

NOTE: There could be differences between this document and the official printed *Hansard*, Vol. 314

TUESDAY, 6 MARCH 1990

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. J. Fouras, Ashgrove), read prayers and took the chair at 10 a.m.

PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE COMMISSION

Appointment of Members

Mr SPEAKER: I wish to advise honourable members that pursuant to section 6 of the Parliamentary Service Commission Act 1988 the Parliamentary Service Commission comprises seven members of the Legislative Assembly. The membership shall include Mr C. B. Campbell, MLA, Chairman of Committees; the Honourable T. K. Mackenroth, MLA, Leader of the House; Mr K. R. Lingard, MLA, who has been nominated by the honourable Leader of the Opposition; and myself.

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (10.01 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That Mr K. W. Smyth, MLA, Mrs D. E. McCauley, MLA, and Mr J. A. M. Innes, MLA, be appointed as members of the Parliamentary Service Commission."

Motion agreed to.

VACANCY IN SENATE OF COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that His Excellency the Governor has been informed by the President of the Senate of the resignation of Senator John Owen Stone, as follows—

"President of the Senate

Parliament House

Canberra

1 March 1990

His Excellency the Hon. Sir Walter
Campbell, AC, QC
Governor of Queensland
Government House
BRISBANE QLD 4000
Your Excellency,

Pursuant to the provisions of section 21 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution, I notify Your Excellency that a vacancy has happened in the representation of the State of Queensland through the resignation of Senator John Owen Stone on this day.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Kerry W. Sibraa

President of the Senate"

In pursuance of the provisions of Standing Order No. 331—Casual Vacancy in the Senate—I propose to summon honourable members to meet in the Legislative Assembly Chamber on Tuesday, 20 March 1990, at 7.30 p.m., for the purpose of electing a senator.

**QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENTARY HANDBOOK AND IDENTIFICATION CARDS;
PHOTOGRAPHS**

Mr SPEAKER: I have to inform honourable members that official photographs for the *Queensland Parliamentary Handbook* will be taken today from 12 noon to 4 p.m in room 504. In addition, photographs for identification cards will be taken today from 11 a.m. in room 514.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Brisbane Limited Rail Service

From **Mr Hamill** (34 signatories) praying for talks with the New South Wales Government to retain the Brisbane Limited rail service.

Inclusion of Florence Bay in Magnetic Island National Park

From **Mr Comben** (53 signatories) praying that Florence Bay be included entirely in the Magnetic Island national park.

Proposed Marinas at Wynnum and Tingalpa Creeks

From **Mr Burns** (60 signatories) praying for rejection of marina proposals at Wynnum and Tingalpa Creeks.

Daylight-saving

From **Mr Ardill** (235 signatories) praying that summer daylight-saving continue on a permanent basis.

Burnett Heads Harbour Housing Development

From **Mr Campbell** (505 signatories) praying that the land fill for housing development in Burnett Heads Harbour area not proceed.

Teaching of Vietnamese Language in Primary and Secondary Courses

From **Mr Palaszczuk** (123 signatories) praying for the introduction of the study of the Vietnamese language in primary and secondary courses where there are sufficient numbers of students willing to study that language.

Study of Transport Needs in South-east Queensland

From **Mr McLean** (1 456 signatories) praying for a major study of transport needs in south-east Queensland and that no action be taken on the proposed bridge from Teneriffe to Bulimba or adjacent suburbs.

Petitions received.

PAPERS

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

Reports---

Department of Works for the year ended 30 June 1989

Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland for the year ended 30 June
1989

Nominal Defendant (Queensland) for the year ended 30 June 1989

The Commissioner of Land Tax for the year ended 30 June 1989

Golden Casket Art Union Office for the year ended 30 June 1989
State Service Superannuation Board for the year ended 30 June 1989
Queensland Treasury Corporation for the year ended 30 June 1989
Council of the Queensland Institute of Medical Research for the year ended
30 June 1989
Queensland Health and Medical Services for the year ended 30 June 1989.

The following papers were laid on the table---

Financial Statements of the Trustees of the Parliamentary Contributory
Superannuation Fund for the year ended 30 June 1989.

Proclamations under the Forestry Act 1959-1987

Orders in Council under---

Harbours Act 1955-1989

Education and Charitable Institutions Act 1861-1967

State Service Superannuation Act 1972-1989

Superannuation (Government and Other Employees) Act 1988

Queensland Nickel Agreement Act 1970-1988

Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982-1989

Forestry Act 1959-1987

Primary Producers' Co-operative Associations Act 1923-1989

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1989

Health Act 1937-1989

Nursing Studies Act 1976-1984

Racing and Betting Act 1980-1989

Racing Venues Development Act 1982-1988

Liquor Act 1912-1989

Regulations under---

Firearms and Offensive Weapons Act 1979-1988

Pawnbrokers Act 1984-1985

Hawkers Act 1984-1985

Second-hand Dealers and Collectors Act 1984-1985

State Transport Act 1960-1985

Professional Engineers Act 1988

Liquor Act 1912-1989

Health Act 1937-1989

Hospitals Act 1936-1988

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1989 and the Wheat
Pool Act 1920-1989

By-laws under---

Railways Act 1914-1985

Harbours Act 1955-1989

Chiropractic Manipulative Therapists Act 1979-1987

Dental Act 1971-1987

Optometrists Act 1974-1989

Rules under---

Casino Control Act 1982

Soccer Football Pools Act 1976-1982

Reports---

Royal Children's Hospitals Board and the Royal Children's Hospital Foundation
for the year ended 30 June 1989

Dental Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1989

The Medical Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1989

Nurses Registration Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1989

Optometrists Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1989

Physiotherapists Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1989

Podiatrists Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1989

Psychologists Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 1989

Central Queensland Racing Association for the year ended 30 June 1989

North Queensland Racing Association for the year ended 30 June 1989

Rockhampton Jockey Club for the year ended 30 June 1989

Greyhound Racing Control Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June
1989

Queensland Harness Racing Board for the year ended 30 June 1989

Totaliser Administration Board of Queensland for the year ended 30 June
1989

Trustees of the Bowen Racecourse for the year ended 30 June 1989

Audit Report of the Willows Harness Racing Club for the six months ended
31 December 1989

Audit Report of the Trustees of the Willows Paceway for the year ended 30
June 1989.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Appointment of Members

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (10.10 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order No. 22 the Standing Orders Committee for the present Parliament consists of the following members—

Mr Speaker, Mr Goss, Mr Burns, Mr Mackenroth, Mr Cooper, Mr Borbidge and Mr Innes."

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Proposed Inquiry into Sports Funding

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Wolston—Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (10.12 a.m.), by leave: I wish to inform the House about a serious matter that was recently brought to my attention. It would appear that, under the previous National Party administration, some malpractices were allowed to develop in the making of claims for grants and subsidies under the Encouragement to Sport Scheme, which is now administered by my department.

Apparently as far back as 1982, one major youth organisation has been rorting claims and, consequently, has wrongfully and deceitfully applied for and received tens of thousands of dollars. An extensive investigation which is being carried out into that

organisation, including its branches throughout the State, will not be completed for some months. However, even at this stage it is almost certain that criminal charges will be laid against a number of people.

As soon as the situation was brought to my attention steps were taken to tighten up procedures within the limits of current guidelines and the structure of the scheme. Those steps include—

- (1) the creation of a database for the management of sporting subsidies with audit control which ensure that subsidy is paid on legitimate and eligible claims and that maximum subsidies are not exceeded;
- (2) strengthening of auditing provisions to ensure compliance with the guidelines; and
- (3) random checks to verify income details with individual coaches.

I have also conferred with some of my Cabinet colleagues. As a result, last Wednesday the Auditor-General's Office commenced an investigation into all organisations that have benefited under the scheme in the past, which will be a lengthy exercise. However, on information supplied to me, I have reason to believe that some other bodies may also have been taking advantage of the National Party Government's loose and incompetent administration.

The blame lies fairly and squarely at their feet and is another reason why they are now sitting in Opposition. In this context I should point out that, some time ago, my Cabinet colleague the Honourable the Minister for Police and Emergency Services raised this very matter in this Parliament, but obviously the previous Government did nothing about it.

I should point out that usually applications for sports funding during the 1990-91 financial year would have been called last month. However, because of the need to tighten up the scheme, that will now happen towards the end of this month.

I take this opportunity to announce my intention of holding an inquiry into the whole question of sports funding during the next few months. In view of the impending introduction of poker machines, which will usher in a new era for Queensland sport, I believe that this is necessary.

Mr Gunn interjected.

Mr GIBBS: Listen to "WAM" Gunn. He left here mad and has returned insane.

Whilst the substantial additional funds from that source will pave the way for important policy commitments of our Government, such as a Queensland academy of sport, a women's sports unit and a sports house, many millions of dollars will be provided for new initiatives and upgrading of existing schemes. Those funds must be applied wisely, effectively, efficiently and responsibly with proper accountability. For this reason, I have decided to instigate an inquiry, which will be quite separate from those being conducted by the Commissioner of Police and by the Auditor-General.

It will be carried out by my parliamentary committee comprising the member for Stafford, Mr Rod Welford, as chairperson; the member for Barron River, Dr Lesley Clark, as deputy chairperson; the member for Manly, Mr Jim Elder; the member for Springwood, Ms Molly Robson and the member for Redlands, Mr Darryl Briskey. The committee will call for submissions from throughout the State and all sporting bodies and interested individuals will have the opportunity to make written submissions and appear before the committee if deemed necessary.

The committee will specifically examine the effectiveness of current funding schemes, particularly the desirability of retaining the system of subsidies as against grants for capital facilities and coaching. If the committee finds support for subsidies, it will review their current levels. The committee is expected to report to me by about the middle of this year.

The draft terms of reference for the committee's investigations are—

1. To inquire into the scope and nature of State Government assistance to be provided to sport in Queensland, covering the needs from the community participation level to the high performance level, including administration, coaching, umpiring/refereeing, facilities and equipment.
2. To seek submissions from State sporting associations, sports people, community interest groups and individuals on their concepts and ideas for the development and betterment of sport.
3. To examine the adequacy, effectiveness and accountability of existing encouragement to sport schemes, including the types of assistance offered.
4. To ascertain what levels of support, assistance, financial contributions and development are provided by local authorities throughout the State.
5. To ascertain the level of non-Government assistance to sport in Queensland.
6. To report to me on its findings and provide recommendations on the future role of Government assistance to sport in Queensland.

In view of its importance to such a large cross-section of the community, I felt that Parliament should be the first to hear of this initiative. All relevant details will be publicised through the media throughout the State.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT **Passenger Transport Needs**

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development) (10.17 a.m.), by leave: I rise today to explain a key initiative of the new Government in the area of passenger transport. On 31 January, I had the pleasure of launching the South East Queensland Passenger Transport Study. This study will look at the passenger transport needs of Brisbane and its surrounding growth areas both now and into the twenty-first century.

The study is being steered by two groups, the first representing the providers of passenger transport services; the second, the users of the services. The users group, called the Community Consultative Group, comprises 14 people who represent the broadest possible range of community interests. Work by both of these steering committees is now well advanced and we are ready to proceed with the first of a range of studies that will help define a transport system that is economically efficient, environmentally sensitive and fair.

