware that the Labor Party is ideologically opposed to free enterprise and profit. It wants to strangle business with red tape, committees, union rules and taxes. But Labor politics are not strangling business; sheer Labor incompetence is doing that.

Not only has the Labor Party's economic bungling forced up interest rates so high that all businesses are suffering, but also its inability to cope with the pilots dispute looks like finishing off many small businesses. Many speakers during this debate have touched upon the pilots dispute, and during yesterday's debate on the Tourism Estimates I touched on it, too. If the airlines dispute is not solved quickly many small businesses that are directly or indirectly involved with the tourist industry will go to the wall. However, let me turn to something a little more positive.

Few, if any, areas in Australia would match the growth that has been enjoyed by small business on the Gold Coast. Let me look at the number of businesses with fewer than 20 employees. Since the last State election the number of manufacturing businesses has grown by 37 per cent, and at last count there were 872. This year, the number of small businesses in the wholesale and retail-trade sector totalled over 4 100, which is a 25 per cent increase on the figure of three years ago. During that period, there were 2 500 small businesses in the finance, property and business-services sector, which was a huge rise of 55 per cent on the figure three years ago. The number of restaurants, hotels and clubs increased by 30 per cent during that period.

That sort of development would have been possible only under a Queensland National Party Government, which has provided a low-tax formula and has been responsive to the needs of business. However, during the past few months the going got tough for small business. Canberra's economic stance of using high interest rates to dampen down spending rebounds on small business. The upward spiral in interest rates not only keeps the customer from the door but also makes it difficult for the business-operator to service his loans. Small business is just as much a victim of soaring interest rates as the consumer.

Rather than bringing forward tax payments by small business, as was announced in the Federal Budget, the Federal Government should be providing incentives. The tax structure must take account of the contrast between big and small business. The present Federal tax system favours big business and permits it to establish a strong capital base from which to endure some of the financial hardships that emerge in the day-to-day economy. Highly geared small businesses often cannot survive for weeks or months.

It is unfortunate that taxation generally tends to have a more adverse impact on small business than it does on big business. A major reason is that the taxation system does not take into account the operating environment of a small enterprise, particularly the working capital restrictions that are experienced by small operators. A review of the Commonwealth tax system in that regard is well overdue.

It is not as though no options exist. A House of Representatives standing committee of inquiry into small business has completed the gathering of evidence, and the delivery of its findings is long overdue.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mrs GAMIN: Before the dinner recess I was discussing the problems that small business suffers under the present taxation system, mostly because that system does not take into account the operating environment of a small business, particularly the working capital restrictions experienced by small operators. A House of Representatives standing committee of inquiry into small business has completed the gathering of evidence, and the delivery of its findings is long overdue.

The Queensland Government stakes a claim to providing the lowest-taxed business environment. It will continue to strive to maintain a climate in which small business can prosper. Mr Temporary Chairman, you may fail to realise that vulnerability to changing economic conditions only runs a close second to lack of management expertise in causing small-business collapses. As a result the Government is doing something positive about that, too.

It is very important simply to make small business owner/managers aware of how they can help themselves. Business-operators should not be going into business without proper training. The tragedy is that that continues to happen. The Small Business Development Corporation seeks to demonstrate to small business owner/managers what they need to know about business administration, the critical aspects of risk management and how to take advantage of business opportunities. The corporation provides a business advisory service totally free of charge, and charges only a nominal fee for its small-business training courses. In the space of two years, the corporation has expanded from its Brisbane base by adding three regional offices at Townsville, Cairns and, early this year, the Gold Coast.

The Queensland Government places a high priority on fostering an environment in which small businesses can prosper and grow. Queensland was the first State to establish a Ministry for Small Business, and the Small Business Development Corporation has been active since 1980, providing business advice and training and awareness programs.

One of the Government's strategic goals is to encourage the unique abilities which foster small-business promotion and enable small businesses to reach into new products and services. Queensland's Small Business Development Corporation is the only Government-backed organisation providing such a wide range of services across industry sectors. Its budget last year was \$2.9m. Its budget this year is just over \$4m, a 40 per cent increase. It employs 51 people, with staff numbers increasing in response to growth.

At times, small business operators need information from a wide range of areas covering professional services, advice, financial assistance, Government rules and regulations, market research and training. The corporation provides a centralised, or one-stop, referral service for business-operators to enable them to access this type of information.

In Queensland there are nearly 90 000 small businesses, employing 335 000 people. Last year, approximately 4 900 people attended corporation awareness programs. Of these, nearly 750 attended programs for business-beginners. However, surveys showed that as a result of seminars, 46 per cent decided not to proceed with entering their own business. This alone represented a major saving to the economy through a reduction in future business failures.

Last year, the corporation received over 64 000 telephone inquiries, resulting in more than 6 000 face-to-face consultations with advisory staff. This reflects a 34 per cent growth over the previous year. So-called contact statistics showed that the corporation registered its ten-thousandth client to receive business advice. I believe that these statistics show that the SBDC is fulfilling a valuable role in Queensland in helping successful small businesses grow and prosper into successful big businesses.

I want to pay a personal tribute to the work of the Gold Coast office. That office commenced operations in November 1988, and was opened officially in February 1989.

In 1988-89 the office handled 869 telephone inquiries and 523 face-to-face consultations with clients, and posted 704 information kits.

Advisory services are provided on a monthly basis to the towns of Beenleigh and Beaudesert. Training seminars were held for those commencing in business and on the topic of taxation for small business.

The regional manager has delivered addresses on small-business management to local secondary school teachers who teach the small-business subjects and to several groups of students from both Gold Coast TAFE and Logan ITEC. Service groups such as the Chambers of Commerce in Beenleigh and Beaudesert were addressed on the role of the corporation and the operation of a small business.

I am particularly interested in the work of the Gold Coast office. As I mentioned earlier, I was part of the Gold Coast small-business scene for more than 21 years. My husband and I owned and operated a successful soft-furnishing and curtain-manufacturing business. When we opened in Southport in 1964, Trittons and ourselves were the only firms between Beenleigh and the New South Wales border that were selling curtains.

I do not know how many furnishing and interior-decorating businesses have popped up since then. It has become a growth industry. In our 21 years of business I saw many establishments open up with hope and enthusiasm that had to close with gloom and despair. That is a syndrome peculiar to the Gold Coast. I will cite an example of that.

Let me refer to a married couple who live in the south, probably Victoria, and who have been coming up to the coast every year for holidays. They love the coast and its life-style. They always say, "When we retire we'll go to the Gold Coast." And so they do. They retire early with a modest—perhaps a very modest—superannuation payment as well as whatever they receive from the sale of their house in Melbourne. They buy a house on the Gold Coast, maybe spending a bit more than they planned, because this time they want a swimming-pool and probably a better house than the one they left.

Then they look around for a little business, because they have been saying to each other for years, "When we retire we'll get a little boutique", or whatever. The very first mistake that this sort of couple make is that they have never seen the Gold Coast except at holiday periods when it has been bustling and busy—and there are long, lean months between holidays. They buy a business and they sign a lease. I am not even talking about some of the leases in Surfers Paradise that would curl your hair. This typical couple sign a lease without any idea of what they are tying themselves up to. Then comes the sad part. Sometimes an enterprise like this never trades well enough to recoup the initial cost of its shop-fitting. As a result, there is another business failure, another bankruptcy. In some centres, merely the shifting of a bus stop can make the difference between keeping the doors open or closing down.

As I said before, I have seen people come and I have seen them go. I have seen them arrive on the Gold Coast with great hope and enthusiasm, but then they fade away. Some of them are inexperienced, undercapitalised and generally amateur in management and this is where the SBDC comes in. It provides guidance and advice to those who seek assistance, either through its small-business awareness courses or through its direct and free advisory services. Prospective new business-operators are referred frequently to the SBDC by banks, financial institutions or accountants. The SBDC can help people become aware of the way to properly run and manage a small business. That type of advice is what the Victorian couple should have had.

When all aspects of proposals have been examined, in 46 per cent of cases the advice that is given is, "Don't do it. Don't open. Forget it. You and your wife will both be working full-time for up to five and perhaps six days a week and you will make far less than you would make in the ordinary work-force. Financially, you would both be better off getting a job, and you would save yourselves a lot of worry and hassle instead of taking on a non-viable business that will go broke in a couple of years." That is the type of good advice that the SBDC can give to businesses that have no hope of succeeding.

Prospective operators who have sound business prospects or existing operators who want to improve their businesses can obtain assistance from the SBDC and its advisory services. The Gold Coast office of the SBDC is the best thing that has ever happened to small business on the Gold Coast.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (7.39 p.m.): I ask the Minister for Tourism, who is presently in the Chamber, to convey to the Minister for Industry my best wishes for his success in administering that portfolio. Although I cannot really say that I hope the Minister enjoys a long period in charge of commercial activity in this State, I believe that he has some of the qualities that are necessary to make a good Industry Minister.

During this debate on the Estimates, I wish to put into perspective industrial development in Queensland. I intend also to examine some of the problems that exist in the Burnett region of this State. The Wide Bay/Burnett region has the slowest growth rate of any industrial area in this State, yet no additional incentives were provided for that area when the Government established the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone. I believe that there is as much need for an enterprise zone in my electorate as there is in north Queensland. I believe that if the Government wanted to establish enterprise zones, it should have established them in various areas throughout Queensland.

A research paper titled the *State of Siege* compares Queensland with other States in Australia. It refers to the distinguishing features of Queensland's economy as, firstly, a dependence on primary production, specifically agriculture and mining; and, secondly, high levels of foreign and interstate ownership and control. The paper states that those two features make Queensland particularly sensitive to fluctuations in world commodity prices, patterns of international demand and decisions made by foreign entrepreneurs and that, in short, the Queensland economy is dependent. The study suggests that the social costs of that dependence are manifested in insecurity of employment, a largely unskilled labour-force and relatively limited prospects for the development of local capital. Those problems should be of major concern to the Minister in charge of industrial development in Queensland.

The paper goes on to state that the Queensland Government has adopted a policy of generating as much revenue as possible from resource-based industries. It states—

“The Queensland Government has done little to plan for industrial growth and has overseen a State economy that has a high rate of unemployment: 7.3% in April 1989.”

The study also states—

“Queensland's peculiar industrial structure and unusual demographic conditions have not produced a stable economy well adapted to the changes likely to be forced upon the State; and they have been accompanied by a political and institutional system (including public authorities) which is unable to develop the strategies needed for the future. These deficiencies are acknowledged even in the politically sanitised ‘Quality Queensland’ document.”

Under the heading “Queensland wastes golden opportunities”, the following point is made—

“Queensland is a resource-rich state with a cargo-cult mentality. The economy is not stable because of its reliance on international commodity markets and tourism flows.”

Mr Borbidge: Who did the study?

Mr CAMPBELL: It was done by the Evatt Foundation in Victoria.

Mr Borbidge: That explains it.

Mr CAMPBELL: The Minister should not worry. Although the study makes harsh comments about Queensland, it makes the same type of comments about other States. I believe it is very important to take those matters into account. I believe that the comments made in the study on Queensland's economy are reflected in the Budget.

Page 13 of the document titled the *Queensland Economy 1988-89* sets out private new capital expenditure for Queensland. It clearly demonstrates the problems confronting industrial development in this State. For the nine-month period to March 1988, Queensland's private net capital expenditure amounted to \$2.542 billion, whereas the Australian total was \$17.377 billion. Queensland recorded 14.6 per cent of the national total. Queensland's figures for the nine-month period ending March 1989 had fallen to \$2.341 billion, whereas the Australian total increased to \$19.751 billion. For the latter period, Queensland's private new capital expenditure level had declined to 11.8 per cent of the national total. Those figures have to be examined in the light of the fact that Queensland has 17 per cent of Australia's population yet records a level for private investment expenditure that is decreasing. These figures give cause for concern for the future of industrial development in Queensland. Irrespective of who is right or wrong, members of this Parliament should be very concerned about those figures.

The Department of Industry Development plays a very important role in ensuring that proper industrial development takes place in Queensland. The economic policies drawn up by the future Goss Labor Government will ensure that proper industrial development takes place.

In Bundaberg more funds should be provided for an extension to the Bunda Industrial Estate. I base this statement on the information contained in the subsidiary accounts to the Queensland Budget papers for 1987-88 and 1988-89. The Department of Industry Development Appropriation Account shows that for 1987-88 the expenditure appropriated in the Industrial Estates Construction Fund was \$14.6m. The total expenditure was only \$7.3m and there were lapsed appropriations of \$7.329m. In other words, only half the money put aside to be spent on the construction of industrial estates in that year was actually spent. The reason given in the note written by the Auditor-General was as follows—

“Savings due to a unilateral Departmental decision to reduce construction activity due to an unfavourable economic climate, an anticipated land acquisition which did not eventuate, and unforeseen delays in construction projects.”

In last year's Department of Industry Development Appropriation Account, that is for the year 1988-89, under the Industrial Estates Construction Fund the expenditure on the development of industrial land was \$11.237m, whereas the amount appropriated was \$13.96m. In other words, again last year there were lapsed appropriations of \$2.6m. Over those two years, almost \$10m of the money which had been set aside to be spent on the development of industrial land was not spent. In the second year the reason given was as follows—

“Savings due to construction work in progress delayed by heavy rainfall”—
sounds like farmers—

“and an anticipated land acquisition which did not eventuate.”

The case that I wish to raise with the Minister refers to the extension of the Bunda Industrial Estate. Under the Bundaberg strategic town plan, land is available for purchase between the present industrial estate and the airport. The purchase of that land for industrial purposes would assist Bundaberg's industrial development for not only the next decade, but also the next three or four decades. If that land had been acquired last year or the year before, the cost would have been fairly small.

Another issue that I wish to raise concerns a Mr Kevin Simpson of Simpson Transport, which is a small transport business operating from Lester Street. Mr Simpson is making an application to transfer his business out to the Bunda Industrial Estate. The eligibility criteria for businesses located on industrial estates state that those types of service industries are not normally based on industrial estates. However, if, in the opinion of the Minister, a service will complement the region's economic industrial development, it could be considered. I ask the Minister to consider this case and allow Mr Simpson to locate his business at the Bunda Industrial Estate. Because of noise, this transport business is causing some concern to residents in the area in which it is presently

located. In addition, many of the businesses for which Mr Simpson provides a transport service are located on the industrial estate, and this relocation would make his business more efficient.

This is not a one-off situation. Already, industries are located on the industrial estate that are not basically manufacturing industries as laid down in the guide-lines which enable industries to be established on the estates. For example, there is the drive-in testing centre, and, although the estate is a good place for that centre, according to the guide-lines it cannot be established on an industrial estate. Also other industries that are basically warehousing industries, such as Apex Products Distributors, who are bag merchants, Southern Cross Machinery (Bne) Pty Ltd and Loeskow, which are engaged in warehousing and selling, and Ian Lohse Constructions, which is a warehousing depot for construction on other sites, are established on the estate. Mr Simpson's case is not unique and there are good reasons why the Minister should allow Simpson Transport to be established on the estate. A service of that kind should never have been established in the area in which it currently operates. This region should never have been developed as an industrial area and the Bunda Industrial Estate is the best place for that type of service.

The Bunda Industrial Estate should be expanded into the area known as the rifle range. On Friday, 15 September, the Minister visited Bundaberg and was asked about the purchase of land to allow for an extension to the industrial estate. An article in the *Bundaberg News-Mail* of 18 September stated—

“Industry, Small Business, Technology and Administrative Services Minister Mr Huan Fraser said on Friday he felt it might be possible to buy part of the site ‘for the good of Bundaberg’.

He said that the future of the site was really the province of the Bundaberg City Council and that the council should examine its strategic plan and then implement a development-control plan for the area. It would then not have to be rezoned, Mr Fraser said.

“The council should take cognisance of the strategic plan and I am willing to be involved in discussions with all interested parties including the development board, the railways and the Department of Industrial Development,” he said.”

An additional aspect involved the possible development of a loop railway line into the Bunda Industrial Estate. The council is now considering a rezoning of that land for special residential purposes. Under the strategic plan, it is zoned for future industrial use. The rezoning of that land would be one of the worst faux pas that a council could ever make. It would be to the detriment of industrial development throughout the whole region for decades to come.

The Bundaberg City Council strategic plan was only gazetted on 26 November 1988. It states—

“At this level, the Strategic Plan is intended to perform several functions, including:-

- (a) to assist the Council in deciding land development applications;
- (b) to indicate to land-owners, developers and the public the objectives of the Council in dealing with land development proposals; and
- (c) to provide a framework for co-ordinating the activities of public and private development agencies, in order to promote the achievement of certain desirable community objectives.”

The strategic plan, under the heading “(3) Industry”, states—

“Objective 3(a) To promote the provision of necessary infrastructure, namely sewerage, water supply, stormwater drainage, roads and railways.”

It then provides—

“... future industrial development, in the south of the City between the Airport and Thabeban rail siding, is in a location to which water supply and sewerage services can conveniently be extended.”

That is the area I am speaking about—the rifle range. It continues—

“Industry areas have been located with convenient access to existing or proposed major roads . . .

Council will liaise with the Department of Industrial Development and the Land Administration Commission as considered necessary, so as to ensure the Department’s estate planning is compatible with proposals for surrounding areas, and to coordinate the provision of services.”

This area directly involves the Department of Industrial Development, because the Minister said that he is considering the purchase of that land that the strategic town plan says is future industry areas. The council is now considering rezoning that land as residential.

The strategic plan continues—

“Objective 3(c) To protect and encourage the supply of sufficient flood-free, well-serviced industrial land to meet long-term requirements for new and expanding industries;

Implementation

(i) Areas are allocated on the Plan to allow for the future expansion of Bunda Industrial Estate westwards and southwards. The area between this extension area and the railway has also been allocated to industrial use, including an area held by the Land Administration Commission, and intended for industrial subdivision.

While the total area indicated on the Strategic Plan for Industry in the southern part of the City is in excess of short-term requirements for industrial land, Council will not permit its alienation from possible long-term development. Some non-intensive interim development, for example recreational uses, may be permitted on the Rifle Range site, on Portion 114, and on the designated part of Portion 140. Residential development will not be permitted.

(ii) Council will co-operate with the Department of Industry Development, the Land Administration Commission, and private development interests in the area, in ensuring a continuous supply of serviced industrial allotments, sufficient to meet demand.”

I raise those points because, only two weeks ago, the Minister said that he was considering purchasing part of that land to extend the Bunda Industrial Estate. It is presently zoned for special purposes but, under the strategic town plan, it is for future industry and there is now consideration of rezoning it for special residential. I believe that, this evening, the Parliament should make the council answerable for the decision that it may take so that, if it rezones this area without liaising with and consulting the Minister, the Minister will take it as an insult because, through the paper, he has advised the local member of Parliament that he will negotiate and consider the purchase of that land for future industrial development as part of the Bunda Industrial Estate. If the council goes ahead, the Minister should look seriously at the actions of the council and ask it to explain. Why would a council with a majority of councillors who were members of the previous council, which brought in this strategic town plan, scuttle the plan eight months after it was brought in, when this is a major aspect of industrial development in Queensland?

The honourable member for South Coast mentioned small business. One aspect of small business that needs help is service station operators. From the way in which they are manipulated and controlled by the oil companies they are, to use an Australian saying, not getting a fair go and consideration should be given to protecting them.

Caltex told Ron Davis, after he had leased the Caltex Star service station for 31 years, “We will not renew your lease. You are out.” After 31 years of faithful service, Caltex said, “We do not want to negotiate with you.” The company was not even prepared—

Mr Menzel: Did you get onto Caltex?

Mr CAMPBELL: I must compliment the Minister because, within half an hour of this being brought to his attention when he was in Bundaberg, he was in touch with the oil company, trying to do something about it. He did not muck around. He just got straight into it. I do not think that the oil companies should be allowed to have that much control. Some protection must be given to the small service station operators.

Mr Milliner: That is the way the Liberals operate. They operate by throwing people out like that. That is their philosophy.

Mr CAMPBELL: Yes, and some of them even provide steroids to athletes.

I realise that, under the retail shop leases legislation, there is a possibility of some protection being provided. The Minister looked at the problem. However, I believe it is an issue that I should raise. It is very un-Australian for oil companies to use their power and apply pressure to manipulate small service station operators.

Mr SIMPSON (Coorooora) (7.59 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I support the Estimates before the Committee. I congratulate the new Minister on taking over this portfolio, and I also congratulate his predecessor.

Mr Milliner: Is this your valedictory speech?

Mr SIMPSON: It could well be. Let me state a few home truths right from the heart.

Mr Milliner: Let it be honest, if it is.

Mr SIMPSON: Whatever I say always is.

This Government has targeted small business because it appreciates and understands how important small business is. Many years ago, after a fact-finding tour throughout the State, it gave assistance to small business. What concerns small business is overregulation by the Government. It is still present, and should be lessened.

A common request that members of Parliament receive is from successful business people who wish to close an industry to other prospective business people. If people are sold goods in their homes, legislation should be in position to enable them to get their money back if they have second thoughts about the transaction.

We should educate young people to be more self-sufficient, teach them about private enterprise and make them realise that profit is not a naughty word.

Mr McElligott: No Government subsidies.

Mr SIMPSON: I know that Opposition members think that "profit" is a naughty word. Opposition members accuse successful businessmen of being National Party followers. The socialist system is to knock down tall poppies who are the performers setting the example for the community.

Successful small-business people should go to schools to talk to the children. Many children in schools are not motivated and are not achieving their full potential. Some children even disrupt the teaching programs that have been put in place. A group of wealthy business people who have acquired Rolls Royces and other material possessions should talk to the children who do not want to learn. They could ask, "How would you like to own a Rolls Royce?", and tell them how to go about acquiring those material possessions.

When I was at school, I worried about passing examinations; yet, when I left school, I found it easy to make money. In fact, I wondered why I stayed at school for so long. We should motivate in a positive way the children who muck around at school. We should say, "This is how you get with it. Wouldn't you like to have a swimming-pool, a big house, a Rolls Royce, a sports car, live it up and have a great time? You can do it if you are successful in business."

Mr Vaughan: Become an SP bookie in Queensland.

Mr SIMPSON: No, not like Tommy Burns and other Opposition members. I am not talking about that. I am talking about legitimate business, which the Government promotes.

We must start by teaching the young people about the principle, "Let the buyer beware", and we must reduce regulation and control of the economy and the community. I realise that it is preferable to have people driving on the correct side of the road and that a few basic regulations are required for health and community reasons. However, overregulation is weighing down small business.

The other thing that is weighing down small business is the wretched partner who keeps taking all the money—a shocking person called Keating who lives in Canberra.

Mr Milliner: Ha, ha!

Mr SIMPSON: Obviously, the honourable member has never been in a small business.

Mr Milliner: Of course I have. I was very successful, too.

Mr SIMPSON: If the honourable member was in small business, he would understand its problems. I am yet to find any businessman who welcomes Keating as a partner. Obviously, the honourable member knows nothing about small business, because business people do not welcome Keating.

With an election approaching, the Estimates debate on Small Business is an excellent opportunity to point out to Queenslanders what would happen under a Labor Government.

Mr Alison: Disaster!

Mr SIMPSON: Disaster!

In Victoria, the State Bank is losing billions of dollars. In Victoria, the workers' compensation rates exceed those in Queensland. Victoria has a financial institutions duty. Every time a Victorian fills his car's petrol tank, not only does Keating belt him with a 23c a litre tax, but also the State Government slaps another 4c a litre tax on him. Small business cannot afford those taxes, and that is what is sending them to Queensland.

Opposition members do not understand why those people are moving to Queensland. The people of Queensland should wake up to all the glossy advertising that states that Labor understands business. Is the Labor Party going to con the people of Queensland?

Mr Milliner: No, we're going to be truthful with them.

Mr SIMPSON: Well, let us be truthful. Why did Hawke hand out \$60m to Kodak in his own electorate? Why did he hand out a deal to big business to keep it afloat? He is not interested in the small guy.

Opposition members should ask small businesses that are going bankrupt in the tourist industry in Queensland what they think about the hand-outs that have been given to the big guys. Labor has no idea what business is about. It starts from the premise that profit is a bad thing. If a business is successful and profitable, the Labor Party tries to bring it down.

Mr Menzel: Is there any truth in the rumour that Kodak is probably giving Bob Hawke \$1m for his campaign fund?

Mr SIMPSON: I do not know that, but it would not be the first time. If the honourable member examined the Wran Government in New South Wales, he would discover all the rorts. In Queensland, we will not allow that to happen. We are putting legislation in place to stop those rorts.

In travelling round Queensland, we found that small businesses wanted assistance to get out of some of the problems that they found themselves in. Some of them were

undercapitalised, had low cash flows and lacked knowledge in the management of their businesses. The Small Business Development Corporation has been assisting those small businesses.

Mr Alison: Doing a good job.

Mr SIMPSON: It is doing a very good job. That service is being decentralised and extended. A new office is opening on the Sunshine Coast.

Mr Yewdale: Highest bankruptcies in Australia.

Mr SIMPSON: That is because Queensland has more small businesses per capita than the other States of Australia. Labor members never tell people that.

Mr Yewdale: They aren't going too well.

Mr SIMPSON: Would the honourable member be going well if he was paying 24 per cent interest and was being flogged by Keating up hill and down dale? Of course not. Keating sets the interests rates. He has admitted that on television. Small business has to wear the high interest rates.

The advice of the Small Business Development Corporation is needed. The decentralisation of its offices is very important because a business that is in trouble does not have any surplus funds to enable it to send a worker—usually a partner or an owner—away to obtain that advice. It is important that these business people are able to obtain advice and assistance locally. In many instances that advice will be very useful and make a great deal of difference to the way in which a business is being run.

People come to Queensland from Victoria and New South Wales. They say to themselves, "Right. Our children have not been able to get a job. We will buy a business and that will employ them." Mum, dad and the kids work in the business. They do not consider whether it will be profitable or how they will manage it. It all gets back to, "Let the buyer beware."

Sometimes people look at businesses being sold by what I was going to call less-than-honest real estate sales people. However, even without the influence of a biased real estate sales person who presents a business in a false light, people still go into business with gold cash registers in their eyes and do not examine the real figures. I have seen that happen. Those people need some hard-nosed advice. Very often they are reluctant to take that advice. However, if people are given good advice before they purchase a business, it will stand them in good stead.

There is a learning process in all things. One has to hand it to people who are successful in private enterprise because they have proven that they have been able to go down that track and learn about business and how to manage their own resources. That is very important. The potential for business in Queensland is so great that the Government needs to encourage everybody, not just kids going through school. It is okay to say to kids, "You must try to get a job. This is how to conduct yourself in an interview." That certainly needs to be done. However, they should be encouraged to be their own person.

Mr Menzel: There wouldn't be any Labor voters left if you did that.

Mr SIMPSON: My aim—and we nearly achieved it in 1974—was to get rid of the Labor Party altogether and just have a couple of conservative parties—the Liberal Party and the National Party—in Queensland. If that had happened, this would have been a great State. The ALP has conned people and made up some lost ground.

Mr Yewdale: The wheel has turned.

Mr SIMPSON: Members of the Opposition have conned a lot of people. That is what they have done.

As I have said, this State has tremendous natural resources. Almost half of the rain that falls in this country falls in Queensland. Water is the base resource that determines

the ultimate production and population in any region. A given quantity of water can be moved by pipeline. I believe that there should be decentralisation according to the availability of water supplies.

Queensland has a tremendous amount of coal and ore bodies, which will be important to this State. However, there are a few clouds on the horizon. If our present rate of production is doubled, Queensland has a 200-year supply of coal. However, the "in" thing is the greenhouse effect and the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It is not only motor cars that produce carbon dioxide; pollution is also caused by power stations in the generation of electricity.

Queensland has been very efficient at selling coal for power generation around the world and in this State. The fact that the Queensland Government has kept down the unit cost of electricity has attracted small business to relocate in Queensland. That will be a winner for this State.

The Government has to examine the development of natural gas resources because, when burned, the carbon dioxide component is basically half that of coal. That is something that has to be planned for in the future. We cannot end up dependent on any one thing. Members of the Opposition have legitimately claimed that there needs to be a spreading of industry in this State. Industry in Queensland is not as strong as it is in some other States. I agree with that. There also needs to be more processing of our natural resources. That was mentioned by the Minister in the presentation of his Estimates. Queensland industry has quite a future in glass production. Ceramics will also be an important industry in the future of this State.

Queensland has a great future. Our resources need to be well managed. The natural gas resources of this State need to be developed because they result in less pollution than coal. By the year 2025 there will be changes to the world population that will perhaps cause concern to Western countries. The population of China will rise by only a small number—say, to 1 500 million people. However, the population of India will be approaching 1 400 million people by that time; Indonesia, 250 million people; and Australia, 25 million people.

One can either be negative about the increase in the world population and think, "What is going to happen to us?", or be positive and think, "Here is a tremendous opportunity for Australia to provide the food resources and infrastructure necessary in the Pacific." Of course, the need will extend beyond the Pacific, but basically it will be contained within that region. I believe that that is the way we should go about things. Those are the sorts of challenges that will be faced in the future. I only wish that I could live for a couple of hundred years to enjoy all these things.

Mr Davis: As long as you don't wear that tie.

Mr SIMPSON: I am proud of this tie.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: The honourable member is not very observant. I have worn three different Scottish tartan ties over the last two weeks.

Mr Milliner: What is that one?

Mr SIMPSON: This one is a Fraser tartan. I am obviously being led astray.

Industrial estates on the Sunshine Coast are located at Noosaville, Yandina, Maroochydore and Caloundra. An expansion of the population has given an opportunity to provide additional tertiary industries in that area. Consideration has to be given to the extension of the Noosaville industrial estate. Planning of the future extension to the Yandina industrial estate must be undertaken. At Sippy Downs on the Sunshine Coast, an industrial estate has been lost. A university is planned for the area. I do not think that that is consistent with utilising our resources. There was an opportunity to establish a university for nothing, many years ahead of time, by utilising the resources of a forestry area.

Mr Davis: That would be a Christian one, would it?

Mr SIMPSON: That would be great. Would the honourable member support that?

Mr Davis: Yes. I am a Christian myself.

Mr SIMPSON: I think that is a great concept.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: There is only one Creator. The honourable member can keep the others.

Part of that area of forestry could have been sold off in return for a development right on the steps of Nambour, with rail and road transportation. Of course, then we could have had the Sippy Downs industrial estate back again. We will need an industrial estate in the future. I do not think that the forestry area is a suitable site for industry. I would not support that at all.

I am concerned about the principle of private enterprise utilising the resources of Queensland. The Government has to look at its resources and say, "Here is an opportunity to get a university for nothing. Bring it forward in time. We really need it." The Federal Government has reduced funding for student places in tertiary institutions. The State Government has to keep driving the education and training factors because Queensland is slipping behind its competitors on the Pacific rim. In planning terms, the construction of the university would have given back the Sippy Downs site for an industrial estate. The Government would have had an opportunity to keep that program going; otherwise it will have to go looking for more land, compete for funds and so forth.

Industrial estates are very important. The concept of freeing up land so that industry can go anywhere without being restricted only to industrial estates is even better. Many industries operate on the Sunshine Coast, such as the Yandina ginger factory, which is the largest of its type in the world. The member for Everton likes it, too.

Mr Milliner interjected.

Mr SIMPSON: The new policy of the Yandina industrial estate to become a public company is a matter that should be considered very carefully. Because there is nothing to stop the company from being taken over, everything could be lost. However, the company has made that decision. I wish it every success. It will have a big tourist component and I am sure that the honourable member for Everton will tell all his friends about it. That will help make the venture successful.

Eumundi Brewing produces a product that is probably more to the liking of some people in this Chamber. It is quite successful. The tourist industry is supported by the tertiary industries. Many gifted people work in the clothing industry. Last Sunday, Trevor Perrett and I opened an exhibition of Aboriginal art from the Aborigines of Cherbourg, some of whom reside in my electorate. One painting was sold by them to Qantas for \$6,000. Qantas has indicated that it will display the painting in its Sydney office. A company officer said that, if the painting was sold in New York, it would bring \$20,000. They are only a few of the resources that can be promoted in Queensland.

Time expired.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong) (8.19 p.m.): This evening, honourable members have heard a great deal about small business. Member after member who spoke in the debate indicated the important role played by small business in Queensland's economy. As has already been mentioned, 96 per cent of the businesses in this State are called small businesses. Small businesses are those businesses with fewer than 20 employees. I am aware that 90 per cent of the State's businesses employ fewer than 10 employees. A total of 98 per cent of the State's businesses have fewer than 50 employees.

In the mining industry, 90 per cent of enterprises have fewer than 20 employees. Of course, members do not refer to operations in the mining industry as small businesses.

In the manufacturing industry, 87 per cent of enterprises have fewer than 20 employees, as do 87 per cent of enterprises in manufacturing industry, 98 per cent of enterprises in the construction industry, 94 per cent of enterprises in the wholesale industry, 98 per cent of enterprises in the retail trade industry, 97 per cent of enterprises in the transport and storage industry, 97 per cent of enterprises in the finance, property and business services industry, 94 per cent of enterprises in the community services industry and 94 per cent of recreation, personal and other service industries.

Looking right across the board, one can see that a large percentage of this State's enterprises are correctly classed as small businesses. The umbrella covers a diverse area indeed. Unfortunately, far too many people are entering small business without being aware of the financial and marketing skills that are necessary to make a success of their undertaking. To cope with these ever-changing circumstances, small business needs more flexibility, particularly in the labour market and its work practices. With incentive and motivation, small business will create prosperity through higher productivity and investment, which, in turn, will lead to more jobs and improved living standards.

The Government has gone some way in assisting small business through the Small Business Development Corporation. Over a period some criticism has been levelled at the corporation, as is generally the case with such Government undertakings. Generally, I believe that the corporation does a good job. The staff of the corporation should be congratulated. However, they have an important role of co-ordination. It is important not to get the role of co-ordination confused with competing in the market-place with other small businesses. In the area in which the Small Business Development Corporation operates it is so easy to start competing against fellow small business operators, whether it be in the industrial relations area, the consulting area or assisting people with their financial skills. It is important that the Small Business Development Corporation have very clearly defined guide-lines. I am sure that the Government is continually considering the introduction of such guide-lines, as are the members of the corporation.

I note that the allocation for the corporation has been increased in this year's Budget, presumably because of the one-stop shopping centres, or the one-stop licensing centres, and the increase in the number of offices of the Small Business Development Corporation throughout the State, particularly in country areas. Although that increase is very pleasing, it is important that we do not become confused about the ways in which we can assist people in the community.

As to education—small business can assist greatly in its co-ordinating role. The retail industry has a very fine industry training council, as do several other industry groups within the community. Although many industry groups exist, some people still want to set up small businesses without undertaking any training. This Government must try to ensure that before people enter small businesses they undertake training courses and gain some skills and knowledge of the industries into which they are moving. Unfortunately, many people have knowledge of an industry but they lack the marketing and financial skills that are so necessary to assist them in small business.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: Honourable members would be aware that Mr Davis lacked those skills when he was in the service station industry, and that is why he got into so much trouble.

People in the community are more aware than ever of the role and ability of organisations such as the Small Business Development Corporation that can teach them the necessary skills. I ask the Government to give consideration to encouraging business to introduce small-business scholarships so that people in the community can be chosen at random to undertake further education courses.

I am aware that, in recent times, small-business education courses have been introduced into schools, but there should be a push towards creating more option courses at schools so that students, particularly in Years 11 and 12, can consider undertaking small-business courses.

As a number of members have already mentioned, many people who leave school lack the necessary basic skills of small business but believe that, because they have completed their education, they are fit and proper to enter the market-place and to become involved in small-business undertakings. A greater spread of educational courses that do not clash with other industry groups and the existing TAFE courses is needed within the community.

Much has been said about interest rates and their associated problems. Small business has always had problems with cash flow, but the Federal Labor Government is not particularly concerned about that. The Labor Party in general does not seem to be concerned about the cash-flow problems of small businesses and the way in which high interest rates of 22 per cent and 24 per cent are affecting them. Because high interest rates are eating up ready cash, small businesses have insufficient cash to invest and to acquire new goods that can be put onto shelves and sold in the market-place.

On 15 July 1990 the horrendous company tax imposition will further hit small businesses. Not only will small businesses have to pay their quarterly tax payments during 1989-90, but also as at 15 July 1990 they will have to find 85 per cent of their 1989-90 tax payments. Although companies such as BHP and Coles-Myer might be able to borrow \$500m to pay that horrendous tax, because small business operators do not have the ready cash, they will have to find thousands and perhaps tens of thousands of dollars overnight.

The Treasurer has been given an indication that, as at 30 June 1990, a large number of small businesses will have to close their doors if they have to find that horrendous payment as at 15 July 1990. However, the Labor Party has not said a word about that.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: Members of the Labor Party would much rather interject, kick up a great fuss and become a general nuisance without applying themselves to assisting the small-business people in the community.

Mr Burreket: The world's most useless Treasurer won't be any good.

Mr BEANLAND: The world's most useless Treasurer is too interested in looking after big business, big government and big unions.

That is the case right across the board—whether it be the airlines dispute, business or anything else. For example, because of Mr Keating's belief in big unions, big government and big business, television moguls are in dire straits.

It is clear that other ways exist in which the Government can assist small business in this State, including the prompt payment of accounts within 30 days not only by Governments but also by statutory authorities and qangos. I realise that many authorities attempt to do that, but an equal number of authorities do not pay their accounts on time and are unconcerned if those accounts remain unpaid for 60 or 90 days. The Government must seriously consider introducing special legislation that ensures that all Government departments and instrumentalities assist small business by paying their accounts promptly within 30 days. There can be no excuse for Government departments delaying the payment of accounts for goods and services that are supplied to them.

Another factor that is a direct flow-on from the high-interest-rates syndrome that exists at present—the groove, as Mr Keating calls it—is small debts. Small business is being hit by debts and it will be hit even further when the new privacy legislation relating to credit references is passed through Federal Parliament. Small businesses will be unable to check the credit references of many of the people to whom they wish to sell goods and services. They will have a choice of not making a sale or running the grave risk of incurring debts on their books in the short and long terms. Credit-reference bureaus will no longer be able to supply the vital and necessary information that they supplied in the past yet not a word is heard from the Labor Party either federally or in this State. It just seems to pass them by.

These are the crucial questions that are facing small business today. These are the crucial questions that are cutting into the cash flow of small business. Rightly, some members of this Chamber ought to hang their heads in shame. This is the bottom line for small business. I appeal to the Government to look at the small-debt problem.

Mr Burreket: It's probable that none of them have been in business and so wouldn't understand.

Mr BEANLAND: It is known, of course, that they are Mr Goss' faceless men. They are shadows behind Goss. They are not seen up front on any of the leaflets. When one looks at their credentials, one can well understand why.

The problem of small debt is growing to the small-business sector of the economy, which occupies the vast majority of the business economy of this State. I appeal to the Government to consider the implementation of a small debts court or a small debts tribunal. A simplified process must be found. The Small Claims Tribunal does exist, but its orders cannot be enforced. Therefore, even if a small business is successful in its claim before the tribunal, it may not be successful in recovering its lost cash. Therefore, many small businesses consider an appearance before the tribunal to be a total waste of time and effort. If a person is running a small business by himself or if he has half a dozen staff, he may have to take half a day off to appear before the tribunal. As a result the business loses not only a considerable sum of money but also an employee from the workplace.

Clearly, the Government needs to give very serious consideration to what can be done to assist businesses with small-debt problems. The problem will get worse. It is no good running away from it. The interest rates will continue to rise. The Federal Treasurer says daily, "We are in the groove." He has said that high interest rates will prevail until well into next year. He will not be able to buy the banks off to stop the interest rates from increasing further. Already the building societies and other credit organisations are increasing their interest rates, and the effect of that will flow right through the community.

Payment of taxes will be another slug for small businesses next year. The effects of that will affect other sectors of the community. The small-business people of this State will suffer the same problems as those in Victoria, the insolvent State, which is controlled by a Labor Government—but not for much longer. Small businesses in Queensland are fast approaching that state of affairs. It is critical that consideration be given to introducing another system, one that will assist small businesses. They cannot afford to go before the Magistrates Court and pay all the expenses involved in employing a solicitor. Once solicitors are employed to recover a small claim, the legal costs far exceed the cost of the small debt that is to be recouped.

There is a need to come to grips with what will be a much bigger problem in Queensland in the foreseeable future. That has been caused by the Federal Labor Government. Heaven help us if the Labor Party ever came to office in this State. The problem would grow overnight.

The Government also needs to give serious consideration to the tying of Government charges to the increase in the consumer price index. Not all of us know where this system of increases in charges started. Believe it or not, it started in 1976 when the Brisbane City Council increased its property rates by the rate of inflation. However, the council could never work out what the rate of inflation was. In nine years the property rates increased two and a-half times the rate of inflation. Unfortunately, this Government and other Governments seem to have picked up what I think is a very unfortunate way of increasing charges without having to justify them.

Charges have been increased in line with the consumer price index. In this day and age, that system is not good enough. We have to come to grips with the problem. Charges should not be increased unless the increase can be justified. They should not be increased merely because the CPI has increased. Many of the charges relate to a host

of other matters that have nothing to do with the CPI at all. It becomes another revenue-gathering exercise for the State Government. But that is not nearly as bad as the fuel levy that increases twice a year and that is now costing motorists more than 30c for every litre of petrol that they buy. Mr Keating will ensure that that system rolls on.

Because of the huge burden that land tax places on small-business people, the Liberal Party has clearly committed itself to its abolition. The outgoings of such a tax are passed on to shop-keepers, office-managers and businesses right across the board. As a result of the large land-tax burden that is thrust upon businesses, instead of paying \$20,000 a year in rent, their rent can more or less double overnight. That is particularly prevalent in places such as the Gold Coast, Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast, Cairns and Port Douglas. In those places horrific increases in valuations have occurred. Even people in places such as Kingaroy pay land tax. Not very long ago, passing through the wonderful town of Kingaroy, I called in to a garage, where I spoke to a gentleman about land tax. That very morning, he had written out a cheque for several hundred dollars to pay his land tax. Land tax is a matter of grave concern right across the business community.

I want to say a few words about capital gains tax. The member for Warwick, Mr Booth, spoke about this matter in his speech. Unfortunately, he is not in the Chamber at the moment. I want to refer Mr Booth to the Federal Liberal Party's policy on capital gains tax. It clearly spells out that it will abolish capital gains tax immediately it takes office. If we believe what we read in the newspaper, that will not be long—maybe 2 December. The Federal Liberal Party will abolish this wretched tax, which is not only a capital gains tax on business, but also a death tax. I will not beat about the bush: it is a death tax that has been reintroduced through the back door by Hawke and his cronies in Canberra. In the next 20 years, all sorts of businesses and farmers will be caught up with this capital gains tax. The Liberal Party will do away with that and replace it with a speculative gains tax that will decrease on a sliding scale over a period of five years. The Labor Party knows that. I am surprised that Mr Booth is not also aware of that. Of course, that tax will not apply to the family home; it will remain excluded.

A Federal Liberal Party in Government would replace the current capital gains tax with a speculative gains tax that would reduce gradually over a period of five years. I believe that that policy will be welcomed by all businesses and all sectors of the community because, although speculators will be caught, the genuine investor will be provided with incentive and motivation to create wealth and improve living standards.

Yesterday during the debate on the Estimates, a great deal was said by members of the Labor Party about flexibility of the labour-market. The member for Wolston, who is presently not in the Chamber, made various Keating-type remarks about me and other members of the Liberal Party. Members of the Labor Party are good at playing the man but are very poor at playing the ball, and it is typical of members of the Labor Party to adopt that type of approach. Keating carries on with all that scumbagging nonsense because he cannot debate the issues and he does not have any policies. Day after day it becomes more obvious that his policies are failing. Members of the Labor Party adopt the Keating style and make wild and outlandish allegations about other members. Because time is short, I will not go into the sins committed by members of the Opposition.

Mr Gygar: All the rorts and phoney voters.

Mr BEANLAND: At some time in the future I ought to look into the part played by members of the Labor Party in nominating phoney voters and engaging in electoral rorts.

Mr Gygar: Ex-Ministers in gaol.

Mr BEANLAND: The only former Minister in gaol in this nation is Mr Rex Jackson, who was a Labor Minister in New South Wales. The member for Stafford is so right.

In conclusion, I wish to outline delays that occur and frustrate the objectives of small business. I look forward to the Government's undertaking an overhaul of the Department of Freehold Land Titles and the Corporate Affairs Commissioner's Office and an improvement in the efficiency of the Stamp Duties Office. Heaven forbid that the Labor Party should take over the running of the Corporate Affairs Commissioner's Office.

Time expired.

Mr BURREKET (Townsville) (8.40 p.m.): I join in this Estimates debate to outline a significant program of development that has been launched by the National Party Government to promote industry in the north. I am not talking about the magic wand, cargo-cult mentality that pervades the thinking of members of the Labor Party in relation to economic policy.

As I listened to the previous speaker, the thought crossed my mind that consistently the Labor Party leaves a trail of economic disaster in any State or nation in which it holds office. I am referring particularly to the Federal Labor Government in Canberra and the State Governments of Western Australia and Victoria and the previous Labor administration in New South Wales. There can be no doubt about the outcome of what is occurring in Tasmania. I thank God that the Labor Party will never form a Government in Queensland.

Members of the Labor Party advocate the imposition of a whole series of taxes, including a fuel tax and a financial institutions tax. They say that these taxes have to be imposed to bring the level of taxation paid by Queenslanders up to the rate paid by the residents of other States. Clearly, Labor wants to wreck decentralised Queensland.

Imagine the effect of a fuel tax in country areas of Queensland! If Mr Goss wanted more roads constructed in Queensland, he should simply have approached the world's worst Treasurer, Mr Keating. He should have suggested that, instead of the Federal Government reimbursing only 4.9c of the fuel tax revenue, 27c per litre should be paid to the Queensland Government. If he could arrange that, Queensland would have an additional \$300m to spend on road construction in this State. An additional 1 000 miles of roadway could be constructed, which would provide improved transport services for Queenslanders. Queensland is owed \$300m from the fuel-tax revenue that has already been collected by the Federal Government. The Queensland Government is all about positive development.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr BURREKET: That comment does not even deserve an answer. Honourable members have heard enough about the ALP in New South Wales. Earlier somebody mentioned that Mr Jackson is still in gaol.

Mr Davis interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Campbell): Order! The honourable member will return to the subject-matter of the Estimates debate.

Mr BURREKET: The results of positive development and years of achievement under the National Party Government are evident in Townsville and Thuringowa. Townsville is this State's third-largest city. Last year its population reached 110 000. The most recent figures indicate that in 1986-87, 198 manufacturing establishments were operating in Townsville and were paying salaries and wages worth \$77m. That amount represents an increase of 11 per cent over a four-year period. That pattern of strong, steady growth is reflected in other statistics, such as the number of industrial building approvals.

During the 1988-89 financial year, approvals for commercial and industrial buildings valued at \$91m were granted in the Townsville statistical district.

A Government member interjected.

Mr BURREKET: The members of the Labor Party have run away. There is nobody to stir up.

As part of its contribution to Townsville's development, the Department of Industry Development established the Bohle industrial estate and the Townsville aviation park. They are tremendous initiatives undertaken by the Queensland Government and will assist industry not only in Townsville but also in other areas throughout the State. The department's action is a credit to it, the director and the Minister. Those sorts of initiatives are making Queensland grow.

Mr Davis: Tell us about the Townsville City Council, too.

Mr BURREKET: Must the honourable member spoil everything when I am talking about good things? I will come to that matter later and outline the Townsville City Council's dismal economic record.

To date there are 28 lessees on the Bohle estate. So far \$2.3m has been spent on developing the 130-hectare park. There is one lessee in the 27-hectare aviation park. The department has budgeted \$650,000 this financial year to undertake further development work at Bohle. It intends to release large sites with highway frontage. They are the initiatives that help industry and the growth of Townsville. When complete, these works will provide both DID and Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone clients with excellent, high-profile industrial land.

The Townsville aviation park was released to cater for manufacturing operations involved in the aviation industry. Stage 1 of the estate caters for the Hawker De Haviland facility. This is a very good initiative on the part of the Queensland Government and Mr Katter, who was then the Minister for Northern Development. The aviation industry was encouraged to establish in Townsville. The move has been very successful. Hawker de Haviland is hoping to expand, being very well placed to secure Government contracts for the maintenance and refurbishment of aircraft. If successful in its tender, DID will provide additional factory facilities to this company on a commercial lease/purchase arrangement.

I turn now to some individual industries that have chosen Townsville as a place to expand. This is an industry success story for Townsville. It repudiates some of the nonsense spoken in this Chamber today by members of the Opposition who say that industry in Queensland is going nowhere. The Curtain Bros group of companies has approached DID for an additional 2 hectares of land at the Bohle industrial estate. That company has recently signed a \$153m joint-venture partnership for various gold-mine constructions in Papua New Guinea. This is a success story for Townsville. It is a new industry and Curtain Bros is also servicing many of the ports in Papua New Guinea. This industry simply did not exist in Townsville a few years ago. General Engineering Agencies Pty Ltd has spent \$1.5m in the last six months in establishing a heavy equipment manufacturing site on the Bohle industrial estate. That company intends to go into the market in Papua New Guinea as well.

Mr Davis: This is top stuff.

Mr BURREKET: Ferguson's Engineering and Retail has also been extremely successful with exports into Papua New Guinea and it has currently expanded onto three hectares of land at the Bohle industrial estate. This may not mean much to the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who lives down here in Brisbane; but, after 12 years of ALP rule in the Townsville City Council, finally my city is starting to get going. These are the little sweeteners that are happening in the area.

Mr Vaughan: It's bad enough when he is on the Estimates, but when he raves on about this sort of rubbish, it's terrible. I'm doing penance here.

Mr BURREKET: The honourable member does not have to sit here; he can always leave.

Smorgons Plastics and Australian Poultry Limited are two companies that are relocating to the region, and, although they will not be occupying industrial Crown land, DID acted in a facilitating role to help those companies to transfer to the region.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr BURREKET: I accept that comment. The honourable member has to understand business and think about it. It will be a good exercise for him.