At its first meeting, this group elected Rod Walters as its chairperson and Di Glynn as deputy. Mr Walters is the resource officer with the Department of Family Services and represents the physically disabled on the steering committee. Ms Glynn is the spokesperson for the Urban Coalition, which draws together many inner suburban residents' groups that have taken an active interest in transport matters. This steering committee provides a focus for submissions from individuals and groups and will act as advocates on behalf of those with a special interest in passenger transport.

Although dozens of submissions have already been received, the steering committee is now actively encouraging community input into its study. Such submissions should be sent care of the Study Manager, Bill Croft, PO Box 673, Fortitude Valley, Queensland 4006. I urge all honourable members representing electorates in south-east Queensland to note these details and to actively urge groups in their electorates to have their say in this study.

The study extends well beyond the limits of Brisbane and will include detailed examination of the corridors linking Brisbane with the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and other regional centres. I am delighted with the progress so far and particularly pleased to be able to announce the first phase of local area studies.

Within a fortnight studies will begin in three separate areas—Loganlea/Marsden, Rochedale and Holland Park. Those three areas are all on the booming south-east corridor of Brisbane. During the course of the South East Queensland Passenger Transport Study, similar programs will operate for the north, south-west and western corridors of Brisbane. These are fundamentally market research studies to find out what the transport needs are in these areas and develop a wide range of options to solve the problems identified by the study.

One possible solution to a localised transport problem could be a community-based minibus service, for example. Broader solutions may include more integrated services and ticketing arrangements to make it easier to link different modes of public transport. These are all matters to be addressed in the study. Our process of community consultation and market research will seek solutions which truly meet the needs of the people, are acceptable to them and will be welcomed and used by them.

ELECTION POLLING DETAILS

Order for Return

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (10.20 a.m.): I move—

"That there be laid upon the Table of the House and ordered to be printed a Return in the usual form showing the details of polling at the State General Election held on December 2, 1989, together with details of voting at By-elections held since the General Election on November 1, 1986."

Motion agreed to.

FEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS

Order for Return

Mr PALASZCZUK (Archerfield) (10.20 a.m.): I move—

"That there be laid upon the Table of the House a Return showing all payments made by the Government to barristers and solicitors during 1988-89, stating the names of the recipients and the amounts received separately."

Motion agreed to.

FEES PAID BY CROWN TO PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING AGENCIES

Order for Return

Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (10.21 a.m.): I move—

"That there be laid upon the Table of the House a Return showing all payments made by the Government to public relations agencies or consultants and advertising agencies or consultants during 1988-89, stating the names of the recipients and the amounts received separately."

Motion agreed to.

OVERTIME PAID IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Order for Return

Mr ARDILL (Salisbury) (10.21 a.m.): I move—

"That there be laid upon the Table of the House a Return showing the amount of overtime paid in each Government Department (all funds) in 1988-89."

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE OF SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

Appointment

Mr BARBER (Coorooora) (10.22 a.m.): I move—

"(1) That this House do appoint a Committee to be called the Committee of Subordinate Legislation.

(2) That the Committee shall consist of seven members.

(3) That the Committee consists of Messrs Fenlon, FitzGerald, Hollis, Quinn, Stephan, Sullivan and the mover.

(4) That it shall be the duty of the Committee to consider all Regulations, Rules, By-laws, Ordinances, Orders in Council or Proclamations (hereinafter referred to as 'the Regulations') which under any Act are required to be laid on the Table of this House, and which are subject to disallowance by resolution.

If the Regulations are made whilst the House is sitting, the Committee shall consider the Regulations before the end of the period during which any motion for disallowance of those Regulations may be moved in the House.

If the Regulations are made whilst the House is not sitting the Committee shall consider the Regulations as soon as conveniently may be after the making thereof.

(5) The Committee shall, with respect to the Regulations, consider—

(a) whether the Regulations are in accord with the general objects of the Act pursuant to which they are made;

(b) whether the Regulations trespass unduly on rights previously established by law;

(c) whether the Regulations contain matter which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be dealt with in an Act of Parliament;

(d) whether for any special reason the form or purport of the Regulations calls for elucidation;

(e) whether the Regulations unduly make rights dependent upon administrative and not upon judicial decisions.

(6) If the Committee is of the opinion that any of the Regulations ought to be disallowed—

(a) it shall report that opinion and the grounds thereof to the House before the end of the period during which any motion for disallowance of those Regulations may be moved in the House;

(b) if the House is not sitting, it may report its opinion and the grounds thereof to the authority by which the Regulations were made.

(7) If the Committee is of the opinion that any other matter relating to any of the Regulations should be brought to the notice of the House, it may report that opinion and matter to the House.

(8) A report of the Committee shall be presented to the House in writing by a member of the Committee nominated for that purpose by the Committee.

(9) The Permanent Head of the relevant Department shall forthwith upon any Regulation, which is required to be tabled in Parliament, being approved by the Governor in Council, forward sufficient copies to the Secretary of the Committee for the use of the members of the Committee.

(10) The Committee shall have power to send for persons, papers and records and to examine witnesses whether the House is sitting or not.

(11) The proceedings of the Committee shall, except wherein otherwise ordered, be regulated by the Standing Orders and Rules of the Legislative Assembly relating to Select Committees.

(12) The Committee shall continue in existence for the life of the current Parliament, notwithstanding prorogation."

Motion agreed to.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Appointment

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (10.22 a.m.): I move—

"(1) That the membership of the Parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts comprise Mrs Bird, Dr Watson, Messrs Davies, Heath, Elliott, Perrett and the mover.

(2) That the Committee may sit during the sittings of the House.

(3) That the Committee may meet and adjourn from place to place."

Motion agreed to.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC WORKS

Appointment

Mr PREST (Port Curtis) (10.23 a.m.): I move—

"(1) That the membership of the Parliamentary Committee of Public Works comprise Ms Spence, Messrs Bredhauer, Livingstone, Berghofer, Randell, Coomber and the mover.

(2) That the Committee may sit during the sittings of the House.

(3) That the Committee may meet and adjourn from place to place."

Motion agreed to.

QUESTION UPON NOTICE

Ms R. Kelly; Home Building Industry Inquiry

Mr BEANLAND asked the Deputy Premier and Minister for Housing and Local Government—

"With respect to his announcement in early February in which he stated an independent enquiry into all aspects of the Home Building Industry by Ms Raelene Kelly, Barrister-at-Law, would be carried out—

(1) Has Ms Kelly worked for him or the ALP previously in any capacity?

(2) If so, was Ms Kelly paid for this work?

(3) What is Ms Kelly's current remuneration?

(4) Where will Ms Kelly conduct the enquiry?

(5) Is Ms Kelly involved in any other work for the Government?"

Mr BURNS: (1 and 2) It is a matter of public record that Ms Kelly was a public servant who worked in my office for a time when I was Deputy Leader of the Opposition and, naturally, she was paid for that work.

(3, 4 and 5) A maximum of \$40,000, for her fees, has been allocated in the budget for the review, expected to take six months.

When in Brisbane, she is conducting the review from an office on the twelfth floor of the Executive Building. If, based on submissions received, there is a need to travel to various parts of the State for public hearings, she hopes to utilise local authority facilities in those centres. She is not receiving any other remuneration from the Government.

Ms Kelly, whilst working as a public servant and after she left, spent a considerable amount of time handling complaints from home owners and subcontractors. She was involved with me during the tragic Mansard collapse—and Mr Ahern would remember this—when over 130 families contacted my office. Many of them not only lost money but also faced the break up of their families.

Because of her involvement and concern Ms Kelly was approached by Mansard's solicitors to mediate between Mansard and its customers. Her competence, fairness and expertise were highly regarded by both sides in this extremely bitter dispute. Because of her experience, I believe that Ms Kelly is uniquely qualified to undertake this review, which was an election promise of the Goss Labor Government.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cooke Inquiry Evidence of Illegal Donations

Mr COOPER: I draw the Premier's attention to an auditor's evidence at the Cooke inquiry that the Labor Party was in receipt of illegal donations of some \$100,000 from the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association, which laundered money in such a way as to bypass its political objects fund in contravention of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

I ask: in view of the Premier's repeated demands for the National Party to submit its list of donors to the commission of inquiry for examination—which it did—will he, as the political head of the Labor Party, make available the Labor Party's financial records to the Special Prosecutor's office for examination to determine if the Labor Party was in receipt of other illegal donations?

Secondly, in view of the fact that the audit has found that the FEDFA was laundering money, will he and his Government extend the terms of reference of the Cooke inquiry to allow the financial records of all unions affiliated with the Trades and Labor Council to be examined for the illegal misuse of members' funds?

Thirdly, will the Premier advise the House if he was aware of the illegal donations made to the Labor Party?

And, fourthly, will he amend the legislation setting up the office of the Special Prosecutor to enable proceedings arising out of the Cooke inquiry—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr COOPER: No, I want this to be heard, and I want the Premier to get a chance to answer the question. Fourthly, will he amend the legislation setting up the office of the Special Prosecutor to enable proceedings arising out of the Cooke inquiry to be investigated by the Special Prosecutor?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Firstly, as far as I am aware, there have been no illegal donations made to the Australian Labor Party whatsoever.

Mr Katter: That is not what the commissioner said.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Does the honourable member want an answer to questions 1 to 17 or not?

As I understand the position, the payments that were referred to yesterday, were affiliation fees, which do not come under the realm of the political objects legislation. If the honourable Leader of the Opposition is complaining that things have occurred in relation to donations pursuant to that legislation or that fund at any time over the last

several years, then I join him in condemning the previous Government for its failure to administer those laws.

Mr Borbidge: Will you open your books?

Mr W. K. GOSS: There is a clear distinction between donations and affiliation fees to an organisation. As to the affiliation fees—they are before the inquiry and have been revealed. As to the union's records—it is the union's responsibility under the laws passed by the previous Government to keep its books in order, and if the previous Government failed to prosecute it or failed to enforce its own laws in respect of those unions, then Opposition members should ask themselves questions about that.

As to the list of donations that the National Party made available to the Fitzgerald commission of inquiry—the Labor Party and the Liberal Party did the same. That has been done.

I want to make it plain that, in relation to the Cooke inquiry, our position is the same now as it was prior to the election. We make no distinction whatsoever between a corrupt trade union official, a corrupt National Party Minister or any other corrupt person; they will be prosecuted with the full force of the law.

The Cooke inquiry can continue along its way. I understand that Crown law advice confirms my understanding of the distinction between affiliation fees and political donations. Any suggestion that the donations referred to are illegal is quite incorrect, but it is part of a deliberate campaign of smears and lies by the Leader of the Opposition.

I refer to a very detailed one and a half foolscap page news release issued last Thursday by the Leader of the Opposition on this subject of donations and the Cooke inquiry. It alleges—

"The Secretary to the Cooke Inquiry into union corruption was summoned by telephone to the Premier's Department today"—

that was last Thursday—

"immediately after the Government faced questions in Parliament—"

That allegation is completely false.

The credibility that attaches to the office of the Leader of the Opposition was demonstrated by the fact that nowhere in Queensland did anybody print a line of that press release. All that my office had to do was issue a one-line statement saying—

"The news release today issued by the Leader of the Opposition is false".

We deliberately did not include the subject matter because we propose to use this press release time and time again and we do not want to have to retype it; we will simply photocopy it every time the Leader of the Opposition puts out these lies.

Let me conclude on this subject of illegal political donations by referring to paragraph 3 of the press release, which refers to illegal political donations and which honourable members, and I am sure you, Mr Speaker, would be amused to hear. Paragraph 3 reads—

"Opposition Tourism, Sport and Racing spokesman Mick Veivers grilled his opposite number Mr Bob Gibbs in the House today . . ."