Through the DID regional economic development program, during the 1987-88 financial year the Townsville-Thuringowa Development Board received \$6,000 for industry promotional grants and \$28,000 for specific program assistance. Initiatives from this specific program assistance included a trade mission to Hong Kong and Taiwan and the development of a product and services directory for the region.

During February this year a grant of \$20,000 was approved for research by the geology department of the James Cook University into sea-floor mapping technology as a part of the Gloria survey project. The Department of Industry Development in Townsville has been extremely active with the implementation of quality management workshops as a part of the Government's commitment to improving quality management and changes to the State economic policy.

Mr Davis interjected.

Mr BURREKET: As I said before, while the honourable member is here playing his stupid political games, he should be thankful that there is a Government and smart people in the departments out there doing all these little things to help industry in Queensland. The honourable member cannot understand that and simply wants to laugh. He does not know what he is doing. How can the galahs in the Opposition ever hope to assume the role of Government in this State? Thank goodness it will not happen.

Mr Gygar: When Mr Davis was involved in that wonderful commercial venture, ACTU/Solo, it went broke.

Mr BURREKET: Yes, Mr Davis was involved in Solo and would know all about business. Unfortunately the honourable member will be leaving at the end of this term. He will be in the invidious position of having been in this Parliament a long time, never having been in Government and therefore not understanding what it is like to manage a State.

The DID has also established an industry co-ordination group in Townsville to co-ordinate industry inquiries and assist with the fast-tracking of information required by companies wishing to establish in the region. This very sound initiative comprises representatives from the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone, Department of Northern Development, Townsville-Thuringowa Development Board, Small Business Development Corporation, Industrial Supplies Office, National Industry Extension Service, Queensland Innovation Centre, Austrade, Townsville City Council, Thuringowa City Council, Townsville Chamber of Commerce and Queensland Confederation of Industry. I turn now to other matters that are of vital importance to the north.

Mr Davis: You don't have to take up your full time; you know that, don't you?

Mr BURREKET: If the honourable member had not continually interrupted me, I would have finished a lot earlier. Trying to understand some of the honourable member's comments takes time.

The first of these initiatives is the Cape York spaceport. The Queensland Government has led the way in the initiative to establish a space base on Cape York. I remind honourable members that when Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, the former Premier, suggested the spaceport in north Queensland everyone laughed and said it was a joke. I assure honourable members that this will be one of this State's great initiatives. I congratulate Mr Borbidge, who at that time was Minister for Industry, and Mr Ellis in his department

for the tremendous amount of work that they undertook to make this happen. The construction of the spaceport is about to reach another important milestone.

In June, the Cape York Space Agency, the group given the mandate to develop the proposal over 61 other submissions, announced that a commercial spaceport at Cape York was a viable proposition. The initial cost was put at \$380m.

In three weeks' time, the Cape York Space Agency will make a major submission to the joint working group of State and Federal Government representatives. Responsibility for the establishment of a commercial spaceport at Cape York will pass back to the State and Federal Governments. This will result from the need for legislation to support the development of the project. Our position is clear.

In spite of recent activity with the old Woomera launch facility, Cape York is and remains the prime site in Australia for the launching and positioning of payloads in orbit. We stand ready to play our part in ensuring the necessary infrastructure and we believe that the Federal Government will play its part with enabling legislation and support.

Allied to this is the work of the defence, aerospace and offsets branch. It is charged with the promotion of a defence and aerospace industry capability in Queensland and it is working to achieve this through liaison with national and multinational manufacturers, promotion of our capabilities, direct marketing to overseas subcontractors for Australian defence contracts and targeting Australian defence tenders and contracts.

It is closely involved in helping in the development of another State Government concept involving the proposed purchase of the old Eagle Farm Airport site for the development of a zone targeted at aerospace and defence-related manufacturing and service industries. We are looking at support industries for the Cape York space base as well as for the domestic airlines. Negotiations are continuing with the Federal Government and the Brisbane City Council.

I shall now speak about the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone. In May last year, the Queensland Government decided that enterprise zones should be established to promote the development of high-value-added and export-oriented manufacturing industry. The first of these—the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone—is now up and running following approval by this Parliament of enterprise zone legislation last year.

I should like to report to the Chamber that the enterprise zone is working well. It has a budget. It certainly has a number of new export-oriented developments on the books and we are hoping for some very important announcements in the near future. I am optimistic that the long-awaited zinc refinery will finally come to Townsville. It has been on and off for a long time and we believe that, under the incentives offered by the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone, the zinc refinery announcement will be made in the not-too-distant future.

The department has a number of initiatives for north Queensland. I regret having to restrict my comments to north Queensland. I would have liked to speak about the whole of Queensland in general, but time does not permit. There is scope within the whole of Queensland for industrial and commercial development.

I congratulate the Minister and his staff for the important part that they have played and their initiatives for the local areas to help develop industries. One problem that Australia has had for a hundred years and will probably have for another hundred years is the tendency to extract all raw materials with very little secondary industry to develop them to Stages 2, 3 and 4 before they go to final product.

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (8.55 p.m.): It gives me pleasure to speak in the debate on these Estimates. When the Minister spoke this afternoon, I expected him to deal with the steel-mill for Gladstone. I thought that would have been the highlight of his speech because, recently, he went to Taiwan to put a strong case on behalf of the

Queensland Government, with Gladstone as the centre for the steel-mill. The Minister returned and there has not been one word about his success or otherwise.

Mr Borbidge: You are wrong.

Mr PREST: I guess that, if he had any success, we would have been told.

Mr Borbidge: You are wrong; he didn't go.

Mr PREST: Where did he go—China?

Mr Borbidge: The Minister did not go to Taiwan and he did not go to China. His senior officers went.

Mr PREST: Well, he went overseas and he spoke with the——

Mr Borbidge: He didn't go.

Mr PREST: He did not go overseas?

Mr Borbidge: His senior officers went.

Mr PREST: He did not go? Well, it is reported in the press that Mr Ahern said that the Minister was going overseas. I will accept that the Minister did not go overseas. He did not have the ability to go overseas and put a case on behalf of the Queensland Government. It just goes to show that the National Party Government in this State is very thin on the ground when it cannot get a Minister with enough ability to go overseas to put its case.

Mr Borbidge: You were going to criticise him for going. Now you are criticising him for not going. You are a fraud. You are a hypocrite.

Mr PREST: All right. Surely on their return his departmental officers would have reported to the Minister. If that is the case, who is weak? The Minister for Tourism is saying that he is not the Minister concerned. He is saying that the officers led that delegation and that they were too weak to put a case to get results for the State of Queensland. If they had had any success, they would have told us about it. If they failed, that explains their silence. To send such a delegation would be sending a boy on a man's errand. It is obvious that the Minister did not have the ability to lead the delegation.

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is seeking to deliberately mislead the Chamber. The fact is that, for very genuine reasons, the Minister was unable to go on that trip and it was led by senior Government officers. I also advise the honourable member for Port Curtis, who is attempting to mislead the Parliament, that the project is on track.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Campbell): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr PREST: No statement has been made by the Queensland Government overseas delegation. If it had any success, it must have been very limited. Of course, the Government could not find a Minister with any talent to lead the delegation.

In 1973 the first announcement was made that a steel-mill was to be built in Gladstone. Every year since then, we have been reminded that we are about to get a steel-mill which will employ in the vicinity of 10 000 people or more. There was much competition for the China steel proposal. Many firms in Australia and in other countries throughout the world expressed interest in the steel-mill. It is obvious that Western Australia is not sending a delegation without a Minister. It will be sending a very strong delegation. It has a very old and wise group of people to lead its delegation.

The *Australian Business* of 9 June 1989 stated—

“The siting of the new steel mill is to be investigated by the Australian consultants to China Steel, the Perth merchant bank Hawkins Court. The bank's

chairman, Ken Court, says it would require a construction workforce of 10,000, and a permanent staff of 6000, with a plant using the latest steel-making technology. A Canberra official pointed out the role that the Court family has played in maintaining trade links during the long period in which there have been no official ties.

Ken and his father Sir Charles Court, the former West Australian Premier, are also acknowledged by sources in the WA Labor Government as being the most influential figures in Australian-Taiwanese relations.

Ken Court says the detailed information on the project would be assembled in the next six months and a decision could be expected by the end of next year. If the decision is favourable, it would still be five years from now before the venture was commissioned.

. . .

Court has been negotiating for the past seven years, and the agreement to carry out a feasibility study was completed only three weeks ago.”

When one listens to the National Party Government, one would expect that the steel-mill decision was about to be made. I get disappointed when people in authority, for political, personal or financial gain, make premature announcements. It creates false hope for the unemployed and the struggling small businesses. It causes real estate prices to rise dramatically. Out-of-town speculators pay inflated prices and those purchases have a flow-on effect, with increases in unimproved land valuations having an adverse effect on local authority rates each year. We are left with an unnecessarily inflated situation in which those who can ill afford price increases are affected the most.

On 26 July 1989 I saw an article headed “Focus on finance” that stated, “Out of town investors take stake in Gladstone.” Such purchases throw residents out of rental accommodation and all rentals are increased accordingly.

By making those announcements, the Government increases prices and causes hardship to many people who can ill afford it. We welcome industry and development to our region. However, the development must meet the pollution and environmental requirements.

The 1990s are shaping up as a decade of industrial growth for Gladstone. A number of value-added and downstream industries are looking to establish in Gladstone and they will provide specific opportunities for employment. Those opportunities will be created in areas towards which Gladstone’s work-force is already heavily orientated—manufacturing, transport, storage, electricity, water and gas.

A work-force profile of industry comparing Gladstone with Queensland as a whole shows that the manufacturing sector in Gladstone takes up 22.8 per cent of people employed while the figure for Queensland as a whole is 11.6 per cent. With transport/storage, the figure for Gladstone is 12.7 per cent compared with 6.2 per cent for Queensland as a whole. With electricity, gas and water, Gladstone has 6.6 per cent of the work-force employed compared with 1.5 per cent for Queensland as a whole.

Currently, 42 per cent of Gladstone’s work-force is employed in those areas—more than double the State average. That orientation will be strengthened by the proposed new industries and will open up substantial opportunities to persons with technical expertise and trade-related skills. Indeed, the predominance of tradespersons and operators is currently well above the State average.

If I refer again to the work profile comparing Gladstone with Queensland as a whole, I find that 19.1 per cent of tradespersons are employed in Gladstone as compared with 15.7 per cent for Queensland as a whole; and 15.2 per cent of plant and machinery operators are employed in Gladstone compared with 8.1 per cent for Queensland as a whole. We find that Gladstone’s population is more highly skilled than the State average, with 21 per cent of persons over 15 holding degrees, diplomas or trade certificates.

On a population basis, we find that 21.2 per cent of the population of Gladstone have degrees, diplomas and trade certificates compared with the State average of 17.9 per cent.

Mr Borbidge: When are you going to stand aside?

Mr PREST: It will not be very long. I assure the honourable member that, when I do decide to stand down, the Labor candidate will probably be my successor.

Higher skills mean higher pay. Indeed, Gladstone is reputed to have the second highest average weekly earnings of any city in Australia. A review of the major current value-added industries in Gladstone—QAL, Boyne Smelters and QCL—provides a clear indication of the skills required by the support industries on the way. A staggering 45 per cent of the work-force of these firms is highly skilled. I have a table that shows the qualifications of the employees of QAL, Boyne Smelters and QCL, which employ some 2 230 people. Managerial and supervisory staff, professionals and tradespeople comprise 45 per cent of the work-force. Indeed, approximately 15 per cent hold tertiary qualifications. An examination of ICI's proposed operational work-force reveals that 20 per cent will need degree qualifications and plant operators will be expected to have trade qualifications. If ICI achieves this, it will have more than a 90 per cent highly skilled component in its work-force.

I will examine the new industries proposed—and I stress the word “proposed”—for the 1990s. In today's business world, no-one should assume that any of these proposed projects will happen until the companies themselves make a firm commitment. The first major proposed project is the Boyne smelter expansion. What will that company need after the construction phase? It will need more engineers, more tradespersons and more plant-operators. What is the most common characteristic of people who have these skills? They are primarily male. Indeed, there are some 2 500 tradespersons in Gladstone today and only 6 per cent of them are female. They are predominantly hairdressers and chefs.

When the jobs come and we start to reduce our current chronic pool of unemployed, of whom there are some 2 000, what will we find? The big component of construction, metal trades and electrical workers will disappear. They comprise approximately 40 per cent of the total work-force. Positions will be found for food and beverage workers and cleaners as the hotels, motels and clubs get busy. Those workers comprise 15 per cent of the total work-force.

What about the majority of the rest of the work-force—the pool of clerical, sales and personnel staff—which is primarily female? Herein lies a problem—or is it an opportunity? Only 5 per cent of the work-force of the big firms—the value-added industries, the type that we are going to see in the future—is in traditional female-dominated clerical and secretarial areas.

I believe that if these plants are not opened up to females, if females are not encouraged in relevant trades, technical professions and plant-operating positions, Gladstone will continue to have a much lower than average female work-force participation rate. Successfully encouraging females into these areas will not only help to solve the female unemployment problem but also lessen the future need for new industries outside the city to provide a source of employment for them.

It cannot be assumed that females can be fully employed in the broader community support areas, wholesale/retail, community services, finance, public administration, recreational and personal services and so on—that is, the service sector—which account for 42 per cent of Gladstone's work-force, compared with the State average of 60 per cent. There are several reasons why it cannot be assumed that this sector will adequately employ the females seeking employment.

Firstly, as the skilled and semi-skilled unemployed pool is fully re-employed, the remaining personnel for new industries will be obtained from outside the city. Adult males with wives, families and girlfriends will arrive. Frequently, females who are

experienced workers leave employment to come to Gladstone and seek employment in that city. As a result of this, the female job market remains crowded and career opportunities for female school-leavers are greatly restricted.

Secondly, in the service sector—especially in the community services and public administration areas—the employer is State-based and employment opportunities are directed by State administrators and not locals. Finally, the community services area in Gladstone is much smaller than the State average, primarily because only 7 per cent of Gladstone's population is over 60, compared with the State average of 15 per cent.

For these reasons, and for the simple underlying reason that only 42 per cent of Gladstone's work-force is in the services sector, in contrast to the State figure of 60 per cent, the challenge must be met. Large industries—current and future—and educators must encourage female participation in the predominantly male-dominated work domains. Indeed, any female student in Gladstone today who went on to obtain a chemical engineering degree would find a most challenging and rewarding career at the top echelon of one of Gladstone's industrial giants. This challenge could, no doubt, be more satisfactorily met in the future if the technical disciplines of the new University College of Central Queensland were located on a campus in Gladstone. Gladstone is where the industry will be and Gladstone is where the higher tertiary institution should be.

I turn now to other sectors of our economy which offer substantial employment opportunities in the future. First, we should look at the small support manufacturing area where significant opportunities for trade careers exist. Currently, for every three apprentices employed by the major companies, two apprentices are being employed by the support machine/engineering shops, primarily through the Group Apprenticeship Scheme. This trend will continue as new manufacturing concerns are established.

In the transport and storage sector, the Gladstone Port Authority and the railways will remain a growth area as new industries develop. The port authority and, to a lesser extent, the railways, offer excellent trade and technical degree based career opportunities, and both organisations will be looking to provide multiskilling training for their semi-skilled workers.

The importance of this sector is illustrated by the fact that \$1.6 billion worth of exports were shipped from Gladstone harbour last year—almost 5 per cent of Australia's export revenue. The sector provides administration careers to persons with engineering, drafting, data-processing and accounting skills in similar proportions to the major industrial outlets.

The electrical, gas and water sector in Gladstone is primarily in the Gladstone Power Station, which employs almost 600 people. This organisation has a highly skilled component similar to the other major industries, with 43 per cent of the work-force holding trade or tertiary qualifications in the engineering and technical disciplines. Most of the remainder of the work-force is semi-skilled, and future emphasis will be on retraining, multiskilling and the acquisition of computer skills.

I turn finally to the construction sector. This sector must expand dramatically as new industries are established. However, there are some major problems with job opportunities and career potential in this field.

Because firms chase jobs all over Australia, the construction industry is highly mobile. A heavy emphasis is placed on subcontracting and there is a lack of stability in that industry. No doubt, there will be plenty of trades assistants' and labourers' jobs around for a few years, but it will be very difficult to find career opportunities in the construction field. I must point out, however, that this very fact will lead to a dramatic shortage of skilled building workers within a decade. If one can find an apprenticeship opportunity in this field, one is virtually assured of a prosperous and rewarding career.

I have projected expanding manufacturing, construction, transport and storage sectors for Gladstone, with smaller than average community services and finance and business services sectors. There is great potential for industry expansion in Gladstone. A large amount of money will be injected into the city and provide great opportunities in the

recreation industry, and in the motel, hotel and trade sectors. With all the industries that will be attracted to Gladstone, great opportunities will be presented to the people of Gladstone to obtain positions, provided that they are educated and trained adequately to meet the requirements. I hope that the projects about which honourable members have heard today are not a political gimmick. For the past 15 to 20 years, members of the Opposition have listened to the Government announce only phantom projects.

Time expired.

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (9.17 p.m.): If ever I have seen an actor, it is the member for Port Curtis.

Earlier today, the member for Thuringowa, Mr McElligott, was sitting in the Chamber. The problem with Opposition members is that for too long they have been sitting alongside "Whinging, glossless" Goss—the fellow who has taken his team down the wrong track. Their only problem is that they are divided. They are split into factions all over the place. Members of the Opposition are beginning to think that, by following the Leader of the Opposition, they are following the Messiah. However, members of the public are not prepared to wear his whinging and whining.

Tonight, on television, Goss looked very dull indeed. After the thumping he received in the Chamber today, he was dull and befuddled. He could not work out which way to go.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Campbell): Order! I ask the honourable member to return to the Estimates.

Mr GATELY: I am talking about the small businesses in this State. Mr Goss is trying to con those people into thinking that he is the leader for the business houses in this State. He looked very befuddled when he was interviewed on television tonight. After he copped a Cooper lacing in the Chamber today, he did not know where to go. Mr Cooper outlined what the Government will do to protect business. He referred to the two Bills that will protect small business and every other person in this State against crime and corruption.

Mr McElligott referred to the Bribie Island airfield being constructed without tenders being called. I wonder whether he knows how many cubic metres of soil were removed. So that the honourable member is educated on the matter, I will tell him. A total of 80 000 cubic metres of soil were removed. The honourable member can work out how much that would cost under the Labor Party's way of doing business. A small business group removed the soil for about one-third of what it would have cost to have the work done according to the way that the Labor Party does business. A firm has relocated its operations from Melbourne to Bribie Island so that it can establish its business as a repairer of light aircraft in this State. That was a coup for Queensland because it has brought 40 families to this State. The repair business will also be establishing a college for the training of aircraft-repairers.

Mr McElligott: Did you call tenders?

Mr GATELY: That is a bit different from the twaddle that I heard coming out of Mr McElligott's mouth earlier today. That is small business, and further development will take place in that area. Whether tenders are called or not, I bet that the honourable member and his Labor mates would not have been able to carry out the work for about one-third of the cost had tenders been called. In fact, it probably would have cost five times what it did cost had the work been carried out the Labor way. In addition, strikes would have occurred, people would have been laid off, and we would have seen all the nonsense that goes with that. Again, small business would have been hurt. That is what happens in this State and nation under Labor.

Earlier, Mr Prest said that he welcomes business and industry to his electorate. I suggest to him that throughout Australia the Labor Party has cruelled small business and big business, except Mr Hawke's mates. If the honourable member does not believe

me, he should look at the number of bankruptcies occurring throughout Australia and how that number will increase as a result of the aggressive, dictatorial attitude of the Prime Minister who stood over the pilots of this nation when there was a dispute between them and their employers. The Prime Minister is putting small business throughout the nation in jeopardy. Already businesses are folding up. Last night, the member for Townsville talked in terms of a company being pressured by Esanda, which is foreclosing because people cannot get to the company's holiday units owing to the pilots dispute. Similar problems are occurring all over the nation.

The Prime Minister said that he would give \$15m per week to keep the 21 000 ground staff of the airline companies employed. What was happening? Australian Airlines, an arm of the Federal Government, was dealing out to the workers—the friends of members opposite—one day's pay per week. If the workers wanted pay for the other four days, they were told that they must make a choice: they could have the pay taken out of their holiday pay, their long service leave, their "Z" or flexi-day entitlements, or they could take leave without pay. Members of the Labor Party did absolutely nothing. The Labor candidate for the seat of Currumbin has been neither heard nor seen on that issue. However, I had the guts to call a public meeting at Coolangatta Airport to try to do something to help the small businesses at that airport that are being affected. The staff in the souvenir shop have not been able to work, nor have the people in the tavern.

As a result of what I did at Coolangatta Airport, last Friday week in co-operation with radio and television stations and the print media, the employees rang me yesterday and said, "Thank you very much. We are now re-employed by Australian Airlines and Ansett for five days a week and we are being paid for it. No longer are we expected to have the pay deducted from our holiday pay; nor will we lose these other benefits." In effect, those benefits are their nest-egg for the future. They did not need to be put in that position.

The pity of it all is the way in which small business right across this nation is being ripped off by the Federal Government and by the Prime Minister, who stuck his nose into something that he should have left alone for the ACTU to handle. The Prime Minister has even been criticised by the Left Wing of the ACTU, which got stuck right into him at its conference last week and told him that he should butt out and be what he is supposed to be, namely, the Prime Minister. Mr Hawke should be a statesman, not an interferer.

I come back to Mr Prest's comments. It is interesting that the Labor Party is going to welcome business to Gladstone and give more socialism to Australia. That is the theme behind the whole deal. Mr Prest said that he will take further steps to ensure that women are made to work in the industries alongside the men. Now honourable members are starting to see the real, hidden agenda. Is that Mr Prest's way of introducing affirmative action in Gladstone? The only place that Mr Prest did not mention that he was going to work women was in the salt mines. Mr Prest should be in Russia, not in this State.

Mr McElligott: You're mad.

Mr GATELY: I have not gone mad; Mr Prest has gone mad.

Mr Prest wants affirmative action in Gladstone. The people of this nation will be able to read *Hansard* and learn what Mr Prest said. That is what he proposed. The Labor Party is all about helping the big-business blokes so that it can take them over and turn the country over to socialism.

Let me look at what has been happening. Mr Prest spoke about Hawke wanting higher profits for business. The only reason why Hawke would want higher profits for business is so that he can rip them off with the capital gains tax, if they happen to be able to beat his tax system. Mr Hawke is really saying to the nation, "I want a bigger slice of it in the form of more and more tax." A capital gains tax and a fringe benefits tax have been introduced. There is not one tax that Mr Hawke has not hit business with.

As to small business—because people are fed up with being told what to do by the Labor Party, they take the opportunity of trying to be their own bosses. People go into business in the hope that they will be able to make a profit and keep their families together. However, because of oppressive taxation, they get kicked in the head, kicked in the knees and have their feet taken out from under them.

A new development that has taken place in my electorate, namely, the Zarro complex, was opened on 14 December last year. What an indictment that is! The retail committee of the local chamber of commerce has nothing to report. But at the same time businesses in the complex are going broke. A young fellow from the Caboolture area came to my electorate and set up a butcher shop at a cost of \$150,000. Within four weeks he was stone motherless broke because the operators of that complex led him to believe that the complex would have two floors of retail shops already open and trading, but there is no way in the world that they were open. Opportunities still exist for people to go in that complex and to go broke overnight. If they do not go broke because of a lack of patronage they will go broke because of the oppressive taxation that is being imposed upon them by the Federal Government.

It is interesting that, during his slick little television advertisements, Mr Goss says that Queensland will have a Goss Government. No mention is made of a Goss Labor Government. The media is being used to gloss over that fact, but the public are not being fooled. They are starting to ask why Mr Goss will not speak. The reason is that marketing research has shown that the women of Queensland cannot tolerate his voice; they do not want to hear him and they are not prepared to accept him. As well, the one thing that Mr Goss is not saying is, "We will socialise this nation. We will introduce homosexuality to this State." Where do Mr Prest and Mr McElligott stand on that issue?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will get back to the subject-matter of the debate. The Committee is not debating homosexuality; it is debating the Estimates. The honourable member will come back to the Estimates.

Mr GATELY: I will talk about what is happening with small business as a result of the Tourism Minister's trip to Melbourne last week. Many travel agents in this State and in Sydney who are dependent upon domestic air ticket sales are now facing bankruptcy because of cash-flow problems that have been created by the Prime Minister's interference in the free flow of private enterprise. The way in which the pilots dispute is being dealt with must be considered, because the Waterside Workers Federation is being handled with kid gloves. A total imbalance exists. Both of those factors have an effect upon small business in Australia and, more particularly, in this State. I am concerned about the business-operators in Australia who cannot stand what is happening to them today. I ask honourable members to have a look at the empty rooms from Point Danger to the tip of Cape York Peninsula.

Mr McElligott: Will you take an interjection?

Mr GATELY: Why does the honourable member not say to Mr Hawke, "Stop and let the small-business people have a normal free flow of customers into their stores and into their establishments so that they can make a profit."? Without a profit, small-business people will be unable to pay the workers whom the Labor Party claims it represents and more and more bankruptcies will occur. The Labor Party must say to Mr Hawke, "Let the people who are involved in the dispute sit down and negotiate so that they can go back to work." That is where the problem lies. It does not lie in the nonsense that Mr Prest and Mr McElligott want to go on with. They are like Bib and Bub and they do not even make a good picture then.

I want to know what honourable members opposite support. Do they really support small business in Australia, as they reckon they do? Or do they support other things in this nation? I ask them to tell me that. Or do they support standing over people? All the time they stand over and suppress small business at every opportunity. When they are not doing that, they are kicking small business to death with high taxes.

Mr McElligott: If you are so concerned about small business, why did your Government rezone for Harbour Town? How much did you get from Lewis Land?

Mr GATELY: I find the words just used by the honourable member totally offensive and I request that they be withdrawn forthwith.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chamber will come to order. The member for Currumbin objects to the words that he considers to be offensive and asks for them to be withdrawn. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr Vaughan: Who said it?

Mr GATELY: He knows who said it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will withdraw.

Mr PREST: I withdraw.

Mr VAUGHAN: I withdraw.

Mr MILLINER: I withdraw.

Mr McELLIGOTT: I withdraw.

Mr GATELY: I now refer to the airline companies, which are starting to renege on the traveller—the traveller who has been so inconvenienced because of Hawke's interference. The airlines are so depressed that they have pulled the stunt of trying to take away previously discounted airfares. Supporters of the Opposition could have been equally disadvantaged by what the airline companies attempted to do. If it had not been for the intervention of the Trade Practices Commission, the companies would have got away with it; they would not have given a damn. They did not care whether people were able to meet their commitments or whether they had enough money left in their pockets after being stranded as a result of Hawke's total incompetence, arrogance and stand-over tactics. They did not care. But the point is that this Government has done and is doing everything possible to assist. I have already referred to that in relation to the airline employees at Coolangatta.

The gloss and glitter of Goss will not stand up to scrutiny. It is really the socialisation of this nation and this State. Mention was also made of regionalisation. To me, that is Whitlam reincarnated. That is what Goss and his group are about. When small-businessmen see the oppressive way in which the Federal Government deals with them, they should just watch out for the sort of taxes that will be brought to bear on them if Labor comes to power in this State.

Mr McElligott said that Labor would not introduce a fuel tax or a financial institutions duty. I would be interested to see how Labor performs. However, it will not have an opportunity to do that because the people of this State do not believe Labor, will not accept it and will not give it their vote. The same thing will happen federally. In no way at all will the public of Australia wear the Labor Party.

As I said in a debate yesterday, why did "Whinging Wayne" jump off the plane from America and run down to his little friend Mr Hawke? I will tell honourable members why. He has been down there conspiring and telling Mr Hawke, "Don't give the Queensland Government any money for their roads. Whatever you do, keep them suppressed. It is the best chance we have got of rising above this. We will promise all the nest-eggs when we get there."

The public will be made aware of just what the Opposition has been up to. They will not be misguided by the Opposition's agenda about homosexuality and the attack upon this Government's industrial relations policy. Without any doubt at all, the public will get right into the Opposition. That is what the public will be told about. When the whips start cracking on election day, it will be interesting to see just where the Opposition

is. I believe that the people of this State have enough brains, capacity and ability to see through the gloss and glitter. There is no way in the world that——

Mr Vaughan: The most flourishing small businesses in this State are massage parlours.

Mr GATELY: The honourable member would know, because he frequents them. The honourable member brought the subject up; I did not. The honourable member knows because he has been there. That is his problem. The next time he starts fighting he wants to be careful what he says. It is as quick as that; no problem at all.

Quite frankly, the people of this State will not wear the Opposition. They will vote for a strong, positive leader such as the Government has in Mr Cooper. They will stick with the tried and true; they will not take the gloss and glitter.

Mr De LACY (Cairns) (9.35 p.m.): We have just heard a very enlightening speech from the member for Currumbin, and we thank him for that. I do not know whether it would surprise honourable members to know that, before he was elected, the member for Currumbin actually defrauded the electoral rolls in this State. When he was first nominated for his seat he was not on the electoral roll, so what he did——

Mr GATELY: I rise to a point of order. I find the words used by the honourable member totally offensive and out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! What is the honourable member's point of order?

Mr GATELY: I find the words used by the honourable member totally offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn. I am on the roll, and was when the election was held.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind both honourable members that some very reciprocal views have been expressed in the Chamber tonight and it does not seem to be desirable for a point of order to be taken on every word that is spoken. I ask the Chamber to come to order and I ask honourable members to watch their language.

Mr De LACY: I will withdraw the word "defrauded", but I will explain to honourable members what happened.

When Mr Gately nominated for the National Party, he was a resident of New South Wales. As everybody would know, as a resident of New South Wales, it is not possible to nominate for election to the Queensland Parliament; one must be on the electoral roll. So he secured a room at a hotel in Surfers Paradise, in which he never resided, and used that——

Mr GATELY: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is misleading the Chamber. I have never had a hotel room in Surfers Paradise at all. The honourable member would not know what he is talking about. I ask that the words be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Currumbin asks that the implication that he had a room in Surfers Paradise be withdrawn.

Mr De LACY: All right, Mr Chairman. I understand that more will be said about this before long. We await with interest the outcome of the investigation.

Let me say that the honourable member never legitimately lived in Queensland until something like four or five months after the election. I want to know how he can be on the roll in Queensland when he does not live in Queensland.

Mr GATELY: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is misleading the Committee. What he said is not true. He is telling blatant untruths. I ask that the words be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Currumbin asks that the words suggesting that he committed any electoral misdemeanour be withdrawn.

Mr De LACY: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I will get back to the debate on the Estimates for Small Business and Industry.

I am pleased to be participating in this debate because, as many honourable members have observed during this debate today, small business and industry are vital components in Queensland's economy. I thank all Government members for the advice that they have given all day on techniques for lowering interest rates, solving the pilots dispute, cutting income tax and increasing productivity. I wonder why the National Party is not in Government in Canberra—and does not even look like getting back into power federally—if its members have all the answers? In spite of the fact that interest rates are running at 17 per cent, the Morgan poll indicates that Peacock and his mates are still hard up against the popularity of the Labor Party. Imagine what will happen when interest rates decrease! The Liberal/National Party will be history federally in much the same way as it will be history in Queensland in a short time.

Yesterday in this Chamber I raised the matter of the scandalous waste of \$16.3m of tax-payers' funds. I said the scandal could only be described as gross financial mismanagement by this National Party Government or another example of the cronyism that has strangled Queensland for decades under the stewardship of conservative Governments. Tonight, I will provide further evidence to honourable members and the public of Queensland that this scandalous waste of tax-payers' funds on the World Expo Fun Park sale was, as I suspected, a deliberate back-room deal between the Government and what appear to be mates of the National Party.

I raise this matter in this Estimates debate tonight because, as honourable members are only too well aware, while Expo was a considerable success, many small businesses suffered during the six months of its duration. The National Party would have us believe that they are the party that supports business in this State but the National Party does not support all businesses in this State. This National Party Government has always been a Government for just a few lucky businesses—those in the know; those who support the National Party; those who understand the system. If a person donates to the National Party or supports the National Party, then kick-backs are sure to follow.

The Fitzgerald report exposed this scandalous practice. Tony Fitzgerald highlighted examples of multimillion-dollar Government contracts being handed out to companies purely on the basis that donations were made to the National Party. That system is not good for business or industry because it creates an uneven playing-field. Business has not got and is not getting ahead in Queensland on the basis of entrepreneurial initiative or ability, but on the basis of political connections. That is what has been wrong with business in Queensland and that is what really needs changing. The Fitzgerald report states in black and white that millions of dollars of tax-payers' funds were given out to mates and cronies of the National Party. It did not matter that other companies had tendered for the contract at a lower price. It did not matter that outside independent advice suggested that particular contracts should go to another company. When a donation was forthcoming to the National Party, the chances of getting an expensive Government contract increased enormously.

The conservatives in this State—including the Liberals, who were part of this whole seamy set-up for most of the Government's term of office—have never been interested in all the businesses in Queensland. They are interested only in lining the pockets of their mates. Meanwhile, many honest and productive businesses in Queensland, and particularly small businesses, are driven to the wall because of the policies or lack of policies of this Government and past National/Liberal Governments. This Government has done very little to help those businesses, but it has gone out of its way to assist its mates and cronies.

Fair competition and free enterprise has never really existed under conservative rule in Queensland. Instead, an agrarian socialistic State has been in existence. It is amusing for me to hear the Liberals talking about free enterprise and the manner in which they would change the system because the whole system of agrarian socialism and of cronyism and corruption developed while the Liberal Party was in coalition with

the National Party. I do not think that anything could or would change in Queensland unless a Labor Government is elected.

I return now to the subject of the scandal surrounding the sale of the World Expo Fun Park site. The evidence I have received indicates that the Government's decision to buy back the fun park site was reached after secret negotiations between Pennant Holdings and the Government. As I revealed in this Parliament yesterday, Pennant Holdings—a Perth-based company, not a Queensland-based company—which had a 90 per cent share of World Expo Fun Park Pty Ltd, failed to pay the State Government the \$4m instalment it owed as its part of the contract at the end of Expo.

Mr Gately: You are becoming repetitive about the Expo Authority.

Mr De LACY: The honourable member would not let me become repetitive when I started to talk about the anomalies surrounding his enrolment. However, before I am finished, I may become repetitive about that matter.

Mr Prest: He really had a permanent room at Misty Blue's at Broadbeach. That was his permanent residence.

Mr De LACY: I thank the honourable member for his comment. I think it should be included in the record because it is a very perceptive comment.

Under the contract signed by the developers and the Expo Authority in 1986, failure to meet that payment meant they had defaulted on the contract. As I told honourable members yesterday, this Government did not move immediately, as it could have under the terms of the contract, to charge the operators 24 per cent interest on the money owed; nor did the Government move to take possession of the site and its buildings or move to sell the site, as it could have under the contract.

The Government could have resumed the site at no cost to the Queensland taxpayer because of this default by Pennant Holdings Pty Ltd. I ask: why did the Government then bail out Pennant Holdings, whose management and operation of the fun park were clearly questionable? In addition, World Expo Fun Park Pty Ltd—which, as honourable members will recall, was 90 per cent owned by Pennant Holdings—was in a highly questionable and unstable financial position. I understand that World Expo Fun Park Pty Ltd will go into receivership later this week. Had the Government enforced its right to examine and scrutinise closely the financial position of the fun park operators, the Government would have been aware in 1988 that World Expo Fun Park Pty Ltd was on the brink. Therefore, Queensland tax-payers are justified in asking this National Party Government why it agreed to bail out Pennant Holdings to the tune of \$34m when there was absolutely no need for it to do so.

In recent days information has come to me which suggests that this could have been another sweetheart deal between the National Party Government and the Perth-based company Pennant Holdings. Despite Pennant Holdings' mismanagement of the operation of the World Expo Fun Park, its failure to pay any of the \$4m that it owed under its contractual obligations and clear evidence from the company's financial statements that it was in difficulties, this Government continued to hand out large Government contracts to Pennant Holdings and its subsidiary, John Holland Constructions. I ask: was this part of the deal? As honourable members will recall, John Holland Constructions, a Sydney-based company, is a 49 per cent subsidiary of Pennant Holdings Pty Ltd. The Government was caught in a bind of its own making. It had promised the owners of the fun park that after Expo they would be able to build two 40-storey buildings on the site. The original contract signed by the Expo Authority and the developers had included in it a promise that the land would be rezoned as Commercial B, and that such a zoning plan would come into effect immediately at the conclusion of World Expo on 31 October 1988. It became apparent to Pennant Holdings and the Government that this promise may not be delivered.

Pennant Holdings was then able to outmanoeuvre a National Party Government racked by indecision and leaping from crisis to crisis. This is a company that could not

run a fun park, yet it was able to outmanoeuvre this Government with all the resources at its disposal. Pennant Holdings immediately began legal action to seek costs for losses as a result of the Government being unable to deliver on this rezoning promise. To avoid the political embarrassment that would flow from this litigation, the Government was willing to be bought. From evidence that I have been able to gather, it appears that former Liberal Cabinet Minister, Sam Doumany, was the go-between for Pennant Holdings and the Government. Honourable members will remember Mr Doumany. I understand that he has very close contacts with the National Party Government. Honourable members may think that that is surprising because he sat in this House as a member of the Liberal Party. However, at the same time he had a couple of colleagues in this Parliament who were Liberals and who subsequently had very close dealings with the National Party. I understand that these days Mr Doumany is a member of the National Party and has done very well out of it. Amongst other things, he has been appointed Chairman of the Milk Board. Mr Doumany was involved in the negotiations and assisted in stitching up the deal. The person I spoke to told me that Mr Doumany was the bag-man and was very successful.

As I told the Chamber yesterday, the Government was bought for \$34.3m, leaving a clear profit to the company on the land of \$16.3m. The National Party was willing to hand over an extra \$16.3m of tax-payer's funds to an obviously mismanaged company to save the National Party's political neck.

This is not the end of the matter. Is it a coincidence that John Holland Constructions—which is basically the company I have been talking about, because many companies weave tangled webs so that people cannot follow them—has been given the \$26m contract to run Queensland's first private prison west of Brisbane, the Borallon Correctional Centre? It is certainly no surprise that Thiess Constructions was given the contract to construct the correctional centre. The public of Queensland have all seen and heard about the cosy relationship between this Government and the Thiess family. No doubt we will hear more of this relationship when Special Prosecutor, Doug Drummond, has finished his investigations. It seems that John Holland Constructions, an interstate company, was able to gain lucrative deals from the Government prior to the Expo debacle. Mr Brian Johnson, a director of John Holland Constructions, and a good friend of Sam Doumany, was also listed as a director of companies that received tenders for two private hospitals on Brisbane's south side, one in Logan City and one in Redlands. There are some very questionable happenings surrounding the granting of these tenders, but these can wait for another day and another debate. I know that honourable members can handle only so many scandals in one day.

Mr Sherrin: You haven't proved a thing you've said. Go outside this place and say that.

Mr De LACY: Is the honourable member for Mansfield a back-bencher now?

It has been suggested to me privately that the Government got a good deal when it paid \$34.3m for the World Expo Fun Park, and that in fact the land is worth considerably more than \$34.3m. I guess it depends on how the sums are calculated. Information that has come to me attests to the fact that the market-place was tested in April of this year when two blocks of land were offered for sale at auction that were situated adjacent to the Expo site. The first block, known as the Mazda site, comprised 1.8 hectares and is bordered by Melbourne, Russell, Merivale and Cordelia Streets. This block attracted one bid of \$8m and was passed in after failing to reach an unknown reserve price. The second site, known as the Golden Triangle, is a 0.5 hectare block near the railway line in Glenelg Street. It failed to attract any bid at all after the auctioneer opened the bidding at \$1.2m. The auctioneers, Jones Lang Wootton, who appointed Sir Llew Edwards as an executive consultant after Expo, then said they were negotiating with several buyers and expected a sale within a week. Subsequently, the Mazda block and the Golden Triangle block were withdrawn from sale because the reserve price was not reached.

It depends how one does the sums, but the fact is that that block of land is very valuable if the Commercial B zoning holds. If a developer can purchase that block of land and construct two 40-storey towers, it is a very valuable block of land. But does anybody think that the people on the south side of Brisbane will allow two 40-storey tower blocks to be built there? They will not, and to do so would be inconsistent with the Brisbane town plan. If the zoning were changed and the right to build 40-storey towers was withdrawn, the land would not be worth anything like the \$34m paid by this Government to a developer who is obviously a friend and a crony. I repeat what I said the other day. The National Party State Government has wasted, in the worst kind of way, millions of dollars of tax-payers' funds either bailing out its mates, looking after its mates or saving its political skin.

Mr SHERRIN (Mansfield) (9.54 p.m.): Before I commence my remarks on the Estimates, I draw attention to a couple of the smears that came from the honourable member for Cairns. He made one allegation of some impropriety in the allotting of the contracts to John Holland Constructions, which is only one of a consortium of three companies that have been successful in their tender to operate Australia's first private-enterprise correctional facility at Borallon.

He tried, by the usual old ALP method of smear, innuendo and association with a name, to draw out some impropriety. In so doing, of course, he cast a very serious aspersion upon the whole role of the Corrective Services Commission. That commission is a broadly based organisation with a wide community membership, including two union officials. Not only has he smeared all members of the commission but also he has attacked the integrity of the two union officials and the unions they represent.

Such is the haste of the honourable member for Cairns to smear everybody and everything that he has smeared those union members. I certainly will be drawing that to the attention of the commission, I will be drawing it to the attention of the unions concerned, and the honourable member for Cairns can stand condemned.

I challenge him right now to walk out of this Chamber and repeat the smears, innuendoes and allegations outside the protection of this place. As we know, he is famous for hiding behind the protection that this place affords its 89 members. He does not have the intestinal fortitude to walk outside and to make those allegations, because he knows that he cannot substantiate them. He uses the protection of this place to smear. His credibility has sunk again to an all-time low.

That is not the point that I want to make, although it needed to be said. I want to dwell for a time on the role of what I think is one of the premier departments of the Government, that is, the portfolio of Industry, Small Business and Technology. I want to dwell particularly on the role of information technology.

Mr Yewdale: You stuck with Mike, anyway. You've a chance if you live long enough.

Mr SHERRIN: I thank the honourable member. There is a tremendous amount of talent on the National Party back bench. That is certainly not the case on the ALP back bench—or the front bench, for that matter.

I wish to talk about the role of information technology in the operations of Government. It is an area of considerably increased importance. It assists in a whole host of functions within the Government, including Government accounts, database for land information, information on patients and records in the Health Department, the education mail department, the registries of births, deaths and marriages, the electoral rolls with which all members are associated, police information and the need for high security there, motor vehicles and transport. Many of the functions of the Government require the storage of information and the immediate access to and collation of that information.

How successful the Government is in meeting the needs of the community is, in many ways, dependent on how that information is accessed, whether it is collated in

the right way and how the different agencies of the Government utilise the information to best deliver their services.

The Government in Queensland has a very proud record in the use of information technology, particularly the use of computers and the associated communication modes that are required for disseminating information through the arms of the Government.

In 1976, the State Government Computer Centre was set up. In 1988, it was redesignated as CITEC, which is the Centre for Information Technology and Communications. This year's Budget provides \$77m for the centre, which has a staff of about 368 people. It is a very important area of the Government's activities. The Government could not function without access to this information, and CITEC is one of the premier arms of the Government in allowing it to provide the excellent services that it provides to the citizens of Queensland. CITEC has many and varied roles.

I wish to acknowledge the role played by many of the officers in CITEC. In my time as Assistant Director Technology Services in the Department of Education, I had occasion to deal with many of the officers from the old State Government Computer Centre and then CITEC. I found them to be a very professional group of people. The remuneration paid to people in the computer industry is quite significant. I was privileged to meet many officers who undoubtedly could have earned much more remuneration out in the private market-place but, because of their dedication and the ethos that the State Government Computer Centre and CITEC were able to impart, many of these officers remained with CITEC. They are very fine officers. One of the reasons that CITEC is such a premier organisation is that it has been fortunate to be able to attract fine officers and to provide great leadership over many years.

The role of CITEC is varied. It is obviously the guardian of the large black boxes—the computers—that the Government operates. It operates a whole host of state-of-the-art large box-type computers. It is responsible for the Government telecommunications network. In a State as vast as Queensland, that is a large responsibility. CITEC is the central co-ordinating authority for the efficient and effective use of computers within the whole system of government, for which it certainly has my condolences. Certain Government departments, with the tremendous rush towards information technology, raced ahead and started developing computer systems.

I remember my first year of teaching. Portable computers were just becoming the vogue and many schools were buying computers and setting them up to do much of the basic administration work in schools. I remember working late into the night programming an Apple by cutting code myself. Much of that development went on in the various Government departments. Small departments were using basic computer facilities. CITEC had to come in and overlay a co-ordinating function on that so that the Government network was a rational system to provide the exchange of information right across the Government network.

CITEC facilitated and encouraged the development of the State's information technology sector in two departments with which I have had some experience. Recently we have seen a tremendous increase in the use of computer facilities in the Family Services Department to allow the many area offices and regional offices access to data information. With clients of the department being so mobile nowadays, as they move round the State, different area officers need access to that information very quickly. That can be achieved only by using information technology and up-to-date systems. As well, a local area network is provided within head office. That is being managed by our own local information technology people under the guidance of CITEC.

Over the years, we have seen the development of many of those resources by CITEC. It has acquired phenomenal assets over the years. The special purpose computer facility that has been provided is well worth a tour of inspection. I have been through it on a couple of occasions. It certainly is a state-of-the-art and very secure facility.

Much emphasis is placed on physical security as well as electronic security. Daily, we read of intrusions into Government computer files. That has not occurred in

Queensland. A very high priority has been given to the security of client-information databases and restrictions are placed on access. Yet, at the same time, we are seeing some very exciting developments occurring in the area of public access to information whilst keeping all those safeguards in place. A number of trials are under way whereby public users can also tap in to the Government information network to gain access to the information, which is to be encouraged.

The development of the Governmentwide electronic messaging system is a step in the right direction. The open system architecture that is now quite commonplace throughout the computer industry provides the opportunity for the various users of governmental information technology services to communicate one with another for the exchange of information from one Government agency to the next. Of course, CITEC is in the forefront of those developments.

I have already alluded to the public access system. Access to that Government information system with the appropriate security, the remote commercial television service and the subsidy of just under \$3m that is provided by the Government for the operation of that remote area service to outback areas have been accepted very well.

Q-Net, which has been purchased by a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bond Corporation, was another State Government initiative that CITEC facilitated and then ran with. Now the network has gone to private enterprise, but the Government is still using it.

The satellite network transponder TSN 11 is used quite frequently for in-service work for Government agencies as well.

We see a very proud record of leadership in the area of information technology. I commend the Ministers responsible for that: the present Minister, the Honourable Huan Fraser, for the initiatives that he has taken in his time, and the Honourable Rob Borbidge, for the leadership that he has shown over many months. That leadership has been conveyed all the way down through the organisation. One of the reasons why we are so proud of the role of CITEC is that outstanding leadership has been provided by its senior officers and very high professionalism has been displayed by the staff.

Mr VAUGHAN (Nudgee) (10.06 p.m.): I preface my remarks by referring to a situation in my electorate that is causing some concern to my constituents. I refer to the proposed relocation of an industry that is currently situated at Acacia Ridge. A galvanising plant called Industrial Galvanizers has made an application to the Brisbane City Council to establish a new galvanising plant in Buchanan Road, Banyo. In January of this year, that company made application to the Brisbane City Council for consent to develop a site in Buchanan Road. The area to which the company chose to relocate to is at present zoned General Industry. However, because a galvanising plant is regarded as a noxious industry, the company had to seek special consideration from the Brisbane City Council.

Subsequent to the company's lodging its application with the Brisbane City Council in March, the council's registration board wrote to the company and gave it permission to make an application based on consent to develop its site at Banyo.

In May, the company formally lodged its application for consent to develop with the Brisbane City Council. The necessary signs were placed on the property. There was some suggestion that they were not placed in accordance with the council's requirements; however, be that as it may, the proposal was advertised and it has caused much concern to residents in the area.

The proposed site is about 400 metres from the residential area of Banyo. It will be in the path of the prevailing winds. Because of their concern about the likely adverse effects of the industry which, as I say, is regarded as a noxious industry, the residents of Banyo have signed petitions and served them on the Brisbane City Council. Letters from more than 600 residents have been sent to the managing director of Industrial Galvanizers asking him to withdraw his application to the Brisbane City Council and to relocate in a Noxious Industry zone. However, at present all this has been to no

avail. There has been no response from the company, and the Brisbane City Council is saying that it is relying on the Department of Environment.

I have written to the Minister and informed him that the council contends that it requires permits from the Department of Environment in relation to air pollution and water pollution and that, upon receipt of those permits, the council feels that it will grant the company's application.

The residents of Banyo are concerned that this industry, which is a noxious industry, will be the thin end of the wedge and that there will be nothing to prevent other noxious industries moving into the area. They are concerned about the proximity of the industry to the residential area. Any fumes will be carried by the prevailing winds.

The company maintains that it will abide by the requirements regarding air pollution and water pollution control. That is all right now but what about five or six years down the track? It is very difficult to police these things. There have been instances in the area of companies not abiding by the anti-pollution laws. Of course, they breach the laws in the early hours of the morning when it is very difficult to detect the breaches. The residents are concerned that if this industry is allowed to relocate in Banyo, it will have an adverse effect on the community.

The airport floodway is a major canal drainage system for a large part of Brisbane and a prolific breeding-ground for fish and crabs. I have tried to have that natural breeding-ground declared a sanctuary but at present the Government will not do that. A creek runs into that canal, and there is a fear that if any pollutants escape from the galvanising plant they will get into that canal and have an adverse effect on the area.

There is also another problem. I understand that an injunction has been taken out against Industrial Galvanizers by a Gold Coast developer who is developing an industrial estate zoned General Industry adjacent to the proposed location of this galvanising plant. That developer is concerned that, because of this plant, the price that he was going to be able to demand for the properties that he is developing will be depreciated. The surrounding general industries are also concerned about this plant moving into the area.