That honourable member should remember from his days on the sporting field that if a person has to tell people he has done something, he never did it. All I can say is that, if that performance last Thursday is what the Opposition calls a grilling, our Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing will be a rare Minister indeed.

Federal Grants to the States

Mr PREST: The Treasurer will have heard that yesterday the Federal Opposition announced that it intends to cut back payments to the States by another \$120m. I ask: what will this mean to Queensland?

Mr De LACY: I thank the honourable member for the question. What the Federal Leader of the Opposition did not say in his policy release yesterday was that he had already announced a \$300m cut to the States from the general revenue fund. That means that the total cut will be \$425m. I remind honourable members that, last year, Queensland received 18.5 per cent of the general revenue grant so that if, heaven forbid, the coalition is elected, Queensland stands to lose \$80m. We cannot afford to lose \$80m. How a Federal leader of a coalition, which aspires to be the Government of Australia, can say that he cares about families when he says that he will cut grants to Queensland by \$80m, I do not know. Surely he knows that it is the States that deliver basic services such as education, health and welfare. I ask honourable members on the other side of the House whether they support what the Federal Leader of the Opposition said yesterday. Do they support the reduction of \$80m in State grants?

A Government member interjected.

Mr De LACY: Yes, they are suddenly strangely quiet.

That \$80m is more than one-third of this year's budget for welfare, community services and housing. That \$80m is more than the total cost of providing 2 000 teachers. That \$80m is what it costs to have 2 000 police trained, equipped and on the streets. It represents a cut of 2 000 nurses. Is this the policy for families that Mr Peacock is talking about?

Do honourable members remember John Howard's monumental document *Future Directions*? We all know where John Howard went and what his future directions are. He is no longer leader. Now Mr Peacock also is cutting grants to the States. Funds to the States have been cut over the last five years and now represent only 40 per cent of our total revenue budget. That is a criticism of the Hawke Government but, if the coalition is elected, Queensland's grant will be cut by another \$80m. My challenge to the members on the other side is to say whether they believe that cutting funds to the States is a family policy and whether they support the \$80m cut?

State Stores Board

Mr PREST: I ask the Treasurer: has he seen a report in the *Courier-Mail* of 5 March concerning the State Stores Board? If so, what is the Government doing to improve the Government's purchasing policies?

Mr De LACY: I did notice the report in the *Courier-Mail* yesterday. I understand that a report on the State Stores Board and purchases by the Government was commissioned by the previous Government last July. What happened? What action did the Government take? To which Minister was the report delivered? It was delivered to the present Leader of the Opposition who was then the Minister controlling police, emergency and administrative services. What did he do with the report? He did nothing. He took no action, as per usual. The new Labor Government has been left once again to pick up the pieces.

Mr Cooper: Rubbish!

Mr De LACY: I would like the Leader of the Opposition to say exactly what he did do, because nothing has happened. The same situation as is identified in that report prevailed right up until the time that the Labor Government took office. The Labor Government will be doing something about the matter. Of course, the first thing that it has done is to rationalise departments. The State Stores Board has been rationalised in the Department of Administrative Services with the other purchasing arms of the Government. The Government will be looking at the report and at ways in which economies in the Government's purchasing policy can be effected.

The days of profligacy and inefficiency in Queensland are finished because a Labor Government will deliver on its election policies.

Sunshine Motorway

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Deputy Premier, I refer to a statement that he made on the Rod Henshaw show on ABC radio on 9 February 1990, in which he said, when justifying his backflip on the Sunshine Motorway toll—

"The biggest problem we faced in opposition was that we were never told the truth by the government. We were never given the facts in relation to matters. We never knew for example that the Sunshine Coast tollway that the \$40 million road was going to cost \$80 million."

I ask: does the Deputy Premier still stand by those comments in the House today?

Mr BURNS: The statement that I made on the Henshaw program to which the honourable member referred is substantially correct in that since then I have discovered that figures were given in relation to the toll-road that showed at a later stage a cost of about \$70m. I do not back away from the fact that I am against toll-roads; I am still against toll-roads. When we started to debate the issue in the Parliament and when the promise was made, I make no bones about the fact that I went to the Sunshine Coast and told the people there that I was against toll-roads. Since then, I have been back to the Sunshine Coast and told the people exactly the same thing—I am opposed to toll-roads. I have no problem with that and I have no problem with my party on the issue.

We finally reached the stage at which we would have had to spend \$14m a year on that toll-road, which was the sort of money that we could spend on the roads in that area forevermore. It would be stupid of us, and it would be stupid for the people on the Sunshine Coast, to accept a situation in which a small section of road—a toll-road—received a subsidy of \$14m out of the money that was available for roads throughout Queensland instead of spending money on the David Low Way, the Boreen Point road and the Cooroy by-pass.

I repeat that the Government made the correct decision. It was the decision that had to be made on those issues. The people who want to use that road can pay the toll. If they do not want to pay the toll, they can use other roads nearby.

Sunshine Motorway

Mr INNES: In directing a question to the Premier, I point out that he just heard the answer given by the Deputy Premier relating to his understanding that \$40m would be involved in building the toll-road. I refer the Premier to a question asked in this House on 6 September 1989 by Mr Burns, who was then the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. He asked the then Deputy Premier—

"What is the total cost of the motorway, and the cost of stages I and II and the bridge?"

I refer also to the answer that was given to that part of the question, which stated—

"The current estimate of the final cost for Stage I is about \$76m. Stage II could be similar although detailed estimates have not been prepared. Included in the cost of Stage I is the Maroochy River Bridge at a cost of \$4.3m."

I now ask: did the Premier include the costing of the Sunshine Motorway in that widely publicised document containing his pre-election promises released some two months later? If he did not, why not? I also ask: does he allow his Ministers to race round this State making untruthful statements as to prior knowledge relating to the election; and: what does he do about his Ministers misleading the House?

Mr W. K. GOSS: It would be misleading the House for the member for Sherwood to suggest that the Deputy Premier has misled the House. The Deputy Premier quite—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: If the members opposite had been listening instead of squawking, they would have heard the Deputy Premier say that his understanding right from the outset of the debate and for some considerable period—as was mine—was that the original cost was in the vicinity of \$40m. In September last year, as the Leader of the Liberal Party indicated, an answer was given, and it was tabled. I understand that the Minister for Main Roads, who answered the question, could not give an answer because he did not know the sums. He had to ask that the question be placed on notice. I am advised that the answer was tabled the following day.

My understanding of the position is that it would have been preferable to avoid imposing a toll, as it would have been for the Logan Motorway in my own area. But the situation was that we simply had to face what was a very tough decision—tough for the people who are now complaining and tough for people like the poor old member for Landsborough, who is now a sudden convert to toll-free toll-roads.

Mr Ahern: You will pay for that.

Mr Hamill: They are going to rename it after you, Mike.

Mr Burns: The Mike Ahern toll-road.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The Mike Ahern toll plaza. We will let him pull the curtain on the plaque.

On the front page of the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, of which the member for Landsborough should be well aware, under the headline "Goss warns on toll roads" the following statement appears—

"State Opposition leader Wayne Goss yesterday warned of more proposed toll roads for the Sunshine Coast—but said a Labor Government might be forced to uphold the Sunshine Motorway toll.

However, he stopped short of promising an end to the toll . . ."

For the information of the honourable member, I will table that article. As a matter of interest, the second page of the same newspaper cites Mr Randell, who was a Minister in the Ahern Government, saying that Mr Ahern was perfectly safe as Premier and that there was no challenge from Mr Cooper. I table the document.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr Littleproud: Answer the question.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The answer is simply this—

Mr FitzGerald: Answer the question.

Mr W. K. GOSS: If you want the answer, here it comes!

Mr FitzGerald: What are you doing about Burns, who has misled the House?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lockyer will cease interjecting.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The answer is that the Deputy Premier did not mislead the House. There is no necessity for any action. Mr Burns and I are of one mind on this issue.

Statement on Pollution Control by New South Wales Minister for Environment

Mr PALASZCZUK: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to comments appearing in yesterday's *Australian Financial Review* attributed to the New South Wales Environment Minister, Mr Tim Moore, in which he stated that the change from a National Party Government in Queensland to a Labor Government has brought greater

interstate cooperation in developing national standards in legislation on pollution. I ask: does the Premier agree with that statement? What steps are being taken by the Queensland Government to overcome the deficiencies in this State's anti-pollution laws?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Let me say that I welcome the statements by the Minister for Environment in the Liberal/National Party coalition Government in New South Wales. The view of the Liberal/National coalition Government in New South Wales, as expressed by its own Minister, Mr Moore, is to say—after having made a whole lot of comments about the Liberal and National Parties in Queensland—as follows—

"The switch from a National to Labor administration in Queensland has also helped."

That is what Mr Moore said, and it is about time, too. I only wish that that Liberal Minister's colleagues in this State would catch up with his progressive approach, instead of trailing along in the wake of the environmental vandals who now sit opposite the Labor Party in this Chamber and who used to occupy the Government benches.

Let me make it plain that my Government's approach will be a cooperative approach in terms of the environmental and anti-pollution laws that are needed in this State and in this country. A national approach has to be adopted. A cooperative approach must be adopted, instead of the mindless and petty point-scoring approach that was adopted by those papier-mâché Bjelke-Petersens over the years at the expense of the environment. I can only say that I welcome the refreshing frankness and honesty demonstrated by the Liberal Minister for the Environment in New South Wales, who has confirmed that the approach advocated by the Labor Party in Opposition, and which it will pursue in Government, is the right approach to adopt. He has effectively condemned the attitude adopted by the previous administration in Queensland. It is refreshing to read that type of honesty that is coming from the Liberals in New South Wales, even if it is not forthcoming from the Liberals in Queensland.

In terms of cooperation, there are other areas that need to be addressed and about which significant concern is felt on the part of my Government. There should be significant concerns felt on the part of this Labor Government and on the part of other people right throughout Australia as a result of a statement made yesterday by the Federal coalition. I refer in particular to the signal given by the Liberals and Nationals to the effect that they will not use the external affairs power or the Foreign Investment Review Board to protect the environment when intervention is necessary. All honourable members should be very aware of that position and should be mindful of the danger to the environment that would be posed by a coalition Government, should the the coalition be given the opportunity to return to the Federal Treasury benches.

World Heritage Listed North Queensland Rainforest Areas; Federal Coalition Proposals

Mr PALASZCZUK: In directing my second question to the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing, I refer to the Federal Opposition's proposals to interfere with the integrity of the northern rainforest World Heritage site. I ask: will the Minister inform the House of the benefits accruing to Queensland's economy from the present World Heritage site as a tourist destination? Would he also inform the House of the adverse impact on its value as a major tourist drawcard that would arise from the Liberal Party's plan to violate the existing World Heritage area?

Mr GIBBS: Last night—

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. It is my understanding the World Heritage matters are administered by the Minister for Environment and not the Minister for Tourism.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I call the Minister for Tourism.

Mr GIBBS: Last night, Australians were ravaged verbally by the pathetic Leader of the Federal Opposition, Mr Peacock, who promised this country a platform of reform on the one hand, but on the other hand promised in his policy speech to absolutely kill off one of Queensland's most treasured industries, the tourism industry. If Australians and Queenslanders believe what Mr Peacock had to say last night, it will be obvious to them that the economic impact on this State will be diabolical.