The extent of the residents' concern is demonstrated by the fact that more than 600 of them have signed petitions and written to the managing director of the company. Certain areas of Brisbane are zoned for noxious industries, yet this company is trying to locate a noxious industry in a General Industry zone. As I have said, the site is very close to a residential area, and it is quite a large residential area. Not only the people of Banyo but also the people of Nudgee and the surrounding areas are concerned about the plant moving into this area.

Now that I have dealt with a matter that directly affects my electorate, I want to move on to another subject. In the presentation of his Estimates, the Minister referred to a number of industries and the development that is taking place or will occur in the State. He rattled off quite a number of industries throughout the State.

In 1986, also just prior to a State election, the Government moved around the State and referred to the number of industries that were going to come to Queensland. Subsequently, members of the Opposition referred to them as the phantom industries. I have a list of them. In prefacing their remarks about the industries that were going to come to the State, from time to time various Ministers referred to the millions of dollars—

Mr Borbidge: Is this the same speech you made in 1986?

Mr VAUGHAN: No. Actually, I did not speak about this in 1986. I thought it would be more appropriate to save my comments for an occasion such as this.

I can remember the member for Cairns making a speech in which he totalled up the worth of that development and referred to the thousands of jobs that it was claimed would be created.

Mr Davis: They used to put out booklets.

Mr VAUGHAN: I have got some of those booklets with me. They have been out of print for a while. I have not seen one for some time. However, I have one here that was put out in 1980. It makes mention of quite a number of industries that have yet to come on line. I have another booklet that came out in 1983. If other booklets have come out, they must be back in my electorate office. However, I had these two stashed away, waiting for an opportunity such as this.

I have a list of phantom projects for 1986. There was the Bowen alumina refinery. I can remember that one being floated in December 1981. An alumina refinery was going to be built in Bowen. An 800 megawatt power station was going to be built in conjunction with it. That was going to result in \$800m of development and 1 300 jobs. Following closely behind that one was the Bundaberg aluminium smelter, which was going to provide \$1,000m and 2 700 jobs.

Mr Yewdale: That all happened before Mr Borbidge.

Mr VAUGHAN: Yes. Mr Borbidge cannot really be blamed too much for that, because in those days he was a back-bencher.

Mr Davis: Why not put it onto Huan Fraser?

Mr VAUGHAN: The Minister will have the opportunity of replying.

There was the Alcan aluminium smelter. It was only going to be a small project—\$250m and 1 400 jobs. Not one coke plant but two coke plants were proposed—one at Gladstone and one at Mackay. Those projects were going to be worth \$1,200m each, and create 1 900 jobs. Then, of course, there was the shale-oil project. In April 1981, I can recall that Parliament sat late one night to debate the Rundle shale-oil legislation. The Government was talking about billions of litres of oil being produced from shale and thousands of jobs being created. There was the Condor, the Rundle and the Julia Creek shale-oil projects. The Rundle project is going to be recycled and it will be brought on line in the late 1990s. I am referring to an article in the *Gladstone Observer* on 21 July 1989, which is a current publication.

The Condor shale-oil project at Proserpine was estimated to cost \$4,000m and create 4 700 jobs. The Rundle shale-oil project was estimated to cost \$4,000m—about the same as the Rundle project—and create between 4 000 and 5 000 jobs. Because the shale-oil project at Julia Creek was located way out in the west, it was estimated to cost \$5.8 billion—a really big project—and create 11 000 jobs in the west.

Mr Davis: I have heard that Boeing are going to move to Queensland.

Mr VAUGHAN: Mr Davis says that he has it on good authority that Boeing Aircraft Corporation is going to pull up its stakes in the United States. Is that going to be announced before the election?

The Millmerran oil-from-coal liquefaction plant and power station was estimated to cost \$3,000m. It was estimated that 12 000 jobs would be created by that project. All honourable members know what happened to the Millmerran power station—the site of the proposed power station was shifted to Tarong. Of course, it did not have any impact on the electorate of Barambah—no way! It was not affected at all.

Then there was the Wandoan oil from coal conversion and the steel-mill at Gladstone. I heard the member for Port Curtis, Mr Prest, refer to the steel-mill at Gladstone. That was estimated to cost \$2,000m.

Recently a series of announcements have been made about coal mines. When the former Minister for Mines, Mr Tenni, was with the former Premier in central Queensland doing a beat-up in anticipation of the election date being announced, the statement was made that three or four coal mines were going to be established. One of them was not Duania; it was announced back in 1986. That has gone on the back burner. One project announced was the Ensham coal mine. There is a possibility that it will get off the ground. However, the operators are encountering some problems with their joint venturers.

There was the Bradfield scheme, which is the baby of the present Minister for Mines and Energy, Mr Katter. He is always talking about the Bradfield scheme. In the Chamber recently, he was having second thoughts about the Tully/Millstream hydroelectric project. Considering the extent to which Mr Katter changes policies from time to time, it could very well be that the Tully/Millstream hydroelectric power station project may not go ahead. Ultimately, the Minister may decide to run the water into the inland areas—

Mr Hamill: Has he given up the idea of blowing a hole in the Great Dividing Range?

Mr VAUGHAN: No. He might even work out some way of tunnelling through the bottom of the Tully/Millstream hydroelectric power station project and pumping that water back out west.

Another phantom project was the Western Australia-Queensland rail link. A railway line was going to run across Queensland, through the Northern Territory and across to Western Australia. Coal was going to be carted across the top part of Queensland, through the Northern Territory and across to Western Australia. Iron ore was going to be brought back from Western Australia for the proposed steel-mill in Gladstone. There was also talk about a Northern Territory-Queensland rail link, which was estimated to cost \$700m. Then there was the Redcliffe rail link. It is a pity that the member for Redcliffe, Mr White, is not in the Chamber. The Redcliffe rail link was estimated to cost only \$20m. However, honourable members have been assured that it is still a possibility, but it might be built in the year 2000 or later. Somewhere along the line the Government will get round to that.

The Government was going to build a rail tunnel through the Toowoomba range. The Macalister coal deposits were going to be developed. Of course, the Millmerran and Wandoan coal would have come down through there, too. All the oil that was going to be produced at the Millmerran oil/coal liquefaction plant and the Wandoan coal/oil conversion plant was going to come down through the Toowoomba rail tunnel.

The Stradbroke bridge proposal has been kicked around for some time. A palm oil project was proposed in north Queensland. Was Dr Shrian Oskar involved in that? There was no estimate of the cost of that project. The Government promoted it as a project that would cost millions of dollars and create an estimated 1 200 jobs.

Mr Davis: What about the man with the car that ran on water?

Mr VAUGHAN: The honourable member should hold on; I will get round to that one. There was the atomic plant, or the uranium enrichment plant. At one time that was going to be built at Beaudesert; then it was going to be built at Caboolture. It was estimated to cost \$3,000m and create only 500 jobs. Then, of course, there was the hydrogen car. All honourable members remember the hydrogen car down in King George Square. The Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, poured the can of water into the tank. When it came to the time to start the car, no-one could find the key. The man with the hydrogen car, Mr Horvath, could not find the key. How very fortunate it was that he was unable to find the key to start up the hydrogen car and run it around King George Square!

Numerous tourist industry jobs were created by initiatives such as Enterprise Queensland and Quality Queensland.

Mr Smith: That's the latest one.

Mr VAUGHAN: Quality Queensland is the latest one.

I did not mention Katies at Beenleigh and the BMW car plant. The Boyne Island smelter looks like it might be a bit of a goer. To ensure that that smelter is constructed the Government is going to sell the Gladstone Power Station for a mere \$500m.

Other speakers mentioned projects in north Queensland. The member for Townsville spoke at length about the establishment of industry in north Queensland. I have always

been concerned about the lack of electricity supply in that region. The Collinsville Power Station was not very big and the availability of its electricity supply was spasmodic. The north also has the power stations at Barron Gorge and Kareeya. It has no other generating capacity other than a small station at Mackay.

In the main, power to north Queensland is supplied by south-east Queensland. On numerous occasions in the past I have advocated that the next power station after Stanwell should be located in north Queensland to give that area greater security of power supply.

According to my calculations, north Queensland consumes 10 per cent of the State's generating output but it is only capable of generating 20 per cent of that consumption through hydro power stations. In order to attract industry to north Queensland—particularly big industry—a secure electricity supply is essential. Recently mention has been made of a \$500m zinc refinery that is to be built in Townsville. After the forthcoming election the State Labor Government will give priority to establishing a secure electricity supply in north Queensland. A suitable site for a power station is available outside Bowen.

Time expired.

Mr HINTON (Broadsound) (10.26 p.m.): I am pleased to join in this debate and to welcome the new Minister, Huan Fraser, as the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology. I am quite sure that with his background, particularly in the rural, urban and industrial sectors, and his experience in local government, he will do great credit to his portfolio. To date Mr Fraser's progress has demonstrated that he is a man of considerable calibre.

The member for Nudgee bagged all of the Queensland projects that did not proceed. Honourable members have had a laugh at the hydrogen car.

Mr Hobbs: All drivel.

Mr HINTON: It was not all drivel. I have to give credit where it is due.

The Government believed that many of those proposals that the honourable member mentioned would proceed. However, during economic recessions and when a Federal Labor Government is in power, things do not always go as well as one would expect. The honourable member for Port Curtis was chortling away about the projects that did not proceed.

The member for Nudgee failed to mention the projects that are proceeding in my area. I was pleased that he mentioned the Boyne Island smelter, but he forgot to mention the \$80m ICI complex at Gladstone and the \$50m sodium cyanide plant that are under way. Although members of the Government were interjecting, the member for Nudgee did not want to mention the gas pipeline that the Government is building between Wallumbilla and Gladstone and north to Rockhampton and Yaamba, which will be the greatest single stimulus to industrial development that has ever occurred in central Queensland.

Mr Vaughan: Look at those books.

Mr HINTON: The honourable member did not mention the pluses. Like a good Labor man he mentioned only the negatives—a practice which is followed by Opposition members.

Recently in this Chamber, Mr Goss, the Leader of the Opposition, said that the construction of that pipeline was a waste of scarce Government funds. He said that he was opposed to that project and that he would not introduce that development into central Queensland. Mr Goss said that private enterprise should undertake that project; but he knows that, for a long time, that project was open to private enterprise but that no capital was available.

The Queensland Government is putting its money where its mouth is and is constructing that pipeline to provide the infrastructure for industry in central Queensland, but our friends on the socialist benches are knocking it. The Opposition is against the biggest single project that has ever been undertaken in central Queensland. I assure Opposition members that the people of central Queensland will know about that and that they will hear about nothing else all the way to the State election. It is very important that they are aware of the Labor Party's attitude towards development in central Queensland.

Our friend did not mention the \$120m Kunwarara magnesia project that is under way north of Rockhampton and the \$100m Yaamba magnesia project that is likely to get off the ground because the market conditions and the necessary infrastructure are very favourable. A real surge of industrial development is taking place in the Rockhampton region. The driving force behind that surge is the initiative of the Queensland Government. The Government has a great deal of which to be proud.

Also occurring in my electorate is the development of the Rosslyn Bay harbour. That, too, has been stimulated by the Government which, along with private enterprise, has provided \$4.6m for the construction of a northern wall in the harbour to create a \$25m marina, which will be a great boon to tourism. Construction of the wall is nearing completion. Some 600 000 tonnes of rock has been carted to create that wall. That is a project with which I am very proud to be associated. It is very popular in the district.

Some concern has been expressed by people in the area about the road between Yeppoon and Emu Park which, to some extent, has collapsed because of the carting of that rock. I can assure the residents of the area that State Government funds are available for the immediate restoration of that road once the hauling of the rock is completed, which will be about the end of October.

The central Queensland area has always been called the gap in the map as far as development is concerned. Problems have arisen because of Labor-run councils in Rockhampton and Gladstone. They have been contributing factors. The area has also not been promoted adequately. Organisations, particularly in Rockhampton, have competed for development, but a co-ordinated approach has not been taken to the promotion or development of that area.

The Capricorn Tourism Development Association, the Queensland Confederation of Industry and the chambers of commerce have been very helpful. Also of tremendous help have been Government departments such as the Department of Industry Development. TAFE is playing a major role, as also is the CIAE. However, it has been an unco-ordinated approach. That concerned me, so I spoke to the former Premier, Mr Ahern, about it.

A pilot project is now under way. It is unique. A centre of development of regional opportunities is being developed. That is a bringing-together of all the organisations in the area, as well as Government departments, under the umbrella of the CIAE, to provide a facilitating organisation to encourage industrial development in the area and to encourage people from southern States or elsewhere to bring their money into central Queensland. To facilitate this, the Government is providing \$250,000 per annum, plus an additional \$50,000 on a matching grant basis, if in fact that can be achieved by the centre. Up to \$300,000 per annum will be provided for three years, which makes a commitment of \$900,000.

If the pilot project in central Queensland is successful, it will be used as a model for facilitating organisations in other parts of the State. It is on trial. I believe it will be successful. A board comprising prominent business people in the area has been formed. It is being chaired by Mr Geoff Murphy, who was a Queensland businessman of the year. He is a very successful man. The Minister would know him. The project has all the hallmarks of success. We will have to wait and see how it goes. The sunset clause stipulates a period of three years. At the end of that time the organisation will be judged on its merits.

In opening this Estimates debate, the Minister, Mr Fraser, mentioned sand-mining in my electorate. I want to address a few remarks to that matter because it is certainly a very contentious industry in my electorate. At this stage, two major projects are envisaged. I use the word "envisaged" wisely because at this stage both projects are a long way from getting off the ground. The biggest project, which is being undertaken by RZ Mines, is in the Bayfield area north of Yeppoon. If the project does get off the ground, it will involve a \$600m development process in Gladstone that will use up to 300 megawatts of power, which is more than the amount of power that was generated by the Callide A Power Station. That will give honourable members some idea of the size of the project. Whether or not that project gets off the ground will depend on the environmental impact study that that company puts to the Government to determine whether or not the area that will be mined, which comprises the parabolic dunes well behind the foreshores and is covered by heath at present, can be restored.

The company RZ Mines has an excellent environmental record in the Crowdy Bay national park in New South Wales. However, the Government will have to await the results of the environmental impact study before an assessment can be made of whether the Government will endorse this project.

The second sand-mining project in the area is to be carried out by the Pivot group of companies, which put forward a proposal to mine in the Shoalwater Bay military training area north of the Bayfield area, north of Yeppoon. This project is unique in that, because it is in an army area, it is being undertaken not on State land but on Commonwealth land. That means that the decision as to whether or not mining goes ahead is one not for the State Government but for the Commonwealth Government. The Pivot group informed this Government, through the Main Roads Department, that by the end of September it expected a decision from the Commonwealth Government as to whether or not it would be allowed to proceed.

That group produced an environmental impact statement. I have read that statement and I consider it to be a very skimpy and inadequate statement based on 1974 information. It is certainly quite inadequate and would not be accepted by this Government. It was a very poor and inadequate environmental impact statement. However, that group put it forward to the Federal Government.

A month or so ago Senator Richardson visited that area. While he was there he condemned roundly the RZ Mines project, which is still one or two years away from getting off the ground in the Bayfield area. But he did not mention that he was negotiating with the Pivot group, which was seeking approval to mine in the Shoalwater Bay army area. At the time I thought that was very significant; I did not understand the reason for it. It was only subsequently that I have found out the real reason, that is, that the Federal Government has already taken the decision to proceed with mining in the Shoalwater Bay army area. In fact, Senator Richardson is a very close friend of the owner of the Pivot group, Mr Peter Lawrence. They have been close personal friends for decades.

Tonight the member for Cairns spoke about cronyism and made allegations about Holland Constructions. The Labor Party should take a serious look at that Shoalwater Bay proposal. The project demonstrates an absolutely blatant case of cronyism between Peter Lawrence of the Pivot group—one of the big boys of business—and the Federal Labor Government. They are locked together in this project. According to the Federal Labor Government and the local Federal representative, Keith Wright, the approval for the project was to be given in September. What has happened? Approval has been delayed until January next year.

It is strange that approval will be given after the State election. Obviously the Labor Party does not want to get off side with the environmental lobby groups in my electorate and in other areas of Queensland before the State election. If that is not a cynical political ploy and the nastiest piece of cronyism imaginable, I do not know what is. It should be condemned.

It should be made very clear to the people of my electorate, and to members of the public in Queensland generally, exactly what is taking place. I notice that the member for Thuringowa, Mr McElligott, has a look of concern on his face. I am pleased that he is taking notice of what I am saying because it is very important that members of the Labor Party consider this issue very carefully. The people in my electorate do not believe that there is the slightest doubt that the project has already been approved by the Federal Government. It is obvious that the announcement is being delayed until after the State election for cynical political purposes. I do not have the slightest doubt that if the Federal election is brought on earlier than expected, the announcement will be delayed even further until after that election is held.

The project will go ahead on the basis of an environmental impact statement that is totally and utterly inadequate. I have read the report very carefully and I have condemned it. The conservation movement totally condemns the report as inadequate, yet it forms the basis for approval of the project. That is cronyism of the worst possible type. I condemn it.

Mr DAVIS (Brisbane Central) (10.40 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to join in this debate. I am sorry that the new Minister is not in the Chamber. I do not know where he is.

Mr Borbidge: The old Minister is here.

Mr DAVIS: I am glad. I find it amusing that during the last three or four years a trend has developed for Government Ministers to have their faces emblazoned on reports and advertisements.

Mr Cooper: Better his face than yours.

Mr DAVIS: That is a nice comment from the new Premier, especially as his face certainly would not encourage too many bets in the Good Looks Stakes.

The latest publication put out by the Small Business Development Corporation is taking the principle of advertising at face value to its greatest extent. It is typical of the actions of this Government and former National Party Governments.

Mr Hobbs: Who wrote this speech?

Mr DAVIS: Most of the material has been provided by the member for Warrego.

The annual report of the Small Business Development Corporation was presented today. Naturally the Government ensured that the report was circulated after debate on the Estimates commenced. I notice that the report contains a photograph of the previous Minister, Mr Borbidge. To ensure that the new Minister did not miss out, an additional sheet has been included headed, "A Message from the New Minister." It also shows a photograph of the current Minister.

Mr Casey: Has he got his bow-tie on in that one?

Mr DAVIS: No, it is a plain photograph. The new Minister is following the trend, in spite of the fact that he has been a member of the Cabinet for a period of only six weeks. He also managed to have his photograph included in the Goprint report. I do not understand why Ministers have to have their photographs included in reports. What does a photograph of the Minister do to help convey the message contained in an annual report?

I am pleased that the member for Nudgee drew the attention of the Committee to the number of publications circulated by the Government. With only a few months to the next State election, the new projects that the Department of Industry Development is involved in will be announced. As usual, Government members who participated in this debate received their customary spiels from departmental heads and read them during the debate.

Mr Smith: Some of them cannot even keep the pages in order.

Mr DAVIS: That is right. I will give a tip to the new Minister, for future reference. When he provides briefs for his colleagues, he should make sure that the words are not too big and that the speeches are written in small sentences. Obviously some Government members have difficulty with the speeches that they are given.

It is always interesting to listen to National Party members and their running mates, members of the Liberal Party, talking about small businesses and policies of the Federal Labor Government. In one breath the Liberal and National Party members say that members of the Labor Party are socialists and are totally against profit and big business. In the next breath they say that Hawke and big business are running mates and that members of the Labor Party are the friends of big business and large consortiums throughout Australia. I do not think that conservative party members know what the Labor Party is all about.

Mr Casey: We run our own race.

Mr DAVIS: We not only run our own race; we also know where we are going.

Mr Hobbs: You are always running last, too.

Mr DAVIS: The Labor Party does not always run last. It is sad that my political career is drawing to a close. However, I have already informed the member for Warrego that he will not miss me. I have given him an application form so that he can join the former members' club and see me again at some time in the future. I digress to mention that the former members luncheon was held yesterday. I made the comment at that luncheon that I doubted whether there would be sufficient space next year because so many former National Party members would be attending. Because it is my nature to be fair, I can assure members of the National Party that in my role as liaison officer and in organising the luncheon next year, I will look after all the defeated National Party members when they attend former members functions.

I am sad that I will not be a part of the new Government that my colleagues will form at the end of this year, but the Labor Party has the necessary policies in place.

During the debate the honourable member for Warwick mentioned decentralisation and subsidies. He said that he was amazed that the Federal Government would give Kodak \$60m. The reason why the Federal Government gave Kodak \$60m was to ensure that that company remained in Australia. I cannot see the difference between giving a subsidy to one company to maintain employment and giving subsidies for Crown land and transportation. Member after member spoke about roads and tourist projects. It is amazing how this State Government cries poor when it comes to roads. If my memory serves me correctly, six or seven years ago—and my colleague the shadow Minister for Transport will jog my memory if I am wrong—this Government got rid of licensing permit fees. At that time the fees were worth \$43m.

Mr Burreket: Mr Davis——

Mr DAVIS: This is before the honourable member's time. Therefore, I will not charge him with this.

Mr Casey: Tax under the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Act.

Mr DAVIS: No, that is the next part. The licensing permit fees were separate. Six or seven years ago the figure was \$43m and today, with inflation, the figure would be over \$100m. The Government also got rid of the contribution to Main Roads, which at that time was approximately \$9m. If CPI increases are added to that figure, today it would be a very large sum. Huge trucks were allowed to destroy Queensland's roads; yet this crowd has done nothing but aid and abet them.

Mr Hobbs: But Hawke——

Mr DAVIS: I do not know why the honourable member is so worried about the Prime Minister, because he is doing a marvellous job.

Mr Casey: Never mind Hawke. Bjelke-Petersen and Co. then sat on their backsides and cried about it.

Mr DAVIS: I am glad that the honourable member mentioned Mr Bjelke-Petersen. I hope that by the time I leave this Parliament this State will have done the right thing and made sure that Bjelke-Petersen and his ilk are punished for their wrongs.

The honourable member for Nudgee mentioned some of the phantom projects. The newcomers on the Government back bench would not remember the Government's publications; but, unfortunately for them, Opposition members retain the publications containing details of the phantom projects. The DID and other departments published glossy publications that cost thousands of dollars to produce. The publication entitled *Queensland Development* lists a total of 2 542 projects that were either announced or already under construction and it states that all areas of Queensland are continuing to expand rapidly.

Mr Casey: What year is that?

Mr DAVIS: This publication is dated 1980-1983. The Government tried to justify these projects by including almost every allotment, private investment and residential property.

Mr Vaughan did not have time to mention the Redcliffe rail link. I have no doubt that this time the Government will announce another one of its great projects and unearth the Redcliffe rail link. What about the phantom, fabulous port Petersen, which was to cost \$350m?

Mr Casey: It was to be built on some of the worst flood country in Queensland. It was just a myth, as always.

Mr DAVIS: It will be changed this time to either port Fraser or port Cooper. Those are the types of mystical, mythical projects that Queenslanders have come to expect from this National Party Government. When the election is held in the next six, seven or eight weeks, all the fake promises put forward by this Government in its dying days will be revealed.

Mr Casey: Just as long as it is never port Lester, because they tell me he's the next bloke to line up for the leadership.

Mr DAVIS: I know that the National Party has its problems, but never in my wildest dreams would I believe that they would consider Mr Lester to be a leader. I have a newspaper photograph here entitled "Vroom vroom Vince", on which someone has written "law-breaker", because he is sitting on a motorbike without wearing a safety helmet. Someone implied that he did not need a safety helmet. I will not spend too much more time——

Mr Hobbs: Hoorah!

Mr DAVIS: I hear the crowd cheering me from the rear.

I was able to travel overseas with Mr Fraser, carrying out inspections, and I wish him the best for the short time that he holds this portfolio. It will only be a matter of three or four weeks. This will perhaps be my last speech concerning the DID, and it is unfortunate that the six other members of the National Party could not be given a guernsey in the Ministry during the last couple of weeks of this Parliament. Mr Hinton would say, "Yes, please."

Mr Hamill: There may be a few more of them.

Mr DAVIS: That was to be my final line.

Judging by the revelations on the 8.30 news about certain members who have been asked, "Please explain.", those six members could possibly be in the next Cabinet. It would be nice to be able to say that every member on the Government side of the

Chamber, including Mr Hobbs and Billy Newton, had been Ministers. It would go down in the *Guinness Book of Records* that every member of the National Party in the Forty-fifth Parliament of Queensland ended up having been a Minister. It would be a nice, fitting farewell if this National Party was kicked out of office.

Mr Casey: Do you think that Mr Hinton will have to have a stomach graft, as Mr Stoneman did?

Mr DAVIS: No, I do not think so.

In all seriousness, I congratulate the Minister on the presentation of his Estimates and I hope he enjoys his last few days in office.

Hon. H. D. J. FRASER (Springwood—Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology) (10.53 p.m.): Firstly, I would like to thank all those who contributed to the debate this afternoon and tonight, especially the honourable member for Brisbane Central. I had the pleasure of being on a trip with him and enjoying his company. I hope that honourable members opposite have much more business expertise than the honourable member for Brisbane Central. The honourable member for Everton praised the business acumen of the honourable member for Brisbane Central concerning service stations and taxis. I saw the honourable member purchase a port that was fitted with 747 wheels and he was nearly booked in South Korea for driving it down the street.

The debate showed quite clearly how importantly we all rate the development of industry in this State. I found, overall, that it was in fact a strong endorsement of the work of my department and the record of achievement of this Government in broadening and deepening our economic base.

Mr McElligott: Obviously you were not here.

Mr FRASER: I was here for some of it.

I thank the members on our side of politics for their positive support. I ask them to accept that I have taken on board their comments and contributions, and I will concentrate my reply on the rather ragged contributions from the benches opposite—except that of the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who is a mate of mine.

When there was not strong endorsement of this Government's work, I thought the debate quickly degenerated into waffle. When the first member opposite to speak managed to escape from his mid-80s time warp, in which he seemed to be trapped, he turned almost immediately to that old ALP crutch, the need for more money. If nothing else, this debate has brought forward firm denials by the Opposition of a fuel tax and a financial institutions duty. I am glad that two members opposite made that denial. I would like to hear the Leader of the Opposition make such a denial in this Chamber. In fact, our opponents are promising no new taxes, it seems. Then the Opposition complains that more money is needed for the Department of Industry Development. It also promises more money for police, for education, for nurses, for roads—in fact, for everything.

Mr Goss: I give that commitment.

Mr FRASER: Good.

As the honourable member is interjecting, why does he not stand up and make the statement, "I give an undertaking to the people of Queensland that, in my first term in office, if ever I get there, I will not introduce a fuel tax or a financial institutions duty."

Mr Goss: I give that undertaking.

Mr FRASER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. That is something that I have been able to extract.

Mr Goss: Now you can stop peddling those lies and drivell around the State.

Mr FRASER: Now the Leader of the Opposition has given an undertaking——

Mr Goss: Otherwise I will give you curry in your campaign.

Mr FRASER: I welcome curry from the honourable member. What I used was a reported interview with him in the *Business Reporter*.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! The Minister will address the Chair and the Leader of the Opposition will discontinue his interjections.

Mr FRASER: Thank you, Mr Temporary Chairman. I apologise.

The ALP should come clean for once and state where its money is coming from. Of course, we all want more money, but this Government also believes in low taxes, small Government and restraint. This is the philosophy now being learnt belatedly by the ALP in Canberra. It is a pity that the lesson has not been learnt opposite.

But back to the mid-80s time warp of the Opposition. The shadow Minister claimed that little has changed in industry development since 1985. This ignores the establishment of the National Industries Extension Service in 1987. If the honourable member had been listening, he would have heard that more than 400 companies have been assisted under the scheme and have become eligible to receive some \$2.25m under the NIES consultancy subsidy scheme. He ignores the establishment of the Queensland Innovation Centre, the Queensland Centre for the Development of Entrepreneurs and the Queensland Enterprise Workshop, also under the NIES scheme.

He ignores the establishment of a defence, aerospace and offsets branch within the Department of Industry Development to maximise the opportunities for Queensland industry in the defence and offsets areas. Prior to the establishment of the branch, fewer than 30 Queensland firms were recorded with the Department of Defence. Owing to the work of the branch, more than 120 firms are now listed, and the branch has been active in promoting the capabilities of Queensland firms in relation to the Anzac ships project and the submarine project for the Royal Australia Navy.

The shadow Minister ignores the establishment of the International Business Centre, which has already been responsible for the Queensland/Shanghai relationship, and the promotion of investment opportunities in Queensland of which Fisher and Paykel and China Steel Corporation are but two examples of the type of industry that is being attracted. He ignores the establishment of the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone based on Townsville and Cairns, to which I referred in my speech. Similarly, the Opposition ignores the establishment of the Queensland Business Licence Information Centre. These are only some of the functions that are now being handled by the department, all having been introduced since 1985. One wonders where the Opposition has been while all of this has been going on.

The Opposition was concerned that adequate land was available for worthy industry. During 1988-89, more than \$11m was spent on the acquisition and development of Crown industrial estates and the construction of factory buildings. Applications for land were received from 236 firms. Of them, 176 met the department's criteria and were offered fully serviced industrial sites to establish manufacturing projects.

Mr Smith: It's been a scandal and you know it.

Mr FRASER: I do not.

In addition, the Gold Coast experienced the highest demand, with 30 sites allocated. Estates in Brisbane, Cairns and the Sunshine Coast were also in demand. Based on planning figures provided by the successful applicants, the projects will employ 2 750 people and involve an investment of \$120m. They are facts and figures and I challenge honourable members opposite to deny them.

The maintenance of strategic reserves of land is essential to the operation of the program. The department currently holds 1 150 hectares of land suitable for future development into Crown industrial estates.

Mr Smith: Where?

Mr FRASER: All over Queensland.

The main emphasis for estate development in 1989-90 will be on areas of high demand, particularly in the greater Brisbane area, Cairns, the Gold Coast and Gladstone. Careful consideration will be given to the purchase of a larger parcel of land on the Gold Coast. This is the major land purchase proposed for the next financial year.

As I mentioned in the presentation of the Estimates, a review of the program's operation will focus on the increasing financial commitment required to continue the program in its present form. The options available to enhance the benefits for industry development and reduce net costs will be examined.

The Opposition claims that it has not seen our latest publication on the State's major development projects and proposals—even after it has bunged on every cheap trick in politics about phantom projects and so-called Government secrecy. I have in my hand the ninth edition of the annual publication *Major Development Projects and Proposals in Queensland*, which was released in July 1989 and was prepared by the Department of Industry Development as a reference on major ongoing and potential resource-related projects in this State. The Opposition gets confused because it does not understand the difference between a project and a proposal. Members of the Opposition are calling the proposals phantom projects. If they read through that document, they will see the projects that have been established.

Mr Smith: If you believe in that, you believe in the tooth fairy.

Mr FRASER: I believe in my department. I would feel sorry for that department if, by some terrible misfortune, the honourable member were ever in charge of it.

That publication reports on 99 projects related to manufacturing, minerals-processing, mining and related infrastructure. Included in the publication are projects generally requiring a capital investment in excess of \$10m.

The first classification of projects in the book relates to those completed during 1988. That section outlines the 17 projects that were completed during 1988.

Mr De Lacy: Why do you put them in the book? Who does that help?

Mr FRASER: That helps potential manufacturers and investors coming into Queensland. I thought that that would be common knowledge to anyone.

The second classification in the publication relates to projects committed and outlines the 42 projects on which development is proceeding or imminent. The third classification relates to projects under study and outlines the 40 projects to which considerable effort has been, or is currently being, directed to detailed feasibility evaluations. Although projects included in that category may not be proceeding in the near future, substantial project evaluation has been completed to enable fairly rapid movement to implementation should an investment decision be made.

I ask the Opposition to treat that document as it is intended—as a document for public information rather than as grounds for yet another political stunt bunged on for a gullible and sympathetic media.

The Opposition referred to the Western Australian equivalent of the TAB system. That is the responsibility of my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Racing. However, I am informed that the Viatel system used in Western Australia is only a limited service at this stage. The system has been reviewed by the Queensland TAB, which currently does not believe the limited service is warranted in this State.

Reference was made to Sperry-Rand personal computers. Those personal computers were purchased many years ago by the Education Department and, as such, were outside the responsibility of my department. However, it would be fair to say that the original personal computers were installed in remote areas of Queensland—areas that notoriously

have been serviced by bad power supplies. It was not surprising, therefore, that early problems were experienced with the power devices in the personal computers. That would have occurred regardless of whether they were Sperry-Rand or any other make. I am informed that, of the 3000 Sperry-Rand personal computers purchased by the Education Department, after four years of service only 47—less than 2 per cent—of the devices have had to be replaced, and those were in areas with no air-conditioning and poor power service.

Mr Smith: The cost of those repairs has been dramatic—quite dramatic.

Mr FRASER: That puts paid to Mr Smith's argument about the computers.

Mr Smith: No, I'm saying you were conned in that deal.

Mr FRASER: The honourable member does not know what he is talking about.

The Sperry-Rand personal computers were state of the art at the time of purchase and placed the Queensland Education Department at the forefront of computers in schools. Mr Smith is trying to say that we should have left our kids illiterate in computers.

Mr Smith: You were conned in that deal.

Mr FRASER: No, we were not conned. I just gave the figures. The honourable member is attempting to say that the children in country areas of Queensland are not entitled to the same education as those in the urban areas.

Mr Smith: No, you are saying that; I'm not.

Mr FRASER: No, the honourable member is.

The local personal computer company, Cleveland, has benefited from that early experience and now produces a robust, reliable unit for local use and export.

The member for Thuringowa commented on the Retail Shop Leases Act. That pioneering legislation was the first of its type in Australia and was introduced in 1984 by the Queensland Government. From time to time, it has been amended to meet the changes in the market-place. At present it is under consideration for further amendments, which will be brought before Parliament when all submissions on it have been fully considered. Although that Act is working successfully, such pioneering legislation will continue to need amendment from time to time.

In relation to the matter raised about the extension of the Caboolture Airport, I advise that the Department of Industry Development has had no involvement with any work in that area.

Mr McElligott: They funded it.

Mr FRASER: I am saying that my department had no involvement whatsoever. I make that statement to put paid to the proposition put forward by Opposition members.

The honourable member for Everton suggested that Q-Net was a failure and that Telecom could have provided the services far cheaper. The fact is that some four years after we introduced Q-Net, Telecom still does not provide services to some of the remote areas of Queensland, and the only telephone service that those Queenslanders receive is via Q-Net. Having corrected the honourable member on that point, let me add that the State Government is still a large user of Telecom services. However, the aim of the Government is to provide the tax-payer of Queensland with the most cost-effective and technically efficient communication services. I believe that that can be achieved best not by a Telecom monopoly but by the existence of competition in the telecommunications market-place. Q-Net provides that competition.

I turn now to the honourable member's comments on technology parks. He should be aware that there is normally a lead-time between the development of an industrial estate and the attraction of suitable industry. It is no different with technology parks. In that respect, the Queensland experience mirrors that of similar parks around the

world. However, the department's technology parks are now attracting a core of firms which, because of their very nature, will result in the establishment of further firms. Two examples of the type of firms that are now being attracted include William Cook and Leeds and Northrup on the Brisbane technology park. If anybody believes that the value of technology parks is in real estate, he has been sadly misled. The value of technology parks is in the long-term accrued benefit of the knowledge and exchange of knowledge between park residents. That is the idea of establishing technology parks.

Investigations are well advanced into the construction of a research/incubator centre on the Mount Gravatt research park. Griffith University has identified opportunities for contract research in a number of disciplines and will lease space in the centre. The opportunity also exists to provide a number of incubator units to foster commercially oriented research in Queensland. A planning group has been established to examine the feasibility of incubator units.

Assistance to technology firms

No firm can hope to succeed without detailed business planning. Such planning identifies the company's direction and the best means of achieving its goals by establishing a realistic strategy for success. A well-developed business plan will identify strengths and weaknesses in products and operational management, address finance and marketing needs, and closely scrutinise production and human resources. Such assistance is provided to industry by DID through the NIES program. I repeat that some 400 companies—many of them in the technology category—have been assisted to improve their chances of business survival. The Government has also established the Venture Capital Committee through the QIDC and the Queensland Innovation Centre, the latter funded by DID to provide assistance to companies. CITEC also has the capacity to provide consultancy advice, particularly to firms in the computer sector, and will continue to do so.

The member for Bundaberg raised the question of additional enterprise zones. The Government sees the Cape York-North Queensland Enterprise Zone as a trial which, if successful, could be a model for other enterprise zones in the State. The enterprise zones legislation has been drafted as general enterprise zone legislation for this reason. International experience demonstrates that a period of several years is required to assess the degree of success or otherwise of new zones. Therefore, it would not be expected that additional zones in Queensland would be contemplated in the very short term. I refer the member to the extract from the enterprise zone working party report, particularly chapter 4, which deals with the objectives of the zone, and the Enterprise Zones Bill and explanatory notes.

The honourable member complains of departmental underspending in 1987-88 and again in 1988-89. During this time the department underspent on its capital works program. In 1987-88, the Commonwealth Government was contracting loan funds to the States and for a short period the department put in abeyance some of its capital works program. This enabled a reassessment of strategies for the development of Crown industrial estates. However, the Government is unaware of any area that was disadvantaged as a result of this temporary pause. I point out also that an amount of \$2.6m of the underexpenditure was allocated to purchase part of the old Brisbane Airport site. Through Commonwealth Government inactivity, at that stage no commitment could be obtained to purchase any of this surplus land, hence the \$2.6m could not be expended.

The department decided that its industrial estate programs would concentrate on areas of proven demand, that is, those areas experiencing demonstrated high growth. Therefore, in 1988-89 the department set out with an ambitious works program of \$13.96m. Despite record levels of construction days lost due to wet weather, as experienced by all contractors in Queensland that year, the department's actual expenditure on capital works amounted to \$11.3m. At the end of June 1989, work in progress and land purchase commitments amounted to \$4.77m, in addition to the \$11.3m actually expended during the year.

The member spoke of the rights of tenancy of service station proprietors after the expiration of a lease or franchising agreement. This complex area impinges on the field of the law of contract. However, this matter is receiving my attention.

The member for Bundaberg raised the issue of whether the department would consider an application for the lease of land from Simpson's Transport on the Bunda Crown industrial estate in Bundaberg. I confirm that the department's primary objective is to assist manufacturing industry, and it makes no excuses for this. Experience has constantly shown that there is a reasonable supply of land for service industries in coastal regions of the State.

In some instances, the department has received requests from local authorities to resolve issues of a purely town-planning nature. For example, through poor planning procedures, industries have been allowed to commence or expand beside established residential areas. As usual, even when residents have established well after industry in a particular area, it is industry that is always asked to move. In these circumstances it is often the case that the department is pressured to pay for these inappropriate town-planning decisions by allowing non-eligible industries on its estates.

The member for Bundaberg also referred to the Bunda Rifle Club. During 1983, as a routine matter two requests were made by the Department of Industry Development to the Commonwealth for details of the property in question and the asking price. In April 1984, the Commonwealth advised that the land was under preferential offer to the rifle club. At that time the department had 12 allotments ranging from 2 000 square metres to 1.71 hectares available for lease on the Bunda industrial estate, and a further 36 hectares available for future development.

In light of this, the department had no requirements for additional land at Bunda. The department is mindful of holding land reserves for future industrial development. Land reserves in themselves have a cost in both holding charges and management. This has to be balanced against demonstrated take-up trends for existing land. The department is comfortable with its existing and reserve land-holdings in the area and is confident that purchase of additional land when required will not pose a problem in the Bundaberg area.

The member for Port Curtis fired a few cheap shots about the recent delegation to Taiwan for talks with China Steel Corporation. He tried to make an issue of the lack of news arising from the visit. The member should look to the media or his own reading habits. Last Friday the Gladstone media, both press and radio, were informed of the visit. Last week senior officers of DID, Treasury and the Premier's Department returned from Taiwan after presenting a detailed submission arguing Gladstone's case. I am told the information was well received and the Government believes the project is proceeding at an orderly pace. I have invited senior executives of the company to visit Gladstone as soon as they can.

The honourable member for Townsville East has asked a couple of questions about the Small Business Development Corporation. He pre-empted his questions with a series of vague statements about the small-business sector.

Mr Smith: You are wrong.

Mr FRASER: That is understood, because the honourable member would not know much about small business.

Mr Smith: I think you had better get new glasses. It wasn't me; it was the member for Thuringowa. Would you like me to give you the name of my optometrist?

Mr FRASER: No. I apologise to the honourable member for Townsville East. It was Mr McElligott. I was present in the Chamber when he made the statement. I apologise to the honourable member. I make no secret of that. It was Mr McElligott.

Mr De Lacy: It's a terrible slight to put on him, to call him Mr McElligott.

Mr FRASER: I would not think so. Mr McElligott, sitting opposite me, looks a smart sort of gentleman. However, the point is that he did not know how to define a small business. He did not know what could be done to help the small-business sector and he did not know what could be done about the business environment.

This Government has defined a small business for the purposes of its initiatives. That definition is in the Small Business Development Corporation Act and is on page 4 of the SBDC's 1989 annual report, to which he referred in his speech. In response to his difficulty in defining "small business", I remind him that the Queensland Government has adopted the following definition—

“‘Small Business’ means a business undertaking—

- (a) that is wholly owned and operated by an individual person in partnership or by a proprietary company;
- (b) has a relatively small share of the market in which it operates;
- (c) is managed personally by the owner or directors; and
- (d) is not a subsidiary of, or does not form part of any larger business or enterprise.”

“Small-business community” means the aggregate of persons engaged in owning and operating a small business and includes any association or group of such persons formed with a view to protecting or furthering the interests of such persons as the owners of small business.

Small business is very important to Queensland. Some 48.7 per cent of all employment generated in Queensland is generated by small business. That compares with the Australian average of approximately 43.6 per cent. That clearly establishes Queensland as the small-business State of Australia.

Mr McElligott: All of them are going broke.

Mr FRASER: I am glad that the honourable member mentioned that. I would like the honourable member's comments to appear in *Hansard*. I am very glad that he mentioned that small businesses are going broke. Let me tell him what his mates in Canberra have achieved from when they took office in 1983 until the present time. I will tell the honourable member why they are going broke. In 1983, approximately 4 900 businesses were the subject of bankruptcy proceedings. In 1988-89, approximately 9 400 businesses will go into bankruptcy. Shame on his Federal friends in Canberra! Their high-interest policy and their bludgeoning of small businesses is sending those businesses broke.

I wish to refer to the changes to Federal privacy legislation. I am dealing with small business and I am replying to the member for Thuringowa. The Federal Government is proposing to amend that legislation. A couple of days ago in this Chamber I said that the only way a small-businessman will be able to check the credit bona fides of anyone applying for credit is to look at the colour of his eyes. That is what the socialists in Canberra are doing. In terms of overcommitment—to credit and fraud—that will cost Australian business \$500m. As Queensland has 16.8 per cent of Australia's population, it will pick up 16.8 per cent of that debt. We would like to know what Mr Goss and his friends opposite have to say about that.

Mr Hamill: Are you running for Mayor in Logan City?

Mr FRASER: Mr McElligott's query about head office staffing does not take into account some far-reaching programs such as small business in schools. Mr Hamill would not be elected as an alderman in Ipswich.

Mr Hamill: Are you running?

Mr FRASER: No, I am not. But I point out to the honourable member that he would not be elected as an alderman.

This innovative program develops skills for young people still studying at school. Through this program, the corporation is providing input into the small-business studies curriculum in Government and non-Government schools and colleges and promotes business as a subject in schools. Students are taught that profit is not a dirty word—something that seems to be misunderstood in some sections of the community, particularly by the Labor Party. The only time members of the Labor Party do not think that profit is a dirty word is when their big mates, such as Sir Peter Abeles, are getting it.

Mr Temporary Chairman, I assure you that the corporation's services and energy are directed to support private-sector consultants—and not to compete with them. The Queensland Government is a free-enterprise Government.

In conclusion, I again thank the members who contributed to this debate, including all the members opposite. I thank Mr Smith, the Opposition spokesman on Industry, Small Business and Technology, for his kind words. I give an undertaking to him to keep him informed about what is happening.

I assure the Committee that DID and its related agencies remain committed to the strengthening of industry and manufacturing in Queensland. The Government believes that it has the policies, the staff and the commitment to achieve that aim. I believe that the people of Queensland also know that.

At 11.23 p.m.,

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr Booth): Order! By agreement, under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 26 September, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for General Public Services, Department of Industry Development and Economic Services, Department of Industry Development (Consolidated Revenue and Trust and Special Funds), the amounts remaining unvoted for General Public Service, Law, Order and Public Safety, Education, Health, Welfare, Community Services and Housing, Conservation, Recreation and Culture, Transport, Agriculture, Forestry and Water Resources and Economic Services (Consolidated Revenue), the balance remaining unvoted for the Trust and Special Funds Estimates, the balance remaining unvoted for the Loan Fund Estimates, the Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated (Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund) and the Vote on Account for 1990-91.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

	\$
Office of the Minister for Industry, Small Business and Technology (Consolidated Revenue)	440,000
General Public Services, Department of Industry Development (Consolidated Revenue Fund and Trust and Special Funds)	77,006,000
Economic Services, Department of Industry Development (Consolidated Revenue Fund and Trust and Special Funds)	74,796,000
General Public Services, Balance of Estimates (Consolidated Revenue)	1,644,073,000
Law Order and Public Safety (Consolidated Revenue)	570,958,000
Education (Consolidated Revenue)	1,721,033,000
Health (Consolidated Revenue)	1,402,916,000
Welfare, Community Services and Housing (Consolidated Revenue)	236,996,000
Conservation, Recreation and Culture, Balance of Estimates (Consolidated Revenue)	88,063,000

Transport (Consolidated Revenue)	1,381,600,000
Agriculture, Forestry and Water Resources, Balance of Estimates (Consolidated Revenue)	349,533,000
Economic Services, Balance of Estimates (Consolidated Revenue)	441,245,000
Trust and Special Funds Estimates, Balance of Estimates	9,858,091,000
Loan Fund Estimates, Balance of Estimates	109,586,000
Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated (Con- solidated Revenue) 1988-89	3,212,433,000
Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated (Trust and Special Funds) 1988-89	488,779,000
Statement of Unforeseen Expenditure to be Appropriated (Loan Fund) 1988-89	19,582,000
Vote on Account 1990-91	4,425,000,000

Resolutions reported, and ordered to be received on 5 October.

RAILWAY PROPOSAL

Deviation of Standard Gauge Main Line, Southern Connection, to Parkinson; Stanwell Power Station Line; Townsville By-pass Line

Hon. Y. A. CHAPMAN (Pine Rivers—Minister for Transport and Ethnic Affairs)
(11.28 p.m.): I move—

“That Mr Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution—

“That the House approves of the plans and sections and books of reference for the proposed deviation of the standard gauge main line (southern connection) to the proposed new marshalling yard at Parkinson; for the proposed new railway to the Stanwell Power Station; and for the proposed new railway by-pass (causeway connection) at Townsville.’”

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. Y. A. CHAPMAN (Pine Rivers—Minister for Transport and Ethnic Affairs)
(11.29 p.m.): I move—

“That the House approves of the plans and sections and books of reference for the proposed deviation of the standard gauge main line (southern connection) to the proposed new marshalling yard at Parkinson; for the proposed new railway to the Stanwell Power Station; and for the proposed new railway by-pass (causeway connection) at Townsville.”

This Government’s successful implementation of major projects to improve and modernise the railway system in Queensland is a record that is admired not only in this State but also by Governments and respected bodies interstate and overseas.

The recently completed main line electrification is the culmination of a \$1 billion investment in the economy of this State to ensure that Queensland Railways is capable of efficiently and economically transporting Queensland’s huge stocks of export coal, general freight and passengers well into the twenty-first century.

This huge investment is not the end of the story. Other major railway projects that this Government is committed to and that are now under way include—

- the \$450m expansion of the Brisbane suburban railway system, including construction of a new high-speed commuter railway between the Gold Coast

and Brisbane, construction of new inner-city tunnels, and the duplication of track between Kuraby and Beenleigh;

- the purchase of additional suburban passenger rolling-stock, including new 160 km/h passenger trains to operate on the Gold Coast railway;
- the \$100m upgrading of safe working systems throughout the State rail network, including the provision of new signalling equipment and modifications to locomotives; and
- the relocation of the Roma Street freight terminal to Acacia Ridge to provide new integrated and efficient freight facilities and to permit the commercial redevelopment of the existing Roma Street goods yard.

As honourable members can clearly see, this Government does not rest on its laurels but rather takes the initiative and gets the job done for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

The proposals that I have put before the Committee today represent further evidence of this Government's commitment to an efficient and competitive railway system. The first proposal before the Committee provides for a 1 kilometre deviation of the standard-gauge railway south of Johnson Road to provide a connection from the south into the site of a future marshalling yard at Parkinson. The Parkinson site was purchased by the Railway Department in 1984 and is intended ultimately to be developed to serve as the overflow facility for the expanding Acacia Ridge freight terminal.

Queensland Railways' proven success in the freight-transportation business is reflected in the steadily increasing growth in rail traffic into and out of the Acacia Ridge yard and surrounding private industrial estates that are served by rail. The tonnage of interstate traffic being hauled annually through Acacia Ridge has experienced an 18 per cent per annum average growth in the last five years, and a high growth rate is expected to continue in the future.

Land around Acacia Ridge is now largely built out, and development of the Parkinson site is the only viable option for accommodating this expanding interstate rail-freight business in the long term. The provision, at an appropriate future time, of new facilities at Parkinson will be an essential ingredient if Queensland Railways is to meet its customers' demands and to maintain its competitiveness in the transportation marketplace.

The reserving of a southern connection from the existing main line into the yard as proposed in the report before the Committee is essential for the rational development and the efficient operation of the future Parkinson marshalling yard. It is imperative that the land required for this connection be acquired without further delay before surrounding land-development pressures render the proposed acquisition uneconomic, thereby possibly jeopardising the Railway Department's capacity for future expansion of its interstate freight-handling capability. I am sure that honourable members opposite would not wish to put at risk a proposal that will, when fully developed, be of significant benefit to this State.