Let me cite what Mr Peacock told listeners to north Queensland radio last Friday. Mr Peacock said that he would have had a smaller World Heritage area and allowed logging, which is the position of the previous National Party regime in Queensland. Mr Peacock said—

"We would have moved for changes in the area of designation, we would have moved for some listing but our areas would have been slightly different."

Senator Ron Boswell told the *Australian* that he had assurances from the Liberal Party's Environment spokesman that all restrictions on World Heritage areas would be reviewed and repealed. It is a known fact that people come to this State to see the beautiful beaches, the tropical rainforests of the north, the Great Barrier Reef and the outback areas. All these will be dramatically affected if, by some incredible, horrible chance, the coalition is successful in winning the next Federal election.

The simple fact is that there are other matters that should concern the tourism industry. Mr Peacock is already on record as saying that, when he wins office, he intends to abandon the Australian Tourist Commission, which has been the most successful promotional organisation of tourism in this country. That body was responsible, for example, for the Paul Hogan commercials shown overseas, which have had a great impact. It has brought about a significant improvement in Queensland's economy.

The horrific record in Government of the Federal coalition parties, which are now in Opposition, must also be remembered. If the Federal coalition had been still in office, we would have seen the damming of the Franklin River, mining in Kakadu and the rainforests of north Queensland logged, raped and destroyed. As well, the Wesley Vale pulp mill would have been built.

The honourable member is absolutely correct in asking his question this morning. At a time when Queensland's tourist industry has suffered dramatically because of the airline pilots dispute, the simple fact is that, if a coalition Government were elected later this month, the \$2.2m that this Government has invested in the resurrection of the tourist industry in this State would be absolutely wasted. The election of the Federal coalition would desecrate the wonderful tourist industry and the World Heritage areas of north Queensland.

Sacking of Mr A. George from Port of Brisbane Authority

Mr BORBIDGE: I ask the Minister for Administrative Services: did he convene or attend a meeting in company with the Minister for Industrial Relations, the general secretary of the Waterside Workers Federation, Mr Tas Bull, and others just prior to the sacking of Mr Alan George as Chairman of the Port of Brisbane Authority? If so, where was the meeting held and what issues were discussed?

Mr McLEAN: I did attend a meeting with those two people. It had nothing to do with the sacking of Mr George.

Mr Borbidge: Where was it?

Mr McLEAN: It was at my office.

Mr Borbidge: What did you talk about?

Mr McLEAN: If I had had my way, I would have loved to have something to do with the sacking of Mr George. However, I state in this House unequivocally that I had nothing to do with the sacking of Mr George.

Opposition members and Liberal Party members know that he sacked himself. He is the man who signed his own contract for \$90,000 a year. The board knew nothing about it. Mr George sacked himself. His sacking had nothing to do with our meeting.

Ministerial Code of Conduct

Mr BORBIDGE: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to his ministerial code of conduct, at least as it applied on Tuesday, 27 February. I ask: in view of possible breaches of the code of conduct by at least some of his Ministers, will he table the code of conduct? Or is it his intention to amend some secret document every time its guidelines are breached by his Ministers?

Mr W. K. GOSS: I presume the question relates to the amazing revelations brought to this House last week by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. If he keeps up that type of conduct, because of his amazing capacity to spy on the children of other members, around the traps his nickname could well become "lock up your daughters". However, because I am sure that even he was embarrassed by his performance, I have full confidence that he will not attract such a nickname.

Mr Borbidge: Will you table your code of conduct?

Mr W. K. GOSS: I am coming to that. The honourable member is going to get the entree first.

It was a fairly pathetic effort, especially from somebody who should be raising serious policy issues in this House and who aspires to be Leader of the Opposition before the term of this Government is through. There have been no breaches of the guidelines.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I have got all day.

Mr Borbidge: You table the guidelines.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I am coming to that.

I made it plain that ultimately the Cabinet handbook and the guidelines should be tabled and released publicly. That is something that Opposition members would never do—something that crooks would never do.

In relation to the guidelines—I made it public well prior to today, and repeated it on Thursday, that in an attempt to cut out the abuses of the past we had developed guidelines; that Ministers were frequently coming up with questions about grey areas and particular cases; and that, as things went along, we would review the guidelines as necessary to ensure that they were both honest and practical. That is something that Opposition members did not do when they were in Government.

In relation to motor vehicle entitlements—I make one important point: my Ministers accepted a \$6,000 cut in their entitlement compared with that into which the snouts of the members of the previous Government were dipping. My Ministers have not been double-dipping with motor vehicle entitlements. They do not have the \$6,000 entitlement.

The abuses that occurred previously in relation to motor vehicles and in other areas are legion. Ministers have been very gentle with Opposition members so far, for reasons which I will discuss with the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy later today, or as soon as possible. They should be aware of the reasons why my Ministers have held back. However, that is not a permanent state of affairs. I suggest that later we have a discussion about this issue generally.

The guidelines will continue to be fine-tuned as and when grey areas arise. When it is appropriate, according to my judgment of the appropriate time, the guidelines will be published.

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

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Federal Coalition Support for Uranium Industry

Mr HAYWARD (Caboolture) (11.00 a.m.): It is a pleasure to rise to speak during the first Matters of Public Interest debate in this new Parliament. The matter that I wish to raise today is of the utmost importance, not just to the people of Queensland but also to all Australians.

It is now a matter of history that on 2 December last year the people of Queensland said that they had had enough. They wanted a change, and they wanted a real change. The people of Queensland said that they would not tolerate continued corruption at the highest levels of Government and public administration. Queenslanders were sick of seeing pimps, prostitutes and politicians being dragged before the Fitzgerald inquiry, detailing the extent and level of corruption in this State, which had been allowed to grow and prosper under the National and Liberal Parties' agenda in this State.

As the Governor stated in his address last week, this Government was elected with a clear mandate for change. Wayne Goss and the Labor team went to the people last year on a platform of cleaning up corruption. Queenslanders said in the most resounding manner that it was only the Labor Party that could be trusted to clean up corruption and bring about the much-needed real change in Queensland.

Although cleaning up corruption dominated the election campaign last year, undoubtedly one of the other major issues that voters wanted addressed by this Government and by Queensland's political parties in general was the protection of the environment. Not only were Queenslanders sick of seeing pimps, prostitutes and politicians revealing the high level of corruption in Government; they were also sick of the National Party's development-at-all-costs mentality. Queenslanders were tired of seeing the National Party destroy our unique environment, and they were tired of its total disregard for the protection of our environment. Voters wanted to rid Queensland of the State's greatest environmental vandals and return a Government that had a clear policy to protect, preserve and manage our fragile and precious environment.

The record of the National and Liberal Parties on the environment can only be described as appalling. Those parties are nothing but environmental vandals. It is therefore incredible—it would be laughable if it were not so serious—that the same Liberal and National Parties—the parties that Queenslanders so resoundingly rejected on 2 December—are asking Queenslanders and all Australians to return them to a position of trust.

Mr Speaker, as you are aware, the Liberal and National Parties are now seriously asking Australians to elect them on 24 March as the next Australian Government. Could Australians be expected to trust those environmental vandals to protect and preserve our environment? As other members will outline to the House today, the election of a conservative coalition Government in Canberra would be a disaster for Australia's environment.

The matter that I wish to raise specifically in this debate is the support of the Federal coalition for an expanded uranium industry and the establishment of a uranium enrichment industry in Australia. Not only does the Peacock-led coalition want to allow the continued destruction of Australia's environment; it also wants to place Australia's and the world's environment in increasing danger by establishing a uranium enrichment industry in this country.

All members of this Parliament should be most disturbed that one of the planned locations for a uranium enrichment plant could be in Queensland. Which member of this Parliament would want a uranium enrichment plant in his or her electorate? Surely not one member would want that. That is the sort of policy that the Nationals and the Liberals are pursuing in this Federal election campaign.

Last week in Ballarat, while launching the National Party's election policy, Mr Blunt announced that a coalition Government would support the establishment of a uranium enrichment industry in Australia. On the week-end the Opposition Leader, Mr Peacock, confirmed that when he was quoted as saying that if the coalition wins, Australia could have a uranium enrichment industry within two years. Mr Peacock has said that his Government would not move to establish a uranium enrichment industry in its first year of Government but that in its second or third year his Government may be able to move to establish an enrichment industry. That is also the case in regard to the coalition's health policy. It would seem that a Peacock coalition does not plan to do anything in its first year. Fortunately for Queenslanders and for all Australians, there will not even be a first year of a Peacock coalition, let alone a second or third year.

The Hawke Government has had a consistent policy and a consistent position on uranium enrichment in Australia—one which the Queensland Government supports. The policy of the Hawke Government is to oppose Australian involvement in further stages of the nuclear fuel cycle. Apart from the environmental reasons, there are sound economic reasons for this opposition to involvement in the cycle.

The nuclear fuel cycle involves a series of processes. For the benefit of honourable members opposite, I will outline those processes. In the first stage, that is the conversion stage, the yellowcake is converted into a gas known as uranium hexafluoride. In the next stage, that is the enrichment stage—the stage that Blunt is so determined to force on to Australia—the content of the isotope U235, which is the isotope of uranium which enables nuclear fission to take place, is increased from its naturally occurring level of 0.7 per cent to about 3 per cent. In the third stage, the gas is chemically processed to produce uranium dioxide. A collection of tubes is then assembled into a fuel element. That fuel element then goes into a nuclear power reactor.

It is the enrichment stage that the Federal coalition wants to promote and foster in Australia. For Mr Blunt and Mr Peacock to promote the establishment of such an industry displays not only a total lack of awareness of Australians' concerns about the expansion of the nuclear industry in Australia but also a total unawareness and lack of understanding of the economics of the situation.

At present, the commercial enrichment services are provided by four organisations throughout the world. The Nuclear Energy Agency has estimated that in 1985 there was a 48 per cent overcapacity of enrichment services. If the upgrading capacity at existing enrichment plants is taken into account, the Nuclear Energy Agency figures for future demand indicate no need for more enrichment capacity up to 1995 or the year 2000. Even if demand for uranium enrichment should exceed supply in the next 20 years or so, the Americans already have a huge diffusion plant in mothballs, amounting to an extra 20 per cent of capacity, which could be brought on-stream.

Clearly, and fortunately, the Federal coalition's plan to establish a uranium enrichment plant in Australia is economic pie in the sky. The proposals of Mr Peacock and Mr Blunt ignore the realities of the worldwide nuclear processing industry. But, more importantly, they ignore the deep-seated and well-founded concerns of Queenslanders and Australians about expanding the uranium industry in this country.

The argument that is being used for establishing a uranium industry in this country is that it will somehow reduce the greenhouse effect in Australia. That argument is debunked in an editorial in the *New Scientist* of 5 November 1988 in response to the British conservatives, who are pursuing the same issue. The editorial states—

"Greenpeace spent last week putting round a rather different story. Its case is that if all the power stations run by all the electricity companies in the world were to switch tomorrow to nuclear energy, the greenhouse effect would be reduced by just 11 per cent."

Contrary to what the vast majority of Australians want, Mr Peacock has stressed that a future coalition Government would give a priority to increasing the mining and export of yellowcake. The statements of Mr Peacock and Mr Blunt have confirmed that

the Liberal and National Parties have no regard for the protection and preservation of the Australian or the world environment.

A vote for the coalition on 24 March is a vote for the environmental vandals and environmental vandalism. Voters should not be fooled into believing that a vote for the Liberals on 24 March is a vote for environmental responsibility and balance. During the State election campaign and now during the Federal election campaign, experience has shown that a vote for the Liberals is a vote for the Nationals and that same old National Party—Sir Robert Sparkes, Ian Sinclair, Russell Cooper and the sundry other former Ministers who are now being dragged before the courts to face corruption charges. Do honourable members remember them? Muntz and others whom I cannot recall have disappeared, but they will be back. That same old National Party, headed by Sir Robert Sparkes, moved at every opportunity to destroy our rainforests, to concrete over our fragile coastline and to vandalise our heritage.

Brisbane Port Authority; Waterfront Reform

Mr COOPER (Roma—Leader of the Opposition) (11.09 a.m.): I intend to highlight the issue of waterfront reform, which is one of the most vital reforms for Australia's economic health.

While the Federal Labor Government grapples unsuccessfully with Australia's balance of payments problem, little is being achieved on the nation's wharves in terms of lifting productivity and efficiency. During the past year the port of Brisbane was the shining exception to that, but I will say more about that later.

The Federal Government must wear the blame for the state of Australian wharves because, while it recognises that reforms are needed on the wharves, it has given the issue kid-glove treatment. Its prime aim has been not to upset the wharfies but to talk about reforms, to offer the wharfies generous redundancy packages and, in general, to do anything that will not make waves on the wharves. Although Labor has managed to give the appearance of addressing the problem, its efforts are merely a charade. Real waterfront reforms are needed, not the Claytons reform of Ralph Willis' half-hearted effort. Keating's record high interest rates have slugged our hip-pockets to stifle import demand, but where was Labor's concern about boosting exports?

Let me examine what has been achieved in the port of Brisbane during the past year. Firstly, the profit of the Port of Brisbane Authority rose from \$3.9m for the 1987-88 financial year to \$17.1m for the past financial year. The profit of the port more than quadrupled in one year. If this year's budget stays on track, the port will make a profit of more than \$22m. How was that profit for the past financial year achieved? What magic wand was waved to produce that turnaround? The answer is that the Port of Brisbane Authority board, which was headed by Alan George, took on the Waterside Workers Federation.

The Port of Brisbane Authority was winning until Labor came to office in Queensland. Its board wrenched control of the wharves away from the Waterside Workers Federation. With some assistance from the former Queensland Government, it put some backbone into the stevedoring companies that had been kowtowing for far too long. In fact, the board got stuck into the stupid work practices. In one area alone, namely timber, costs were reduced by 75 per cent. Waterside-workers retained the right to load timber onto merchants' trucks so that it could be transported to building sites and the like. It was always stupid that merchants could not get at their timber because, as often as not, no wharfies were available to load their trucks. Because wharfies had to be flown in from Newcastle or Melbourne, merchants had to wait six to eight days for their trucks to be loaded. In the meantime a building site was lying idle with the meter running. On average those delays added \$410 to the cost of every house that was built in Australia. How is that for waste!

With some help from the former State Government, Alan George stopped that stupid practice in Queensland. He went to the stevedoring companies and said, "Enough

is enough." The National Party backed him and, not long before the State election, the wharfies caved in. For a while merchants were able to load their own timber, and that resulted in savings of 75 per cent. However, with the election of a Labor Government, that practice lasted for only one week, after which time the situation was reversed.

We are now back to the old ways in which building construction is delayed intolerably. Once again, labourers are being flown around the country and it is again necessary for a supervisor to be present to ensure that adequate room is provided for a fork-lift so that its forks can get into a timber stack. Although that job was made redundant years ago, that fellow is back again for two hours on and two hours off. That episode is one of the main reasons why Jock George was sacked.

If an election had not been pending last year when that reform was introduced, Brisbane's wharves would have suffered major disruption. However, the wharfies knew that a strike so close to an election would have been a disaster for the Labor Party, so they held their water. They knew that if Labor won the election it would put an end to the troublesome Mr George, who wanted them to work sensibly for their money. What a cheek! Those supervisors work two hours on and two hours off for over \$100,000 a year. That is not bad money if one can get it! Since Jock George was sacked, and because reform has gone out the window, that position is once again available on Brisbane's wharves. Because waterfront reform has been chopped by this irresponsible Government, it is finished.

Let me consider another cogent reason why the waterside-workers wanted Alan George out of the way and wanted changes to the port authority board. Cranes that are driven by waterside-workers are used to load containers onto ships. Some crane-drivers know what they are doing, but others do not. Therefore, an extraordinary situation exists in which a skilled crane-driver who has worked for two hours knocks off for two hours and is replaced by a bloke who does not have a clue about how to drive a crane. The result is that Brisbane has one of the worst rates of loading of any port in the world. The world average is 30 containers per hour. The average in New Zealand is 25 and in the United States it is 28. In Singapore and in Hong Kong the average is 40 containers per hour. However, with exactly the same equipment in Brisbane, how many containers do honourable members think that our waterside-workers can manage? Do I hear 20? Do I hear 15, or 10? The abysmal, sad and disgraceful answer is a single digit. Waterside-workers in Brisbane load nine containers per hour. Frankly, one might as well haul off a beach a kid with a bucket and spade and tell him to get to it.

Alan George wanted to get onto the job dedicated crane-drivers—men who were trained to actually load ships, actually trained to do the job. You can bet your bottom dollar that it will not happen now. The waterside workers, with some devious, dishonest, cowardly and certainly despicable help from their comrades in the Labor Party, have got rid of the man who was going to see that reform came through.

Here is another nice example. It relates to the cleaning of containers carrying meat for export. It costs about \$70 to \$80 per container for the wharfies to do it. The only problem is that they do not do it properly and the work has to be done again. Every meat shipping container has to be cleaned twice. How stupid! That costs Queenslanders about \$1m per year.

I will now refer to grain-handling, which is all automated. A person has to press a button and direct a boom into a ship's hold so that the grain rolls down the conveyor belt. To do that the waterside workers want a foreman/supervisor, a first-aid man and two workers. They are part of the \$50m a year wastage that the Inter-State Commission identified occurs in Brisbane and part of the \$620m wastage caused around the country by inefficient waterfront practices.

When Jock George was running the Port of Brisbane Authority, he was one of the heroes of the movement towards reform of the waterfront. Port authorities around the country were constantly sending him words of encouragement. Brisbane had become the shining example, the sign of some light at the end of the tunnel. The authorities and the shipping companies—the people who were never included in the Federal inquiry

into waterfront practices—know that Willis' Federal inquiry is a paper tiger. It is in the hands of the waterfront unions, the stevedoring companies and the Federal Government—the very organisations which caused the problems in the first place!

Where are the really dynamic reformers of the waterfront, the men who have turned a profit, the men who can get things done, the Jock Georges? They are now on the scrap heap. Jock George was doing something about waterfront reform. He was addressing the real issues. He was revolutionising the port of Brisbane and its performance. The rest of the country and the rest of the industry know it. Some of the top shipping companies in the nation have lamented his passing, as have the staff of the Port of Brisbane Authority. They know what has been lost, as do members opposite and other members of this Chamber. The Government engineered Jock George's demise at the meeting between Transport Minister Hamill, Industrial Relations Minister Warburton, and the Administrative Services Minister and former president and vigilant officer of the Waterside Workers Federation, Mr McLean.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is misleading the House. Today he was told by the Minister for Administrative Services that what he is saying is a fabrication and an untruth.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Minister wishes a withdrawal.

Mr COOPER: In deference to you, Mr Speaker, I withdraw. But Mr McLean admitted before that there had been a meeting. We heard him say that in the House.

As I was saying, that meeting took place, along with the general secretary of the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia, Tas Bull, days before Mr George's public execution. On union instructions, the Government destroyed probably the most determined and most skilful practical waterfront-reformer in the country.

Whom has the Government put in his place? A very hard-pressed acting director-general of a mega-Transport Department, who must worry about the Main Roads Department, the old Transport Department, the Railway Department, and the Harbours and Marine Department. It is a Transport Department modelled line for line on the disastrous Victorian model. One has to wonder how much time he will have to consider the important issues of waterfront reform. One has to wonder what sort of priority the whole issue will now have with the Government. I suggest that the active role of the Port of Brisbane Authority in the issue has already come to an end with the deliberate end to the career of Jock George and that what we will see now is subservience to Mr Willis' half-baked reform process. It will do some good and it will make some savings, but it will not achieve a fraction of what Jock George was already achieving. That is why he had to go—on union instructions, not because of his contract.

Time expired.

Logging of North Queensland Tropical Rainforests

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (11.20 a.m.) I would like to express my concern for the future of the wet tropics World Heritage area in far-north Queensland, should a coalition Government be elected on 24 March. This morning, we have already heard about environmental issues, and I would like to contribute to this very important subject.

The long and arduous process of achieving protection for north Queensland rainforests began in 1984 when the Australian Heritage Commission recommended that the wet tropics be nominated for World Heritage listing. It was three years and many reports later, in December 1987, that the Australian Government actually lodged the nomination with the World Heritage Committee. Finally, in December 1988, at the World Heritage Committee meeting in Brasilia, the wet tropical rainforests of Queensland were inscribed on the World Heritage List.

This very brief description of the milestones on the path towards World Heritage listing and the protection for north Queensland forests should not, however, be construed

to mean that it was an easy process; far from it. The Queensland Government opposed the nomination at every turn, both overseas and here in Australia, bringing Australia's name into disrepute in scientific circles. The Government waged a war of fear and misinformation, manipulating the timber-workers for their own political ends—the frustration of the Federal Government. Had it not been for the election of the Goss Government, the High Court would still have been considering the issue, at great expense to Queensland taxpayers.

At the heart of the conflict between the State and Federal Governments was the issue of logging. The Queensland Government was determined to continue the logging of virgin rainforests, despite overwhelming evidence that the sustained logging of tropical rainforests was impossible to achieve and that the forests were of enormous scientific value. The list of eminent scientists supporting the Australian Government's stance reads like a who's who of the scientific community. I will cite three examples.

Peter Ashton, a professor at Harvard University and president of the International Association of Botanical Gardens, said—

"The rainforests of northern Queensland are unique (and I use that term advisedly). They are the last refuge of a quite extraordinary number of specialized plants and animals . . . Contrary to some assertions, there is every evidence that selective logging can lead to extinction of rare taxa."

Professor David Curtis, the president of the Australian Academy of Science, said—

"We conclude that on scientific grounds there are compelling arguments in favour of the World Heritage listing and conservation of the area . . . Arguments for continuation of current managed exploitation of the tropical rainforests, based on the suggestion that selective logging has few effects, are very superficial . . . In summary, we emphasise that on scientific grounds the preservation of the north Queensland rainforests is of the highest importance."

Peter Endress, Professor of Systemic Botany, University of Zurich, said—

"There is no question that the tropical rainforests of northern Queensland are the most important ecosystem with primitive flowering plants in the world . . . This is really a priceless and irreplaceable possession of mankind as a whole."

Despite this view of the world's scientific community, the Queensland Government persisted and it set up its own management agency called NORMA to develop a land-use plan for the World Heritage area that would allow for the continued logging of virgin rainforests.

However, much to NORMA's embarrassment, its own scientific advisers confirmed that this management strategy was indefensible on both ecological and environmental grounds.