The second proposal before the Committee is for a 5.1 kilometre balloon loop to enable coal to be delivered for use in the Stanwell power station in central Queensland. The construction of the Stanwell power station is currently proceeding in accordance with a program that allows for commencement of electricity production in 1993. At peak production, an estimated 3.5 million tonnes of coal per annum will be required to be delivered to the power station, and this can best be achieved by use of rail services and facilities.

The haulage of vast quantities of export coal to central Queensland ports using modern electric locomotives has proven itself as a fast and efficient means of transportation. Queensland's heavy-haul operations rank with the best in the world. Extension of these operations to Stanwell will further enhance the role that rail transport is playing in the development of this State. Coupled with this modern haulage operation will be the provision of an in-motion coal-unloading facility designed to unload bottom-dump wagons at rates of up to 4 000 tonnes per hour. The construction of the new balloon

loop will allow for non-stop operation with a minimum train turn-round time in order to minimise rolling-stock requirements and to increase the overall operational efficiency. The continuing progressive development of this State depends on the construction of the new Stanwell power station and the provision of rail facilities as proposed in the report before the Committee is an essential component of this development.

I now address the third and final proposal before this Committee, which provides for a by-pass of Townsville station for rail traffic between the port of Townsville and northern areas. Townsville and surrounds is a growing region, well represented by Tony Burreket, and the port of Townsville provides a significant freight destination for large volumes of import and export products, particularly imported nickel ore. There is also potential for a substantial increase in freight volumes handled through the port of Townsville.

As honourable members would no doubt be aware, the reserves of nickel ore from the Greenvale mine are all but depleted and Queensland Nickel is at present importing 1 million tonnes per annum of nickel ore through the port of Townsville. The ore is then hauled north by rail for processing at the nickel treatment plant at Yabulu. Although this is an interim arrangement pending Queensland Nickel's consideration of alternative options, the benefits that this ore traffic brings to Townsville, the region and the State are significant.

To enhance the movement of freight, including this nickel ore, to and from the port, the existing circuitous route through Townsville station must be eliminated and that is what the proposed new by-pass will achieve.

Mr Hamill: What should you do about the Halifax Bay situation in relation to the ore?

Mrs CHAPMAN: The Government is always worried about conservation.

The new connection will enable the elimination of reverse shunting of trains entering and leaving the port area, which will result in improved travel times and a more efficient operation. It also facilitates the provision of a future connection to enable through traffic on the North Coast Line to by-pass the existing Townsville station.

Townsville will also benefit by the reduction in road delays currently caused by train movements across busy level crossings on Charters Towers Road and Sturt Street. In the longer term, the construction of this new connection, together with other rail improvements, may free up valuable railway land in Townsville for sale and redevelopment.

The elimination of antiquated operational arrangements in Townsville and throughout the State's rail network is a goal to which this Government is firmly committed. The further development potential of Townsville's port is dependent upon the availability of efficient rail transportation services and facilities. The proposal before the Committee is crucial to the achievement of this potential.

Honourable members would by now appreciate the significance of these three proposals. I have no hesitation in recommending them to the Committee.

Mr HAMILL (Ipswich) (11.39 p.m.): At the outset I wish to comment on a procedural matter. It is unfortunate that the Committee has before it three separate proposals that are to be dealt with under one motion. Although the Opposition is pleased to support the proposals, I nevertheless believe that any honourable member who has reservations about one or other of the propositions would have benefited if the Minister had brought each one before the Committee to be considered as a separate motion. However, as I say, the Opposition does not oppose these measures.

The Labor Party's support for this State's transport system and for rail in particular is clearly on the record. The Opposition has produced policies that are directly related to the future development of this State's rail system. I am pleased to note that the measures being considered this evening recognise the value of rail as an important part of Queensland's transport system. They will play an important role in the movement of

bulk commodities throughout this State. The deviation proposed for the rail line at Townsville is a clear demonstration of that role. It also demonstrates the importance of networking the rail system with other forms of transport.

From time to time the Opposition has been critical of successive National Party Governments linking responsibilities that have no common basis whatsoever. The Minister's portfolio is an example of the combination of matters that have no inherent link. The Minister for Transport also has responsibility for Ethnic Affairs. Some of the wags around Parliament have made some very disparaging comments about what might be the link between those two areas of Government. I will leave that to the imagination of honourable members.

The Opposition has certainly made it clear that transport is vital to the affairs of this State. It is the life-blood of Queensland's export industries. Members of the Labor Party believe very strongly that this State's transport system would be enhanced by interrelated responsibilities of Government being combined under the Transport portfolio. I refer to the combination of ports, the road system, the rail system and the regulation of transport in general. The Labor Party is committed to that course. I believe that combining related areas of Government will increase the efficiency of the State's transport operations.

In addressing the particular issues before the Committee, I state at the outset that I am pleased to note the Minister has committed the Government to the acquisition of additional rolling-stock for use on the metropolitan and suburban rail system. I hope that the present Minister will not repeat the problem-solving approach adopted by her predecessor with respect to overcrowding on suburban lines. I was astounded that the vision of excellence that the National Party had for rail commuters in this State meant that seats would be removed from carriages to solve overcrowding and squeeze more people into already overburdened trains. I hope that, by virtue of the acquisition of additional rolling-stock, those sorts of problems will be overcome.

Mr Newton: Have you been to Japan? There's no seating on trains in Japan. They just push them into the carriages.

Mr HAMILL: I know that the member for Glass House would not be welcome on the trains during peak hours. I hope that he travels off peak to allow other people the greater use of the facility of the trains during peak hours.

Mr Smith: That's right. And I hope that he is charged at the proper rate.

Mr HAMILL: I do not know that he would be classified as roadside. These days, Queensland Railways are less willing to take on roadside. I feel sure that the member for Glass House would have to find some other form of transportation. However, I digress.

Very important issues are vitally linked to the propositions that are before the Committee this evening. Relocation of the standard gauge line at Parkinson to facilitate the expansion of the marshalling yard and the goods yard that exist at Acacia Ridge is a very important development. The Opposition acknowledges the benefits to be gained by removal or relocation of the goods yards from Roma Street. It has been a matter of concern to the Labor Party to ensure that Queensland's rail system will benefit from having new marshalling yards and new goods yards. By virtue of those benefits, the Opposition hopes that Queensland Railways will attract more business.

By way of interjection, I tried to ask the Minister whether, under this National Party Government, there is a future for the establishment of a link to the port of Brisbane at Fisherman Islands by a standard gauge line. Over the years, that matter has been the subject of some controversy. It had been proposed that a line would run from an area such as Parkinson through Brisbane's southern suburbs to the port of Brisbane at Fisherman Islands. Many people who live in the southern suburbs of Brisbane are anxious to know the Minister's intentions with respect to that project. The Opposition has placed on record that it believes that the port of Brisbane needs to be linked to the national standard gauge railway network.

Mr Lee: Is this about Townsville, or where?

Mr HAMILL: The honourable member for Yeronga is lost as usual.

The Opposition has stated that that link ought to be built along the existing rail alignment by the laying of an additional line to facilitate a dual-gauge link to the port of Brisbane on Fisherman Islands. This will be a priority of a Goss Labor Government and, as Minister for Transport in that Government, I will be delighted to establish that link. I might even invite the former member for Yeronga—which is what he will be at that time—along to the opening ceremony.

Mr Beard: Will you give him a ride in your special carriage?

Mr HAMILL: Under a Goss Government he will be able to use his seniors card and get a free ride. A standard gauge line would be a priority of a Labor Government.

Associated with this project is the future of the Roma Street site itself, which is valuable real estate. It is as large as the Expo site. Over a number of months I have been very critical about the amount of secrecy that has shrouded the Government's intentions for the Roma Street goods yards. At one time the former Minister, Mr McKechnie, stated that there would not be a casino, but subsequently the Government is considering the establishment of a casino on that site.

Mr McKECHNIE: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member said that at one stage I stated that there would not be a casino on the Roma Street site. I find that offensive and ask him to withdraw it, because I did not rule out the possibility of a casino on the Roma Street site. I ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member for Carnarvon wishes the words to be withdrawn.

Mr HAMILL: I do not want to offend the member for Carnarvon and withdraw any words that he finds offensive.

The Government has shrouded the future of the Roma Street site in considerable secrecy. It is a very valuable site. I ask several questions: will the site be handed over to some of the Government's developer cronies for a pittance; will the Government ensure that Queenslanders get a fair return on their land; will the Railway Department get a fair return on the redevelopment on that site; will there be a repeat performance of the River City 2000 consortium and will it be relocated to the north side of the river; and are we to see constructed the multistorey building and convention centre that Sir Frank Moore's consortium sought to establish on the Expo site? That company's preferred-developer status was withdrawn after considerable public outcry. All I ask is that the Minister present information to this Chamber, and in turn to the people of Queensland and Brisbane, as to exactly what the Government's plans are for the Roma Street site. We are sick and tired of cushy deals done behind closed doors by a Government that never knows when to extricate the business of Government from commercial interests and its own political interests. It is incumbent upon the Minister to inform the people of Queensland what is in fact intended for the Roma Street site.

The Opposition has no difficulty with the construction of the balloon loop to the Stanwell power station. It makes a great deal of sense because it facilitates the bulk movement of coal by rail to the power station. It is a further demonstration of the comparative advantages which rail transport can offer to those people wishing to move large quantities of a commodity such as coal, or, in the case of the Townsville loop, nickel ore.

This leads me to the question of Townsville itself. Anyone who has travelled on the north coast railway line through Townsville has seen the current situation prevailing in the goods yards in Townsville and realised that there is ample scope for improvement in the rail operations through that city. I am delighted that the Government has recognised that rail plays an important role in the movement of nickel ore. The relationship between

the port facility and the rail system has been clearly demonstrated. There need to be efficient linkages with Queensland's ports and the movement of nickel ore is the catalyst that has led to this decision being made. I hold the fervent hope that this will not end with the million tonnes of nickel ore that is currently contracted to Queensland Railways, but that additional tonnages of nickel ore will be moved by rail to the refinery at Yabulu. My personal view—and I have expressed it in Townsville—is that I would not wish nickel ore to be brought across Halifax Bay to the refinery. It is to the credit of the rail system that it is gearing up to facilitate the movement of ore in this fashion.

There are a number of other issues concerning this deviation that must be addressed. These issues affect the quality of life of the people of Townsville. I know that my colleagues, the members for Townsville East and Thuringowa, intend to address these issues in this debate. The realignment of the railway line in Townsville necessitates close consultation and negotiation with the Townsville City Council. Important issues, such as traffic flow and safety, must be addressed. If the movement of all trains is not scheduled in such a fashion as to produce minimal disruption to traffic, a major bottleneck in the inner suburban streets and on the road links to the Bruce Highway could be caused.

It is also important that the quality of life of the people of Townsville is properly addressed in this development. I would like the Minister to make a commitment on behalf of her department to the people of Townsville and the Townsville City Council that consultation and negotiation will continue with that council. It was not all that long ago when there was considerable public outrage at the way in which the city and people of Mackay were treated with respect to the deviation of the railway through the lagoon area of Mackay.

Mr Smith: As the incoming Minister you would give that assurance?

Mr HAMILL: I have had the benefit of some discussions with the Mayor of the city of Townsville. He is a very able person who has at heart the interests of Townsville and its citizens. I gave him an assurance that a State Labor Government would consult closely with the Townsville City Council to ensure that the legitimate concerns of the people of Townsville with respect to safety, noise, traffic flow and so on were adequately and properly addressed in an undertaking such as the major realignment of rail movements through Townsville. I want the same assurance to come from the Minister that the people of Townsville will not be left out in the cold.

I want an assurance of an environmental impact study to ensure that minimal adverse effects flow to the city of Townsville as a consequence of what I consider to be a very important and necessary redevelopment of the rail system in the area. Likewise, it is important that the department get on with the relocation of the goods yard in Townsville and look at an appropriate redevelopment of the site round the existing station. But again it is absolutely essential that the Townsville City Council be closely involved in such development.

Mr Beard: But at the end of the day, you've still got to do it, haven't you?

Mr HAMILL: The honourable member for Mount Isa may not be too concerned about the city of Townsville.

I have said that the Opposition supports the deviation as proposed to link the harbour with the North Coast Line but I am also concerned that the people of Townsville are taken into the confidence of the Government and have their interests properly considered and addressed. We have given that assurance and I want the Minister to give the Mayor and the city of Townsville a similar assurance.

Mr Lee: I've got money on you going for another five minutes.

Mr HAMILL: The honourable member for Yeronga made an appropriate interjection and, as I now sit down, he will lose his money and he will lose his seat in a few weeks' time.

Mr BURREKET (Townsville) (11.55 p.m.): I rise to support the motion before the Committee and, in particular, the proposal for a rail by-pass in Townsville. This proposal was announced recently by the Minister for Transport and I commend her for taking the initiative on this very welcome development. I reassure the honourable member for Ipswich that there have been extensive discussions between the Railway Department and the council. It is actually the prerogative of the Minister to mention that but, in passing, I say that it has been addressed and the council has been briefed on a number of occasions. Mr Dunning himself has been speaking with the council and it has already indicated that it is keen that the Minister proceed along this track.

Mr Hamill: Was that a pun?

Mr BURREKET: I was trying to help the honourable member for Ipswich.

Mr Beard: He is off the rails.

Mr BURREKET: He is off the rails; in fact, he has been double shunted.

As announced by the Minister, the construction of this new rail connection is the first phase of a major railway facelift for Townsville, which will ultimately include the relocation of the marshalling yard and the workshops to more appropriate areas of the city. When completed, these works will provide Townsville with modern and efficient railway facilities that are able to meet the challenges presented by the ever-increasing competition in the freight transportation arena.

The new causeway connection, as it is known, will significantly improve the efficiency of train operations for traffic between the port of Townsville and destinations north of Townsville, as well as for North Coast Line traffic passing through Townsville. The existing roundabout route that such traffic must currently take through Townsville is inefficient and slow and, for port traffic, involves the reverse shunting of trains with resultant additional operating costs. The proposal will show without doubt that the passage of trains along Ingham road will be much faster. That means improved traffic flows and the coal and ore trains will take something like 2 minutes instead of 6 to 7 minutes to travel that distance.

The speed of trains entering and leaving Townsville station through the existing marshalling yard area is governed by the requirements of safety for yard workers. This requires trains to reduce speed to 12 km/h until clear of the yard. Therein lies one of the major problems. This not only affects train schedules and performance but it also creates otherwise unnecessary delays to road traffic at the Sturt Street and Charters Towers Road level crossings. No modern railway system can tolerate such outmoded and restricted operational practices on high volume routes such as those through Townsville.

In excess of 2 million tonnes of freight was transported to and from Townsville in the last financial year, including 1 million tonnes of nickel ore hauled from the port through Townsville and north to Yabulu. This traffic is vital to the economy of Townsville and any improvements which enhance the viability of this haulage operation can only be welcomed.

Whilst I recognise that there is no commitment at present to the future expansion of this ore traffic, it is acknowledged that the expansion of this and other general freight traffic to and from an upgraded port of Townsville requires the construction of the causeway connection, and the decision to proceed with this connection as the first stage of a long-term strategy for rail operations in Townsville is evidence of this Government's commitment to Townsville and north Queensland.

It is fitting to remember at this juncture that the upgrading of the Townsville to Mount Isa railway in the early '60s can be said to have heralded the start of the vast improvements to the State's railway network which, over the last 30 years, have transformed the Queensland railways into the most efficient and profitable railway system in Australia. More can be done and is being done by this Government to further enhance the attractiveness of rail for transport of goods and passengers.

Ultimately, the relocation of the railway workshops and marshalling yard out of the city centre will assist in the ongoing development and revitalisation of Townsville and surrounding regions. In particular, the future by-pass and relocated marshalling yard east of Oonoonba will serve to change the impact of through-rail traffic in heavily populated areas of the city and will improve the living and travelling environment for Townsville residents.

In the short term, the causeway connection will improve the travelling environment for Townsville's road-users through reduced delays at the Sturt Street and Charters Towers Road level crossings. The new connection will allow trains to cross those roads at up to 40 kilometres per hour, which is three times faster than at present. I am sure that the proposed new railway by-pass will have the full support of the people of Townsville and of all the members of this Chamber.

I appreciate very much the work that has been carried out by the former Minister for Transport and also the Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services in taking the initiative in terms of the importation of ore. They realised that, although the proposal by Dallhold to take the ore through Halifax Bay had initial support, there was always a possibility that GBRMPA—the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority—might reject it. If the proposal to go through Halifax Bay was rejected, it was important that both the port authority and the railways in Townsville were prepared to provide an alternative form of transport. Both those organisations have done their homework and are up and running so that, should the GBRMPA proposal fall through, the alternative is that the port authority and the railways will be prepared.

The present proposal has been put forward to fix up the railway problem. In that way, we may be able to move the 4 million tonnes of ore through the port of Townsville and then by rail from Townsville to Yabulu.

Mr ARDILL (Salisbury) (12.02 a.m.): Because I do not intend to spend much time on the Townsville proposal, I will speak about it first. The Labor Party has two very efficient and effective members who will talk later on that proposal.

Mr Beard: I didn't think you liked Mr Burreket.

Mr ARDILL: I was talking about the effective and efficient members of the Opposition.

For years it has appalled me that it takes approximately two minutes to travel by car and about 10 minutes to travel by rail the short distance between Townsville and Garbutt. The upgrading of that section of track is long overdue. I am pleased that a start has been made on it, even though it is merely one of the major problems in Townsville.

The proposal to move the workshops and goods yards out of Townsville is a good one. It is about time that the Railway Department vacated land in the centre of cities which has been used for goods yards. Unfortunately, the Railway Department is moving out of cities not only goods yards but also passenger terminals. That is not a good idea; it is a disastrous idea. When the Labor Party becomes the Government of this State after the next election, that state of affairs will be reversed. The Labor Party will maintain passenger services into the heart of provincial cities as well as the centre of Brisbane.

The balloon loop at Stanwell is needed. Recently, this Chamber approved the balloon loop at Ebenezer to bring coal into the railway system. It is only natural that efficient facilities should be provided at the other end of the system where the coal is being deposited.

Talk of the movement of 4 000 tonnes of coal per hour brings me to the subject of the pollution that will occur at the Stanwell power house. I hope that the very best coal will be delivered. When the Stanwell power house comes into operation, the Government will be condemned by the people of central Queensland for lowering the

standard of emissions from that power house. I hope that the Railway Department not only efficiently delivers coal to the power house but also delivers the best coal.

The main subject that I wish to raise is the Parkinson deviation. During the campaign against the proposal to channel coal trains and other large carriers through the heart of Brisbane suburbs three years ago, off the back of a truck fell a layout of the railway yard at Parkinson, which the committee very promptly showed to me. I am not happy with the layout of the Parkinson yard as it was first envisaged. I hope that further thought has been given to the matter and that the Parkinson railway yard will not come right up to the houses at Algester, as shown in that plan.

The detailed plan that the committee showed me contained transshipping yards and marshalling yards for both interstate and three foot six inch gauge or 1.067-metre gauge trains. The problem was that that railway yard was proposed to come right to the outskirts of Algester to Kulcha Street, which is now full of houses. Unless some changes have been made, I assure the Government that it will not have heard the last of the Parkinson yard.

The proposal to alter the route of the existing interstate line also brings to mind the disastrous proposal of the New South Wales Government to abolish the Brisbane Limited train, about which we have heard not one word from the present Transport Minister. The Brisbane Limited train is an absolutely essential part of the land-transport system of Australia, and no glorified bus such as the one that is proposed to take its place will be acceptable to the people of Brisbane. I want the Transport Minister of Queensland to insist that Queenslanders are entitled to have an adequate section of the land-transport system of Australia kept in its present form, that is the Brisbane Limited train, which provides——

Mr Hamill: The removal of sleepers is very inconvenient for people travelling between the two capital cities.

Mr ARDILL: That is right.

The main feature of the Brisbane Limited train, which will disappear with the arrival of the glorified out-of-date bus that the New South Wales Railway Department is touting in the media as being a marvellous upgrading of the service, is sleeping-cars. That glorified bus is totally unacceptable. Once they learn of the stupid proposal that has been put forward and which is being meekly accepted by this Government, the people of Brisbane will be saying in no uncertain terms that this is not acceptable.

The XPT also has inadequate dining facilities for a service that has to provide three meals during a journey from Brisbane to Sydney. In addition, there is no way that the service will be able to run to the timetable that is being proposed. Connections will not be made with other services in Sydney.

It is ironic that recently, after many years, the Queensland Railway Department changed the departure-time of the Sunlander, something which I foresaw as being necessary 10 years ago. On 1 July this Government got around to changing the departure-time of the Sunlander so that it leaves Brisbane after the arrival of the Brisbane Limited. The irony of that is that two days later the New South Wales Railway Department announced the elimination of the Brisbane Limited and said that the Sydney train will arrive in Brisbane not at that time but at 7 a.m., after a horrific journey without any sort of facilities and, I might add, without any car-carrier.

Is the Minister going to sit back and witness the abrogation of the 1930 agreement which guaranteed Queensland proper interstate rail facilities? Or is she going to say to the New South Wales Government, "This is not on. Something has to be done about it."?

I want to canvass also the possibility of the Government taking the residents into its confidence and advising them of exactly what is envisaged for the Parkinson yard. It is my understanding that a line will be brought in from the western suburbs at Wacol

through to the south of Inala, which will join into this Parkinson yard at the Johnson Road overpass in association with this deviation.

Of course it is proposed that a wide sweeping line around Brisbane will move out of the northern end of that yard and around the southern suburbs. It is certainly not the crazy proposal that was put forward three years ago to cut a slice through residential sections of Brisbane. However, at some time in the future, we must surely see a circular line around the southern suburbs of Brisbane, similar to what has been done in Sydney and Melbourne. There is a by-pass of the city of Melbourne which goes from Albion, near Broadmeadows, across to Sunshine. I believe very strongly that at some time in the future we will see a similar line around the southern suburbs of Brisbane.

Surely it is time the public was told exactly what the Railway Department is proposing and what the Government is proposing. It is about time that the Government lifted the veil of secrecy that surrounds road plans and rail plans in Queensland and the public was informed well in advance of what is being proposed. Of course, although decisions were made by the Government in regard to the Wolffdene dam——

Mr Burreket: That's got nothing to do with the railway proposal.

Mr ARDILL: I am drawing a parallel.

The Wolffdene dam was proposed way back in the 1970s. Firm decisions were made by the Government. No mention of that was made to the people who were buying land in that area until a decade later.

Mr Gately: Rubbish! That is absolute rubbish! They were told and it was the Land Court that let them go ahead with it.

Mr ARDILL: The member for Currumbin was not even in this State, so how can he be an expert on what was or was not a fact?

Mr Gately interjected.

Mr ARDILL: The honourable member does not know what he is talking about. He was not even in Queensland. When all this was going on he was still a member of the police force in New South Wales. Hopefully, in the near future, after he gets done over in the coming election, he will be back in New South Wales.

As I was saying, it is time that the public was taken into the confidence of the Railway Department, the Main Roads Department and other Government departments and particularly the politicians in power in this State and told what is being proposed. As part of that, I believe that the proposals that were originally put forward to move trains out of this proposed Parkinson yard at the northern end right up against the residential area of Algester are not satisfactory.

The Railway Department should be considering this matter right now, before it closes off all options, and ensuring that the yard is moved south, away from the residential area of Algester, so that it is not locked into a situation in which trains, when they are moving out of that yard, are being brought right past the back fences of the houses.

The Roma Street railway goods facility is being moved to Acacia Ridge. It is only natural that the railway goods facility has to move to the area in which industry is located. No attempt has been made to tell the people of the area what type of access will be available to that goods yard. If it is proposed to allow heavy transport to travel through residential streets and then into the goods yard, that is not satisfactory and the public will not tolerate it. The years of domination of the public and the overruling of their interests and wishes have gone from the State of Queensland. Fitzgerald ended all that. The public will not tolerate any sort of imposition of unsatisfactory facilities. Examples of that are the proposed Wolffdene dam, the Redbank toxic waste proposal and the Kingston toxic waste problem. The public will no longer sit by and listen to a Government that says, "Don't you worry about that; we will make all the decisions."

Mr Burreket: We are talking about rail deviations.

Mr ARDILL: I am talking about a rail deviation at this moment. I am saying that the Government cannot get away with imposing unsatisfactory developments on the people of Brisbane; they will not tolerate it. The Government should make sure that it has its act together and that it is not going into this without proper plans. It should make sure that it has its accesses right and that the lay-out is such that trains will be able to move in and out of that yard without a protest group jumping on the Minister, on me as the local member, and on the Government of the day. The Labor Party does not want to face the problems imposed upon it by a dying National Party Government.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong) (12.17 a.m.): The Liberal Party is pleased to support the motion. Unlike the member for Salisbury, I will not go round the world in 80 days. I am sure that the changes to the Townsville railway line will be appreciated by the Townsville people. The proposal has the support of the Townsville City Council. I am sure that it will speed up the handling of trains in that area as well as improve the movement of trains generally.

According to the information provided by the Minister, the railway line to the Stanwell power station will cost \$8.4m. I wonder how many tonnes of coal it will take to recover that \$8.4m. With the profits that the Queensland Government is making out of coal these days, I am sure that it will be only a matter of a week or two before the railways will have paid for that alteration to the line. I am anxious to hear from the Minister what profit the railways are making on each tonne of freight transported in that area. The proposal will improve the movement of railways generally in this State. I am sure that the changes will be beneficial to everyone.