Thus, Dr Carl Jordan of the University of Georgia, an international forestry expert commissioned by NORMA, had this to say—

"From an international perspective, logging of the Queensland rainforest would be the ultimate in short-sighted abuse of a World Heritage . . . the Queensland rainforest is so rich in species, natural beauty and conservation values, that it would be irresponsible of Australia not to promote World Heritage listing, with complete elimination of logging."

That is from NORMA's own expert. Dr Jordan went on—

". . . to continue logging in the minuscule Australian rainforest, simply to support a handful of workers operating helplessly outdated mills is really the ultimate in parochialism."

He concluded—

". . . there seems no alternative to complete closure of the Queensland rainforest under World Heritage listing."

Fortunately, it is now a matter of history that the view of the Australian Government prevailed and there now exists a cooperative attitude between the Queensland and Federal Governments with respect to World Heritage and the management of the wet tropics.

But, it is this relationship that is in jeopardy, along with the rainforests, because I believe that a coalition victory on 24 March will see the return to logging in the rainforests of north Queensland. A coalition victory will result in the removal in the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act of those regulations that prevent logging and it will entrench its own pro-logging appointees to the management authority.

Of late, Senator Puplick, the Opposition Environment spokesman, has been very coy on this issue. He cannot disguise the fact that the National Party wants World Heritage legislation revoked.

While Senator Puplick was on record in 1988 as saying in an ABC radio interview that no listed areas would be removed, his spokesman later was reported in the *Cairns Post* as saying that the domestic legislation allowing the Commonwealth to wield power in the heritage-listed area could be revoked. This is the very legislation that prevents logging. This morning in the House we have already heard that Mr Peacock and Senator Boswell are of a similar mind. There has been no change since 1988. We still have World Heritage listed rainforests at risk.

Support for logging is still strong amongst the National Party in Queensland. Just a week ago, the National Party candidate for Kennedy, Mr Ross Shannon, was reported in the august *Herbert River Express* as saying—

"The declaration of the Wet Tropics into a World Heritage area was cynical and grossly irresponsible."

He has promised to fight for the re-establishment of a significant timber industry because, and I quote Mr Shannon—

". . . the current ban on harvesting cannot be justified and selective logging should be resumed."

Obviously, the National Party's Mr Shannon is not very widely read, except probably for the National Party propaganda peddled from the likes of the World Heritage opposition group.

So, at the very time when Queenslanders thought they had won the battle to protect the wet tropics with the establishment of a joint management authority and the end of logging, a coalition victory on 24 March could mean that we will have to start that battle all over again.

A Labor Government in Canberra is surely the only means that we in Queensland have of protecting the wet tropics World Heritage area for future generations. I call on the Federal Leader of the Opposition, Mr Peacock, to make clear to the people of Queensland just what would happen to the World Heritage area? Will he give us a clear commitment that logging will not recommence in that World Heritage area? Queenslanders are waiting for the answer, and it must be made clear to us all.

Waterfront Reform

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.28 a.m.): There would be few more important issues facing Australia today than waterfront reform and there are few greater challenges facing the Goss Government if it intends to match its rhetoric with performance.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: For the assistance of the third-time lucky Treasurer who interjects from his wrong seat—it is a fact of life that the inefficiencies of Australian ports are hurting every Australian. For example, those inefficiencies contribute an additional \$400 to the cost of the timber that is used to build the average new house in Queensland. As

the Leader of the Opposition indicated, we can only process nine containers per hour compared to 40 in Hong Kong.

The simple fact is that the Goss Government, in concert with the general secretary of the Waterfront Workers Federation, has scuttled waterfront reform in Queensland and, in the process, savaged the integrity and honour of one of Brisbane's finest businessmen.

Government members interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I can understand the sensitivity of honourable members opposite.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: For what he has done for Queensland, Jock George is worth every one of them put together.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Brisbane Central has not yet made his maiden speech. I advise him that he ought not to interject until he does so.

Mr BORBIDGE: Members of the Goss Government have been running around, heads held high, telling the world that Australia needs to become more competitive and, quite correctly, that the reason for our extreme balance of payments blow-out is our lack of competitiveness with our trading partners.

The Treasurer, the man who aspires to the same heights in public financial administration as his colleagues in Western Australia, Victoria and Canberra, tells us that we need to manufacture more, to redirect our productive capacity to high value-added, technology intensive industries. However, what he and his colleagues do not tell us is that, at the very basis of improving our capacity to export, is the creation of an efficient waterfront. We will not improve exports whilst we have union thuggery holding business and commerce to ransom. It is very much like the craftsman who produces the best furniture in town but is rude and abusive to his customers. It does not matter how good his product, he will not sell any.

What we have seen in Queensland since the December election is the total dismantling of the Port of Brisbane Authority, which had been successfully tackling the most difficult task of waterfront reform. As the Leader of the Opposition indicated, the authority, under the chairmanship of Alan George, increased profit from \$3.9m to \$17.1m in the space of one 12-month period—an increase in profit of more than 300 per cent, and I repeat, "300 per cent". Contrast that with the performance of the State Bank of Victoria, the fiasco surrounding WA Inc or any of the other Labor models round Australia and we can understand why honourable members opposite feel so sensitive. Why then, we may ask, has the authority been dismantled with further sackings taking place at Executive Council last Thursday? This Government is gloating so much that it is not prepared to observe even the normal conventions of government and, in contempt of the oath of office that each and every Minister is required to take, has deliberately and selectively leaked Executive Council business to the media.

Mr FitzGerald: They have taken no notice of that. It means nothing to them.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Lockyer says, the oath of office means nothing to them.

The reason is simple. The Port of Brisbane Authority was getting too close to the bone with the reform agenda that it had set. Those reforms would have eventually led to a more efficient port system in Brisbane and a model to embarrass the rest of Australia. The Premier and Labor are protecting their mates in the same way that Prime Minister Hawke is protecting them. Ministers opposite simply do not have the guts to take on the waterfront unions. So, when the Premier and his Treasurer speak of their desire for a more competitive Queensland, we on this side of the House know that it is nothing more than a publicity blurb orchestrated by the "A Team" in the Premier's office.

Let us consider Labor's record of waterfront reform. In 1969-70, the Waterside Workers Federation lost a total of 1 072 600 man hours in industrial disputations. When

Hawke came to power in 1983, this had fallen to only 30 900 man hours lost. So, in stepped the Labor Party and Prime Minister Hawke, a man who talks about making Australia more competitive, and what happened? In 1985-86, the Waterside Workers Federation lost a total of 309 800 man hours in disputes—disputes over the coup in Fiji, disputes over South Africa and disputes for the sake of having disputes. At least the Labor Party has made Australia competitive in something. Between 1982 and 1987, Australia's waterfront topped the annual strike figures issued by the ship-owners mutual and strike insurance association of London. Congratulations to the Australian Labor Party.

Mr Elliott: A top record!

Mr BORBIDGE: "A top record", as the honourable member for Cunningham said.

In this illustrious period, informed members opposite will recall the Webber study of the waterfront, the Inter-State Commission and the reforms as initiated by the Port of Brisbane Authority. Yet none of these has threatened the status quo, although all recommended the most basic of reforms be initiated as a matter of urgency.

The Port of Brisbane Authority reform agenda does not even get the chance. It is stopped in midstream, stripped of its eminent personnel and sent off in a new direction. Given the nature and style of this new Goss Government and the philosophical reference group it seeks to appease, our concern is that this new direction will take the waterfront down a line of inefficiency—the same line proposed by Prime Minister Hawke and the Labor Party in Canberra.

If the Premier and his Transport Minister are genuine about waterfront reform, they should immediately endorse reform proposals, many of which have already been undertaken by the Port of Brisbane Authority. They include: the right of the employer and not the union to hire and fire and to set minimum and maximum staffing levels; Government redundancy funding for excess wharfies be given only in return for genuine waterfront reform being undertaken; the use of contract or non-union labour; and sanctions for unlawful industrial action. Of course, we know that the members of the Labor Party cannot commit themselves to reforms of this type. The Prime Minister cannot do it and the Premier cannot, either. The reason is their reference group—the people who run the Labor Governments round this country. They are the people who have already had their say.

The result is a clandestine and secret meeting between the Minister for Administrative Services; the Minister Industrial Relations and Mr Tas Bull, the general secretary of the Waterside Workers Federation; and other union officials. Let me outline the history of the participants. The Minister for Administrative Services, prior to his election to Parliament, was a union official, the president and vigilant officer of the Brisbane branch and a federal councillor of the Federated Waterside Workers of Australia. The Minister for Industrial Relations was assistant secretary of the Electrical Trades Union, the people who gave us the SEQEB strike. The record of Mr Tas Bull and the Waterside Workers Federation are legendary, with their exploits etched into the fabric of all that is wrong in industrial relations in Australia. This conspiracy remains about the only event of any significance in which the Minister for Administrative Services has involved himself.

What happened a few days later? The chairman, Alan George, is sacked. A few weeks later, others face the Goss guillotine and the brave efforts of the authority are stopped dead. In addition, a scurrilous campaign to denigrate the former chairman is initiated to disguise the real reason for Alan George's dismissal.

I must make mention of the point of order taken by the Minister for Transport earlier and I refer to the comments made by the Minister for Industrial Affairs, Mr Warburton, in the *Australian* of 29 January 1990. Apparently the Minister for Transport has indicated to this House that the secret meeting had nothing to do with Mr George or the Port of Brisbane Authority. We have an admission here that the port authority had been on the agenda for that particular meeting. The admission was made by the Minister for Industrial Affairs and is in conflict with comments made today by the

Minister for Transport. The campaign of the National Party in Opposition will continue to highlight the outstanding efforts made by the Port of Brisbane Authority.

Mr De Lacy: This is absolutely pathetic.

Mr BORBIDGE: The third-time-lucky Treasurer of this State should be in the forefront of waterfront reform in the State of Queensland. He has reneged on his responsibilities by running away from the issue. Time expired.

Federal Coalition's Record

Hon. P. COMBEN (Windsor—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (11.38 a.m.): Having sat on the Opposition benches for the last six years, can I say initially that it is a great view from the Government side of the House. In these times, as we move towards a Federal election, it is appropriate that State Ministers look to what sort of cooperation the Queensland Government can expect from a Federal Government after 24 March. State Ministers have a duty to say to the people of Queensland, "These are the alternatives." I suggest that there is only one alternative, and that is, because of its environmental record, the return of the Hawke Labor Government.

In the last seven years Australia has become a world leader in conservation. Our efforts to save forests and wilderness, protect the ozone layer and Antarctica, and prevent the damming of the Franklin River have won international praise and respect. That is what the Government in this State will be moving towards in the next nine or 12 years. For the years that the Government occupies these benches, it will be moving in the same direction as the Labor Government in Canberra.

When one looks at what a coalition Government has done and at what it will be doing, in future one will say, "Goodbye to the Franklin River and to the tropical rainforests." Under a coalition Government, mining would take place on Fraser Island; five-star developments will be constructed along the coast; one will see uranium enrichment; and there will be no cooperation, no system, no supervision and no guidelines for environmental protection in Australia. That is a scenario that is unacceptable to Government members; it is a scenario that is unacceptable today to the people of Australia; it is a scenario that is totally unacceptable globally.

Let me examine the coalition's record to date. During the past seven years the coalition has opposed almost every significant environmental decision taken by the Federal Government. For example, it has opposed the World Heritage listing of Stage 2 of Kakadu National Park where the coalition supports the mining of Coronation Hill. The coalition could see Kakadu and its wildlife knocked out in one pollution spill in one area.

The coalition has opposed World Heritage listing of the wet tropics of north Queensland. I still do not know what the bill is for the fight by the previous Government to oppose that listing. However, the Government knows what the bills were for Geoff Muntz to troop all over the world to attend a whole range of court cases and international forums and to be a fool at each of them. The Government knows that the Leader of the Opposition supported those moves. However, the Government does not know the cost of the legal action. I have seen the legal advice in which the former Government was told initially, "You cannot win." The action by the former Government to try to "defend" the northern tropics had already been tried in Tasmania. The case law is quite clear and unequivocal. The cost to Queensland was \$800,000 or more. That was the approach taken by the former Government.

The coalition has supported a World Heritage nomination for only 30 000 hectares of the Tasmanian wilderness area. The Federal Labor Government, in cooperation with the Tasmanian Government, protected more than 20 times that area with a nomination of more than 600 000 hectares. The advantages to tourism in Tasmania are now well

known. This morning, my colleague the Minister for Tourism enumerated very well the advantages to Queensland of the listing of the wet tropics.

The Federal coalition has supported fast-track development of the Wesley Vale pulpmill. Every day the mill would have dumped 13 tonnes of organochlorins into Bass Strait at a point where there was almost no tidal movement. All we would have had was a marvellous new resource—a whole ocean of organochlorins. That is the type of policy that the coalition has adopted to date.

Last night on television, Mr Peacock said that former Liberal Governments listed Fraser Island, or protected Fraser Island, and did marvellous things for Antarctica. The reality is that there was a former Liberal Government that knew that it could do very little and would do only minimal amounts. The raising of the Fraser Island issue today is really a little spot in the ocean of the past and is totally inappropriate for the modern moves towards environmental care and protection in Australia. The coalition is an environmental and economic vandal of the worst sort.

I turn to the future of the coalition. As bleak and as poor as the coalition's record has been over the past seven years, the future looks even worse. According to its answers to the Green Challenge log of claims, which are being released today, the Liberal and National Parties would have what really is the worst excesses of a free market system—no system at all. It would be the freedom of the hunter at any time to be able to rape and pillage. If it had its way, the coalition would open the way for the resumption of logging in the wet tropical rainforests of Queensland. In the *Australian* of 21 October 1988, National Party Senator Ron Boswell claimed that he had an assurance from the shadow Environment spokesperson, Senator Puplick, that all restrictions on World Heritage areas would be reviewed and repealed.

As my colleague the member for Barron River has already said, that means, "Open it up. Do what you want. Knock over what you want. Chainsaw it. Whatever you choose to do in the World Heritage areas, that's all right by us, mate." That is the sort of thing that the Opposition's colleagues on the back benches—that vanishing group—would have. Every time I am re-elected, there are fewer members of the Liberal Party in this Chamber. Every year members of the Liberal Party say, "We are going to be the major coalition partners after the election." When I was elected to Parliament, there were 12 members of the Liberal Party in this Chamber. After my first re-election, there were only 10 members of the Liberal Party. How many members of the Liberal Party are there now?

Mr Gibbs: A three-quarter pack.

Mr COMBEN: A three-quarter pack!

An Opposition member: They have to take their shoes off.

Mr COMBEN: They do not even have to do that these days. They sit there and they all look the same.

They would rape and pillage with their Liberal colleagues. They are not concerned about the environment in Queensland. They are not concerned about the environment in Australia. They are totally out of touch. They received their just deserts on 2 December last year.

The coalition and members opposite belong to the parties that form that coalition would continue to refuse to nominate any more areas of Australia to the World Heritage List without the agreement of the relevant State Government. The Federal coalition and the opposition in Queensland would allow miners into Kakadu national park and give an immediate go-ahead to the proposed Coronation Hill mine. They would abandon the Resource Assessment Commission's inquiry into that region. That example illustrates the worst excesses of a free market system. They will say, "We don't want to have an investigation or inquiry into what the best system is. We don't want to weigh up competing land uses but will say to the Resource Assessment Commission, 'Forget your deliberations; forget trying to implement a system whereby each person can

participate and share the responsibility of decisions properly made in Australia. Forget all about that. We will let the big developers come in with their hip pockets full of money and let them dig holes in the ground. Forget about appropriate tourism development and forget about protection of the coastline. Let the sand-miners in.' Whatever the developers want to do, they will be able to do it because there's no system. If they have the money, they will be able to do as they please."

The Federal coalition would abolish the office of the supervising scientist in the Alligator River region. That would be another instance of there being no control over the environment in that area. Closer to home, the Federal Opposition has a proposal for Cape York. A multimillion-dollar land-use inquiry has been undertaken to ascertain the competing uses of land in that area.

The attitude of the Federal Labor Government is to work out a system of land use. The Federal Government says, "Let us zone the land. Let us ensure that its wilderness values are maintained and that its traditional owners' needs are accommodated in that area. Let us look to conservation values." In contrast to that, what would the Federal coalition do? When members of the Queensland Labor Government are looking for multimillion-dollar subsidies to properly manage the area, according to the policies announced yesterday, the Federal Opposition would abandon any Commonwealth Government involvement in a joint land-use study of Cape York Peninsula that has already been announced by the Federal and State Labor Governments.

The Federal coalition Opposition and its counterparts in Queensland would take away from the Queensland people millions of dollars in subsidies on a dollar-for-dollar basis. They will not in any way use powers that are available under legislation to issue export licences or protect any part of Australia from excesses of development. They intend to abolish the Foreign Investment Review Board, which is one of the instrumentalities that allow the Federal Government to act on environmental issues. The Federal Opposition's proposals represent a return to the free market system, which offers no protection at all for the environment. Moreover, the system provides for no cooperation at all between the Federal and State Governments. It must be remembered that no Government has total power at all times, irrespective of whether it is a State or Federal Government. Under a Federal system, cooperation involves a weighing-up of the powers of both levels of Government. Queensland needs the Federal Labor Government; it needs instrumentalities such as the Foreign Investment Review Board. In spite of that, the Federal coalition Opposition and its counterparts in Queensland are saying, "Forget it! You will be in the hands of multinational companies and the white-shoe brigade." The result of their policies will be that the environment will be destroyed; the environment will be finished. That is the legacy that will come to all Australians if, on 24 March, the Federal Opposition wins Government.

Cooke Inquiry into Trade Union Practices

Mr INNES (Sherwood—Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.48 a.m.): It is regrettable that some of the worst of the old habits have been repeated by the Labor Government. There are very few occasions upon which private members can have the floor or take the initiative in the House. The last Minister I heard contribute to this debate was Mr Don Lane. I suppose it is appropriate for the Minister for Environment to participate in this debate because he is being systematically stripped of his promises, entitlements, powers and portfolio by the Premier.

I turn now to the matter that I wish to discuss in this debate. I wish to bring to the attention of the House some of the uncontested evidence that has been revealed in the Cooke inquiry. Last week in this House, the Premier described the Cooke inquiry "as an unethical and disgraceful misuse of public money". On every occasion, he has bagged the Cooke inquiry and he has attempted to bag the matters that are the subject of inquiry. He has attempted to denigrate the work being undertaken by the Cooke inquiry.

Yesterday the inquiry was told that \$2m of Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association funds—workers' funds—passed through 15 secret bank accounts held by ALP vice-president, Ken Goodhew, and others. Out of that money, \$94,000 was illegally transferred from secret bank accounts to the ALP. What did I hear about the so-called unethical and disgraceful misuse of rank-and-file union members' money? During question-time today, the Premier offered more justification of those acts and more denigration of the Cooke inquiry. More special pleading and more deception was engaged in, but not a word was said by the Premier who is setting the style for this new Government. The members of the Labor Government are the people who scoffed at the brown paper bags; yet the ALP is happy to accept its dirty money by the wheelbarrowful.

I expect that the evidence about the FEDFA will just be the tip of the iceberg. The State Government must act to give the Cooke inquiry an extension of its terms of reference. The inquiry should be allowed to investigate the books of all trade unions in Queensland to establish the amount of money that has illegally found its way into the coffers of the ALP. All the fuss about accountability has resulted in the wives of, and other females connected with, members of Parliament having their affairs placed on the record of this House. What about the real ties, the real power and the real money that go with obligations? Last week a Minister admitted in the House that he writes directly to trade unions. I would have thought that the usual practice of a well-ordered political party was that there should be no contact between political candidates and the sources of campaign funds; that there should be no compromise. But, no, that Minister writes and obtains funds. How the wheel has turned full circle.

An inquiry that was rubbished by the present leading members of the Government has become a true son of Fitzgerald. Since the inquiry, which is taking a legitimate and long overdue look at corruption within the Queensland trade union movement, was announced it has been bitterly and constantly attacked. When the present Attorney-General was a member of the former Opposition, he said that he would close down the inquiry, but today this ALP Government does not dare touch directly this inquiry which has placed a spotlight on the rotten, squalid, dishonest and illegal practices of trade union bosses in this State. This inquiry should lead to a long-awaited clean-up of trade union practices in Queensland if not for the protective buffer of this Government that the unions have.

It is clear that trade union bosses have gone off the rails. They are ripping off their members to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars. The ALP is trying to deceive workers by claiming that the inquiry is seeking to discredit them.

Mr Elliott: That is a nice old rort at the Bjelke-Petersen Dam site.

Mr INNES: Exactly. This inquiry is acting in the interests of the rank-and-file unionists and of the genuine worker who strongly objects to union dues being used for the personal comfort and sexual gratification of union bosses who have rorted their way to the top.

We have the disgraceful spectacle of the secretary of the FEDFA, Mr Ken Goodhew, admitting that he used \$52,000 of union funds without permission to buy a Gold Coast unit. Is the pattern not the same? Remember all the policemen? One always wondered how they managed, on policemen's salaries, to buy units at the Gold Coast. I do not have a unit at the coast. Now union officials, whose formal remuneration is supposed to be comparatively modest, have units at the coast. Mr Goodhew has not repaid any of the money that he borrowed more than two years ago.

The inquiry has been told that Brisbane's prostitutes did a roaring trade every time a trade union held a committee of management meeting; that several officials of the FEDFA were paid \$217,660 in tax-free wages, perks and allowances; and that a building owned by the FEDFA that was sold for \$950,000 was entered on the balance sheet as having been sold for \$450,000.

Conspiracies to defraud the revenue, illegal activities and corruption included \$104,000 passing through Goodhew's secret bank accounts and food-parcel money

collected for sacked SEQEB workers ending up in at least one union official's personal bank account. They will diddle and rot their own, the system and the laws. They will come at anything. Goodhew's wife, Annette, found \$15,000 hidden in the kitchen cupboard of her home while she was looking for coffee. I bet that in that household it was not Instant Nescafe; it would have been boutique coffee.

The evidence involving the liquor trades union has exposed a pattern of vote-rigging, fraud and violence. That union's former State secretary, Brian Elton, and the assistant secretary, Colin Hardie, have already been convicted and fined for being in wrongful possession of ballot-papers for the 1986 union election. I might add that I have a personal interest in the abuse of those moneys. My student son works at the drive-in department of a liquor barn. Because of the policies of the owner, he is forced to be a member of the liquor trades union.

Mr Gibbs: And you are hoping that he will become an official.

Mr INNES: If I ever felt criminal enough to aspire to union officialdom, I would certainly go to the honourable member to find out the rorts and perks. Nobody would know better than Bobby Gibbs.