Mr SMITH (Townsville East) (12.19 a.m.): The Opposition spokesman on Transport, Mr Hamill, set out fully the position taken by the Opposition. I concur with it. I congratulate the member for Salisbury. Those people who know him would realise that he is very well informed on transport matters, particularly round Brisbane. Obviously, his knowledge extends to the north. I know that he usually travels by train and that he is very observant. This is probably one of those rare occasions on which I agree with the contribution by the member for Townsville.

I thank the commissioner and the former Minister for Transport, Mr McKechnie, for arranging a briefing on what is proposed for the Townsville area, which is the only area that I propose to address. I appreciate that the Railway Department is considering the obligations of a good corporate citizen, and that is appreciated. I say in very broad terms that in north Queensland there is quite a deal of resentment about the reduction of Sunlander services to that part of the State. I suppose that the reduction is permanent, but I would hope that at some time in the future something could be done to improve the service generally and to provide additional services.

The area of impact of the proposed deviation is entirely in my electorate of Townsville East. The problems of unsightly railway facilities and track have been with Townsville for a long time—in fact, for far too long. As late as last Saturday evening, a constituent reminded me that it was one of the topics of my maiden speech when I was elected to this Assembly following the 1980 election. At that time I drew attention to the absence of a protective guard rail along the Ingham road and to the fact that boom gates were not installed at the causeway crossing in Morris Street and at the Sturt Street crossing. That was nine years ago, so the problem has been around for a while.

A great deal of concern has been expressed by Railway Estate residents who are understandably concerned about the ramifications of a proposed future rail corridor—it was referred to by Mr Burreket—which will cut through Railway Estate, after passing through an area known as the national park, and which will run parallel to Yates Street, ultimately fork just south of Boundary Street and then cut through an area bounded by Boundary Street, Twelfth Avenue, Perkins Street West, which is also known as little Perkins Street, and Perkins Street itself. I acknowledge that that proposal is not part of what is before the Committee this evening, but the residents will believe that the new link being discussed tonight is the first step towards the proposed future corridor. One cannot escape from that fact. I believe that the department should examine its proposals

on the future corridor and look for an alternative. If there is no alternative the department has a responsibility to make a decision, to say what it is going to do and to do that as soon as possible.

The people who may be affected by resumptions should be offered immediate compensation with the option of staying on as tenants of the railways until such time as a new rail link corridor is required. People who live in Yates Street and in the area that is affected in Boundary Street cannot sell their properties because it is generally known that, at some time in the future, either those properties will be resumed or they will be adversely affected by rail traffic.

A proposal is presently before council to upgrade the boat-ramp facilities in the area adjacent to the national park. I understand that a submission has been made to the council that that proposal should not proceed. Until Government money, which is supposedly available, is made available, that proposal cannot proceed. Until such time as it is determined exactly where that rail link will go, it is not possible to plan properly for the boat-ramp and parking facilities.

The uncertainty that hangs over property-owners is intolerable. During 1986 and 1987 there was a lot of discussion and publicity about the rail corridor. Although some people denied it, the Labor Party always knew that the proposal was a goer.

On a Sunday morning a meeting was called at the Railway Estate school to discuss the proposed corridor. That meeting attracted so many concerned citizens that, by the time that I arrived—I had to attend a previous function—I had to park my car about three blocks away.

I hope that the commissioner will take on board the fact that anything to do with resumptions and the rerouting of railway lines can be a vexed question for older residents in the community, particularly those who think that they are settled there for the remainder of their lives and who are suddenly confronted with the possibility of being uprooted. I hope that the commissioner will arrive at an acceptable agreement with those property-owners.

The possible destruction of mangroves is an environmental problem. Because that is an even bigger issue, I will not attempt to address it during this debate. The destruction of mangroves must be avoided.

When Queensland Nickel reached a decision to import 4 million tonnes of nickel ore, it considered a number of options to transport that ore from 90 000-tonne ore-carrying ships to the Yabulu refinery, which is just north of Townsville. Two final options were available. Firstly, the ore could be transferred into 3 000-tonne barges and taken to a dedicated jetty in Halifax Bay, which was the preferred option of Queensland Nickel but certainly not the preferred option of the residents of Townsville who are concerned about the environmental impact of such a proposal.

Secondly, the rail link to the existing port of Townsville could have been upgraded. At one stage it appeared that the railways had given up any attempt to secure that business. I remember raising this matter with Mr McKechnie and, after that, things started to happen. It may well be that the new commissioner seized the initiative. That is probably the case, and I congratulate him on that.

It became clear that, regardless of the final outcome with respect to the proposed 4000-tonne volume—

Mr Burreket: Four million.

Mr SMITH: Yes, four million. It was clear that up to one million tonnes would still be required to be transported through the port and railed to Yabulu.

The problem of rail access to the port, which has been inefficient and generally unsatisfactory, has been mentioned. The new link will overcome the Railway Department's difficulty but it will create some problems for particular groups of people; but I will not go into too much detail on that at this stage.

Townsville values the Railway Department as a provider of employment and services. It would be fair to say that the Railway Department enjoys a fairly high level of public approval in Townsville. As part and parcel of the new rail link the Railway Department has agreed to a number of improvements in safety and the visual impact of those facilities. The boom gates at the Morris and Sturt Streets crossing, which I mentioned before, will be welcome, as will a similar gate at Ooonoona, which I have been asking for since 1986 when I became the member for Townsville East.

Concern has been expressed that the noise of the railway traffic behind the civic theatre could create a nuisance. I understand that an earth buffer wall will be constructed and that shrubbery will be established, which should keep the noise level down to a tolerable level.

An ongoing problem exists for the people who live in Perkins Street and in Perkins Street West, which is sometimes referred as little Perkins Street, in South Townsville. The rail traffic that is generated by the existing level of ore trains constitutes a significant noise nuisance. I hope that the appropriate improvements will provide some relief for those people because, regardless of what is done anywhere else, they will bear the brunt of that traffic.

It is entirely inappropriate for a large provincial city that is attempting to improve its image as a tourist destination to be saddled with a large and unsightly marshalling yard and goods sheds in its central business district. The people of Townsville expect that the Railway Department will enter into a formal agreement with the city council for a timetable to relocate the marshalling yards to the Stuart/Cluden area.

If prime real estate, particularly in South Townsville, could be made available for redevelopment as an inner city residential precinct it would meet the housing needs of several thousand people and would revitalise the central business district which, in common with most central business districts in provincial cities, has suffered badly because of the impact of suburban shopping centres.

In respect of possible traffic delays at Sturt and Morris Streets, owing to the time taken for ore trains to pass, the rail authority has given assurances that the trains would be scheduled so as not to operate during peak traffic periods. It is also my understanding that the 2.9 million tonnes of ore could be carried by scheduling trains every day at the same frequency as those handling the present 1 million tonnes. However, it must be remembered that the transportation of that tonnage is on an irregular basis. It needs to be understood that the daily frequency would be the same as it is at present but that those trains would operate every day of the week. If that is not correct, when the Minister replies she may care to correct me.

I also understand that to handle the 4 million tonnes, it would be necessary to upgrade the carrying capacity of the wagons from 60 tonnes to 80 tonnes. That would also involve some additional strengthening of bridges and the lines at quite a number of locations.

I suppose that the final point of contention is the proposal that the existing level crossings would remain rather than motor vehicle overpasses being constructed, which would admittedly be expensive, at a cost of several million dollars. Both the council and I seek an assurance that if the ore trains in fact cause unacceptable traffic delays—and that cannot be discounted; I accept that with Railway Department planning and the best will in the world that should not happen—I want it to be fairly and squarely the responsibility of the Railway Department to rectify that problem by the provision of overpasses without any costs having to be borne by the people of Townsville.

Mr GATELY (Currumbin) (12.33 a.m.): I wish to add my support to the motion before the Committee and in particular the proposal for the spur line and balloon loop to service the new Stanwell power station.

Before continuing on that subject, I want to reply to the member for Ipswich, Mr Hamill, who was critical of the removal of some seats on the electric trains in Brisbane. Because of the difficulty being experienced by some commuters gaining safe entry into

the trains and because of the large number of schoolbags on the floor of the trains, this action was necessary. This trial was conducted on a few trains to allow greater standing-room, primarily for schoolchildren and their bags, during morning peak periods. The trial period proved to be popular and was found to be of disadvantage to very few people.

It is well known that to have the most efficient rail transport system, it is also an integral part of that system to have an equally excellent road system to and from that rail facility. While the member for Ipswich is present in the Chamber, I wonder if he can inform the Committee whether he has, as he agreed at Coolumbah at the annual general meeting of the transport association, publicly called upon the Hawke Labor Government for extra funding for the construction and maintenance of Queensland's roads? I ask Mr Hamill: when and where did he make the public call for those funds? How much extra road-funding did he seek from the Federal Labor Government? Of course, Mr Hamill turns a deaf ear.

Queensland Railways expects to rail up to 3.5 million tonnes per annum of coal to Stanwell by mid-1997, with the first deliveries expected to commence in mid-1992. This haulage task will represent a further chapter in Queensland Railways' coal-transportation success story.

Queensland Railways expects to haul 70 million tonnes of coal this financial year—a single-commodity record for an Australian railway system. This compares with railings of 66 million tonnes in 1988-89. The projected increase over the next five years is 20 million tonnes, consolidating Queensland Railways' rating as one of the world's great heavy haul systems.

The current increase is due to the expansion of mine production at Blair Athol, and the Cook colliery at South Blackwater in central Queensland, and at Ebenezer and Jeebropilly in southern Queensland. Further significant increases can be expected when new mines such as Ensham, Gordonstone and Clermont come on stream. A recent and significant contributing factor in this record coal haulage achievement is the additional operational efficiency stemming from main line electrification.

Main line electrification has streamlined operations, with improved train turn-round times and fuel economies. Turn-rounds on the Blackwater system, between the mines and the port of Gladstone and return, have shortened from 36 hours to 28 hours. This reduction has been achieved through less maintenance for electric locomotives compared with diesel; the better operation of electric locomotives, including faster acceleration; and track upgrading improvements.

With the improved turn-rounds has come more efficient use of manpower. Three shifts instead of five are required for crewing Blackwater trains originating from Gladstone. A reduction of more than 10 per cent in the locomotive fleet, for comparable tonnages, has also been achieved. As well as improving turn-round times, electrification is cutting fuel costs. Annual savings of \$16m are expected for coal-traffic operations.

The last two decades have been a period of extraordinary growth in the export coal industry. The 1 490 kilometre electrified railway network in central Queensland handles more than 1 million tonnes of coal each week. By contrast, Statewide railage of domestic and export coal in 1968 was little more than 100 000 tonnes per week. The credit for this success story can be attributed to the vision of the Queensland Government and to the men and women of Queensland Railways who have successfully implemented the broad and sweeping changes required to improve efficiency and productivity.

Although export coal accounts for the bulk of coal hauled, it needs to be emphasised that the domestic coal market also plays an important role in the economy of this State and the proposal before this Committee is a further sign of the healthy state of the Queensland economy.

Queensland coal hauled by Queensland Railways to Queensland power stations for the purpose of generating electricity to be used by Queensland industries and domestic consumption means jobs for Queenslanders. The latest project will create more employment

in the Gladstone/Rockhampton area. It will provide a significant boost to the economy of that region.

The new spur line and balloon loop will be part of the electrification program. It will add to the already extensive main line electrification network that carries 99 per cent of passenger traffic and 75 per cent of gross freight tonnage. The proposed new spur line and Stanwell power station are positive examples of this Government's goal to develop an economy equipped with modern and efficient infrastructure that has been developed in a co-ordinated manner to facilitate and complement private-sector development throughout this State.

Queensland industry needs the new power station. It also needs this new rail link, which I have no hesitation in commending to the Committee.

Mr McELLIGOTT (Thuringowa) (12.39 a.m.): Mr Chairman, you will be delighted to learn that my contribution will be very brief. My interest in the proposal before the Committee relates only to the Townsville by-pass. Many of the points in favour of the proposition have already been covered by my colleagues the member for Townsville and the member for Townsville East. I take this opportunity to thank the previous Minister, Mr McKechnie, and the commissioner for the courtesy of the full briefing that was extended to me in relation to this proposal. It is certainly a change for information of that type to be given to members of the Opposition.

I wish to refer to the improvement in transportation by rail of nickel ore that will be effected by the new by-pass. The ore will be imported through the existing port of Townsville and transported to the treatment plant at Yabulu, which is located in my electorate. I remind the Committee that the debate on the quantity of ore that will be imported into Townsville is causing considerable division in the Townsville and Thuringowa communities. A major decision will have to be made in the very near future by the Government of the day.

In my opinion the way in which the whole issue has been handled by the Government has been extraordinary. In fact, the Government has been quite inept. The concept of importing a large quantity of nickel ore into Townsville has been around for some time. The company claims that the issue has been discussed for approximately 10 years. Prior to the 1986 State election, the matter was being aired publicly. At that time a former Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, announced a proposal to import ore by conveying it across a new jetty in Halifax Bay. He endorsed the proposal but at no stage indicated the possibility of the alternative of importing the ore through the port of Townsville. In recent times, as the ore body at Greenvale nears its expiration stage, it has become obvious that a decision will have to be made.

On previous occasions when I raised this matter in the House during debate on amendments to the Harbours Act and the Railways Act, both Ministers appeared to know very little about the proposals and showed even less interest than knowledge. As best I could judge from their responses, both Ministers indicated that they were totally opposed to the alternative of bringing the ore through the port of Townsville. Because the port of Townsville is severely underutilised, I found their responses rather extraordinary.

I would have thought that the Government would be eager to take advantage of additional trade that would amount to four million tonnes a year. Similarly, I would have thought that the northern division of Queensland Railways would also have welcomed the additional trade. It is interesting that Wayne Goss visited Townsville a short time afterwards and told the members of the Townsville Port Authority in no uncertain terms that they ought to get off their backsides and fight for the relatively large amount of new trade that was available to them. To their credit, members of the port authority somewhat hastily prepared—

Mr Burreket: Come on! It was well down the track before he put his bib in.

Mr McELLIGOTT: Perhaps the honourable member wants me to give details about the dates.

Mr Burreket: Give any of the dates you like.

Mr McELLIGOTT: If I may say so, the Townsville Port Authority came up with an alternative strategy rather late in the piece.

To the credit of the members of the Townsville Port Authority, they have tried to market that option extensively. Obviously they got the message that there was a considerable volume of trade available for the taking.

Two very distinct options are now available. The one favoured by the company is the importation of ore through Halifax Bay. The one that is now favoured by Government instrumentalities is transportation by rail from the existing port to Yabulu. At a public forum in Townsville, the member for Townsville stated very clearly that both the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Maritime Services were very keen on the option. If they have changed their minds, it is incumbent on them to make their position clear. So far they have not done so. The very clear impression gained by the people of Townsville is that the Government is still supporting the Halifax Bay option.

I can inform honourable members that the proposition to import ore through Halifax Bay is currently being considered by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. It is expected that a decision will be made during the next few weeks on whether or not to grant a permit. This evening I make the point very strongly that that is only the start and that there are still tremendous problems associated with that proposal.

I suggest to this Committee that, if the authority grants a licence, it would be a very brave Government indeed that would reject the Halifax Bay project. The company is committed to that option and claims that the figures stack up in its favour. If the marine park authority grants a licence, that is the way that the proposal will have to go. I personally suspect that the marine park authority will reject the application. It seems inconceivable that the marine park authority would grant a licence to bunker ships to unload nickel ore in a marine park. If the Government is serious about having a marine park, the two concepts seem to be incompatible. I suspect that the marine park authority will reject the licence. In that case the company will be in a position to put tremendous pressure on the Government of the day to accept the port option. The company made it very clear that the numbers stack up strongly in favour of the Halifax Bay option and that, unless there is a significant contribution by the Government to both the capital and operating costs of the port of Townsville option, the company will not proceed.

My strong view is that the bottom line is that the Yabulu nickel treatment plant must remain open. It is unthinkable that a plant which is the most modern of its type in the world, with guaranteed access to imports totalling 4 million tonnes a year and employing some 800 people, be allowed to close. Having had its preferred option rejected, the company will place tremendous pressure on the State Government of the day to assist it.

The proposal that this Chamber is considering tonight is the first evidence that the State is prepared to assist in the capital costs of upgrading that stretch of railway. There is still more to be done, and 16 bridges need to be upgraded at a cost of some \$31m. I imagine that the company will be looking for some assistance in that. In addition, the company argues that its main concern is the substantial additional costs of operating on an ongoing basis for ever more. Again, the company will put tremendous pressure on the Government to give it some assistance in that regard.

Mr Burreket: Which is your preferred option?

Mr McELLIGOTT: My preferred option has always been to import the ore through the existing port of Townsville.

There are environmental questions involved in the Halifax Bay option, and if the marine park is a serious proposal—and all members in this Chamber would endorse it—it is most unlikely that such a proposal would be approved. On the other hand, the option of bringing the ore through the port gives added trade to the port, added business to the railways and provides more jobs both in the port and railway networks than would be provided by the other option.

I again make the point that, although tonight sees the beginning of improvements to the railway system, a tremendous amount more needs to be done if the Halifax Bay option is rejected. In addition, the Government of the day will have to consider providing some assistance to the company for its operating costs.

Hon. Y. A. CHAPMAN (Pine Rivers—Minister for Transport and Ethnic Affairs) (12.48 a.m.), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions to this debate. They need not have any doubts whatsoever that the Railway Department is in the very best of hands. This Government has made a tremendous contribution to the railway system throughout Queensland.

An honourable member interjected.

Mrs CHAPMAN: Don't you worry about that.

The department is on the right track. I will give consideration to the problems raised in this Chamber tonight. I have no doubt that they will be sorted out.

Mr Mackenroth: Are you getting your grass mowed at home?

Mrs CHAPMAN: I do not smoke grass, unlike the honourable member for Chatsworth.

The Railway Department is on the right track. The moves that have been made tonight will make a tremendous contribution to Queensland in general. Because it is the wee hours of the morning, I do not intend to talk about how wonderful this Government is, the great improvements it has made to the railways in Queensland and how my predecessors have also made great contributions to the railways.

Motion agreed to.

Resolution reported and agreed to.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. B. A. NELSON (Aspley—Minister for Family Services) (12.51 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

“That leave be granted to bring in a Bill to amend the Children's Services Act 1965-1989 in certain particulars and the Young Offenders (Interstate Transfer) Act 1987 in a certain particular.”

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill presented and, on motion of Mrs Nelson, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. B. A. NELSON (Aspley—Minister for Family Services) (12.52 a.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr Speaker, I seek leave to incorporate my second-reading speech in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Mr Speaker, The Queensland Government's firm commitment to the maintenance of law and order is a matter of public record.

The Bill represents one of a number of initiatives being taken by this Government to reform the juvenile corrections system.

It is now approximately a quarter of a century since the Children's Services Act became operative. Whilst that legislation has stood the test of time, the Government is in the process of introducing a series of Bills which will replace that Act by more contemporary legislation.

Already two such Acts are in place. At the present time, a Juvenile Justice Bill is being prepared. It is proposed that this will repeal all relevant sections of the Children's Services Act and increase the age of a child within the juvenile justice system to under 18 years. It is anticipated that this further Bill will be ready for introduction into the Parliament in the 1990 sittings.

Mr Speaker, I am sure that all honourable members would agree that the community needs a just juvenile corrections system so as to ensure that the general community is protected. Children who commit offences must bear responsibility for their actions. However, at the same time, because of their state of dependency and immaturity, they may require guidance and assistance.

Therefore, in considering the range of criminal sanctions to apply for children who are guilty of offences, very careful and sensitive thought needs to be given to balancing these factors.

This Bill will provide courts before whom children have been found guilty of, or pleaded guilty to, offences with an additional sentencing option, namely, the making of community service orders.

The Bill coincides with a decision, which was announced in the 1989-90 State Budget, to allocate additional funds to the Department of Family Services for its administration of a system of community service orders for children. The idea that offenders against the criminal law should be obliged to work as part of this punishment is, of course, not new. The requirement for young offenders to perform community service now exists in some form or another in the other States and Territories.

Similar orders have existed in the adult system for some time. The success of that scheme is reflected in the fact that of the 2 362 community service orders that were completed in 1987-88, only 401 were revoked. This represents a success rate of 83 per cent.

Under the proposed system, the child concerned will be able to remain in the general community but will be obliged to perform unpaid community service for a period of time.

This will involve activities declared as such by the Director-General, Department of Family Services. Projects that would be suitable for community service orders include programs organised by service organisations, charitable bodies and other community groups. The Department of Family Services proposes to hold discussions with relevant trade unions before these activities are declared.

Community service orders will provide a less costly, more effective and more humane alternative to the placement of children in secure custody, which should not be considered where other community options are more appropriate.

The advantages of community service orders include that—

- they are clearly seen by the child and the community as a punishment for the offence—by the loss of the offender's leisure time;
- they promote the prospect of rehabilitation through the acquisition of new skills and the establishment/reinforcement of work habits;
- they provide useful services to the community through the child's placement with voluntary non-profit organisations, assistance to pensioners, etc.;
- they recognise that the child's family has a major role to play in the child's rehabilitation, by allowing the family to remain intact;
- they promote the child's self-esteem and sense of worth;
- they prevent the offender having contact with children held in secure custody for more serious offences and avoid the stigma of incarceration;
- they recognise the community's role in the rehabilitation of offenders, as community organisations will be significantly involved in the scheme; and
- the children's exposure to well-adjusted citizens who are members of community organisations will allow them to assimilate some of these citizens' values and enable them to form relationships of a kind that will assist in their personal development towards social responsibility.

The courts will have the discretion to decide, in balancing the concerns for community protection with the interests of young offenders, whether or not to make a community service order, subject to the prescribed arrangements.

However, it is not intended that the introduction of such orders will result in children, who in the past would have been sentenced to less serious orders for similar offences, being placed under community service orders. This potential for "sentence inflation" (i.e. the relative devaluing of less serious orders) or "net-widening" (where the new sentencing option attracts offenders who would previously have been sentenced to less serious orders) is recognised. This will be closely monitored and, if necessary in the light of experience, further amendments to the legislation will be proposed to avoid this potential.

A court may impose a community service order with or without recording a conviction. An order may be made in addition to existing orders, for example, that the child pay compensation or make restitution in respect of damage or loss occasioned by the offence or reinstate property damaged or defaced in the course of the offence.

The Bill prescribes that the maximum numbers of hours of community service that may be ordered are 120 hours for a 15 or 16 year old and 80 hours for younger children 10 years or over. These hours must be completed within 12 months. If more than one order has been made the total hours to be worked at any time cannot exceed these limits. These maximums are less than the adult maximum of 240 hours and comparable with provisions for children in other States.

A minimum of 20 hours' community service is provided. This recognises the relative seriousness of the order and will allow community service orders to be administered on a cost-effective basis.

As I have indicated, work to be performed under a community service order must be undertaken within 12 months. However, a Children's Court may, upon application, extend this period.

Before making a community service order the court must be satisfied that the child is suitable to perform the work and that suitable community service is available. Also, the court must ensure that the child understands the requirements of the proposed order and the consequences of not complying with the relevant arrangements.

Community service orders will be supervised by officers of the Department of Family Services or non-government organisations or individuals acting as the department's agents.

All work will be performed under the supervision of a responsible adult nominated by the body for which the community service activities are being performed.

It is envisaged that much of the work concerned will be done after school hours and particularly on Saturdays. It is a requirement that officers or agents must, in giving directions for the performance of community service as far as practicable—

- avoid conflict with the religious practices of the child or the child's guardian; and
- not interfere with the child's education, training or employment.

Also, in assigning work, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that the children are kept apart from persons serving sentences for which they were convicted as an adult.

The Bill provides that a Children's Court may, on application by the Director-General, Department of Family Services, find that a child has breached requirements relating to an order. If this occurs, the court may increase the number of hours, extend the period within which the service must be performed or discharge the order and re-sentence the child for the offence. Alternatively, the court may accept the child's undertaking to comply in all respects with the requirements of the order in the future.

Where the order was imposed by the Supreme or District Court, the Children's Court may refer the case to the relevant jurisdiction which may re-sentence the child for the offence.

Of course changed circumstances could prevent an order from being completed for example if the child is subsequently placed in custody. Therefore, provision is made for an application to be made by the child, his or her representative or the Director-General to seek new arrangements.

If it is in the interests of justice, a Children's Court may extend the period within which the service must be undertaken. Furthermore, the court that made the order may reduce the number of hours that must be worked or discharge the order and re-sentence the child for the offence.

The Bill provides that for the purposes of workers' compensation an offender undertaking community service will be regarded as a worker of the Crown. This will allow the child to receive payment for medical expenses, compensation for permanent partial disabilities and lost wages.

Other provisions of the Bill of a more machinery nature relate to—

- the making of regulations for the administration of community service orders;
- certain evidentiary provisions;
- certain court procedural arrangements;
- the inclusion of children under these orders in the reciprocal arrangements that allow young offenders under orders to be transferred between participating States.

Mrs NELSON: I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr McElligott, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 12.54 a.m. (Thursday).