I have been harsh on the honourable member, so I will say something in his justification. The dreadful Mr Elton, a union scab on the abuse of the workers' money, was behind an ALP ban on its members' drinking Power's beer because its employees had freely negotiated a voluntary employment agreement. Remember that Elton had the present Tourism Minister, Mr Gibbs, hauled before the ALP's administrative committee to explain why he had sipped from the poison chalice—a glass of Power's beer. The reality was that Power Brewing was offering a free beer, and Bobby Gibbs could not resist a free ticket.

The inquiry has heard that throughout the 1980s most of the liquor trades union elections have been rorted. An electoral commission officer, Mr John Curtis, told the inquiry that he had been subjected to intimidation and terrorist tactics by people acting for liquor trades union officials. Mr Curtis, who was responsible for supervising the 1986 liquor trades union elections, said that last July his house was burgled on consecutive nights. His home had also been threatened by a deliberately lit fire in surrounding bushland. That intimidation came after he gave evidence in the Federal Court against union officials Brian Elton and Colin Hardie for election fraud.

When Curtis contacted the police about the intimidation, he was told by the police, "The people Elton and Hardie mix with are more than capable of doing this." Only last week at the Cooke inquiry, Elton and Hardie refused to supply their fingerprints. They had guilty consciences.

But the most sinister shadow hanging over the liquor trades union is still the unsolved murder of Donald James McLean, a former organiser for the union. Shortly before the union election in 1986, outside a house in Murarrie, he was shot five times. Police said that the murder was a professional hit. They did not discount the possibility that McLean's assassination was connected with his activities as a liquor trades union official. Whatever the reason behind McLean's death, fear still stalks the union.

On 4 December 1989, Colin Hardie told the Cooke inquiry that, because secret evidence had leaked from the inquiry, his life could be in danger. Who does Hardie fear may murder him, and why?

The seriousness of the evidence calls into question a whole range of trade union practices and ethics. I believe that the Premier, Mr Goss, must give a public undertaking that he will accept and implement all the recommendations that Mr Marshall Cooke, QC, may make in his report, which is expected to be delivered later this year. It is time for Goss to practise what he preaches. There are no no-go zones, no closed shops keeping the unions from inquiry and from observing the laws of this land. Just as the Premier demanded that the previous administration implement the Fitzgerald report "lock, stock

and barrel", so must he accept and implement all Cooke's recommendations. To fail to do so would be seen as gross hypocrisy.

It would appear that the clean-up of corruption in Queensland ends at the door of the Labor movement. It would mean that the Government was prepared to spare trade union bosses at the expense of police, public servants and politicians, who have all undergone the most intense scrutiny of their affairs. Some are now facing the courts, where their innocence or guilt will be established.

Time expired.

At 11.59 a.m.,

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, the House proceeded with the debate on the Address in Reply.

ADDRESS IN REPLY **First and Second Allotted Days**

Debate resumed from 1 March (see p. 75).

Mr COOPER (Roma—Leader of the Opposition) (11.59 a.m.): In rising to speak to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, I assure His Excellency of the Opposition's continuing loyalty to and affection towards the Throne. With the first change in Government in Queensland in 32 years, a new political era has begun. I wish His Excellency to know that we are determined that the National Party will play a very major role in that new era.

I repeat my congratulations of election night to Premier Goss and for the first time offer them collectively to his ministerial colleagues and his back bench. Government members won a truly historic victory on 2 December last. In the three years that they have been granted by the people, I sincerely hope that they achieve good government of this great State of ours. We will ensure that they do.

The Government's historic victory was our historic loss. It is saying nothing against my party, the National Party, to declare that I understand very clearly the message that was delivered by voters on 2 December. Thirty-two years is a long time for any party to be in Government. I do not believe that it will happen again in our history. It should not happen again because the seeds of many of the problems that beset the National Party in its final years in office flowed, I believe, with a substantial degree of inevitability from that longevity.

The National Party accepted unequivocally the message from the people. We have formed an Opposition and we will play our role for the next three years, serving the public interest. We will be vigorous and vigilant, constructive and active. My party accepts that it is quite possible that some acts on which the people passed judgment on 2 December were ill-advised and some, I think, were the result of political atrophy—an atrophy which, quite frankly, and very importantly, was displayed equally on the other side of this House.

For much of the past three decades the Opposition to the Government of this State was a very poor Opposition indeed. It was divided, it was unimaginative, and it was poorly led. The Labor Party failed to meet its obligation to the people of this State to provide good Opposition, and it was always full of excuses. Chief among them was the so-called gerrymander. The State's electoral system is one of the most poorly understood and most enduring running excuses for failure to perform in Australian political history. It became the crutch of the Labor Party. Whenever it failed to gain 50 per cent of the vote, its excuse was the so-called gerrymander.

In the final analysis, the very first time that the Labor Party won the votes of more than 50 per cent of electors, it won Government. So much for the alleged unfairness of the alleged gerrymander! Although I congratulate the ALP on its election victory, I must

say that the nature of that victory provides pretty cold comfort to the new Government. It took conditions that could not have been more favourable for the Labor Party to gain the confidence of more than 50 per cent of the people. On a two-party preferred basis, for the Federal Opposition to win, it needs a higher percentage of votes than was the case in Queensland.

In retrospect, and in the memorable words of His Excellency the Governor-General of Australia, Mr Bill Hayden, a drover's dog should have been able to win the election on 2 December. At the first meeting of Labor's State council after the election, even the Premier himself conceded that on 2 December many thousands of Queenslanders had voted Labor for the first time in their lives and that they would need great incentive to do so again. With due respect, I do not believe that they will get it.

From the very beginning, this Government has displayed the mirror image of the problems that beset the previous Government near the end of its 32 years in power. If 32 years is too long for a Government to maintain vigorous standards, then so too is 32 years too long for an Opposition to keep the proper role of Government clearly in perspective. The ALP in Queensland is effectively a snap-frozen version of what the ALP was in this country in the years after the great split of the 1950s. We saw the legacy of that syndrome in 1972 when Labor won federally for the first time in more than 20 years and Gough Whitlam was let loose on the land. Significantly, Mr Whitlam was a prominent presence at the opening of the 46th Parliament of Queensland. Perhaps he knows what is coming.

Queensland now has the same party, full of the same zeal, getting its first taste of power in 32 years. It has not had the chance, as other State parties have in recent times, to learn that nowadays a Labor politician needs to disguise himself as a wolf in sheep's clothing. A Labor politician needs to wear pin-striped suits to pretend that he is really a friend of business and that he really knows how to add up. We all know the truth about that lot opposite, and by now the disguise is wearing pretty thin.

There are lessons that Labor in Queensland has yet to learn. I am afraid that we are all now strapped to that learning curve, with members of the Government like show-goers at the big dipper; like it or not, it is too late to hop off. In several important ways—portentous ways—they certainly have not started well. The Government's first actions were to indulge in a bloodbath like nothing seen in the Government of this country before. It behaved collectively like a rampaging, revolutionary mob on its first night in the palace. All that was missing was a guillotine on the footpath outside the Executive Building.

The treatment of people was, and will remain, an abiding disgrace. Vindictiveness was the order of the day, and in the midst of the revolutionary fervour there were excesses and innocent victims. Some of the State's most senior public servants, people of great substance and long service to the State, received brusque little phone calls in the dead of night, and the message was simply that their services were no longer required. They were packed off to a hastily renovated building at the Normanby, far from the Government precinct, known as the Gulag. They were literally chucked on the scrap heap. Others did not receive even a perfunctory phone call. They read in the newspapers that they were for the chop. Hundreds of other State public servants inhabited that Gulag until just over a week ago. There they sat, at great cost to the taxpayer, doing work which was as close as the Labor Government could provide to sewing mailbags. They did not even have the opportunity to work for the new Government, simply because they worked for the previous Government.

Such is the paranoia of the new Government, the volume of its accumulated bile and the depths of its bitterness that it will no doubt add to the joy of its assassination squad to understand that, to a man, its victims were unsuspecting. They certainly expected change. They expected that others would take the most senior roles in departments. But they did expect to work for the new Government, were prepared to do so, and indeed wished to do so. These are attitudes typical of the public servant. In fact, they are the very bedrock of the attitudes that must exist in the great institution that is the

public service. The need to serve different Governments, to come to terms with different Ministers, is the typical pattern of public service life. These people have suffered merely because there had not been a change of Government for so long that the party that was in Opposition was not prepared for Government; it was prepared only for venting its pent-up frustration and making up for decades of impotence.

Then we had the infamous night of the long knives in which some of the most progressive and dynamic reformers and businessmen in the State were axed from positions of authority simply because, like the senior public servants, they were appointees of the previous Government and worked well with it. Nobody doubts the right of an incoming Government to have, in the crucial senior roles in the public service and in important statutory authorities, people in whom they have complete confidence. There is no argument with the truism that any new Government will exercise its right to hire and fire—to bring in people of its own choosing. But the new Government did not, and does not, have the right to humiliate in return for mere titillation—to gratuitously slake 32 years of frustration by laying waste lives and careers.

The way all this was done reeked of an immaturity and a blood-lust that does not augur well for Queensland. Many victims of the night of the long knives did not have the slightest courtesy afforded them. There was no indication whatsoever from the Government before they read of their sackings in the morning paper. Those sorts of gutless back-stabbings were acts of venal, ill-mannered cowardice. They will not be forgotten. I take this opportunity to thank all those public servants and officers of statutory bodies who have given great service to the State but who have been so shamefully treated by this new Government.

Not to be forgotten is the directive from the fifteenth floor of the Executive Building that stated that no person who worked in a ministerial office during the past 32 years would be employed in any current ministerial office. That gives such a clear lie to the suggestion that, under Labor, all public service positions would be filled solely on merit. The Government believes that it would not be proper for people already within the public service to work in the Premier's own office, and even stenographers and clerks in ministerial offices have been cast aside. The Premier's back-up staff has been hired from outside the public service through private employment agencies. All of that has occurred against a background chorus of self-righteous proclamations that Queensland was entering into a new age in which the Westminster system would reign supreme.

Any person with a reasonable understanding of the Westminster system would recoil at the hypocrisy of the rhetoric compared with the reality. Without a newspaper advertisement or any other opportunity for applications, this Government created positions for seven departmental heads, which were filled by Mr Goss' revolutionary tribunal. So much for the Westminster system and Westminster rhetoric!

It is important to establish the facts of the matter so that, for their own good, Queenslanders recognise the need to be quickly on guard and recognise that this Government is quite capable of hypocrisy. In a very short time this Government has shown that some of its policies are grossly faulty and hypocritical. At a time when emphasis should be placed on the reverse situation, the Government's recent move to end compulsory life sentences for dealers in dangerous drugs—which presages a softer legislative attitude towards drugs on at least one other front, namely, the personal use of marijuana—will not be welcomed by a majority of Queenslanders. Too many of our young people are exposed to the pressures of drug-taking, and the State should provide safe harbour.

Throughout the Government's short life, its softening of the hard line that was taken by the previous National Party Government has been displayed with alarming consistency. One example of that, which gained some media coverage at the weekend, concerned the Film Board of Review, which Labor wishes to scrap. That board ruled against a new video on the grounds that it was "gratuitously violent". The abolition of that board will lead to increased exposure of our young people to violence, which seems to be a regressive move and is quite contrary to the concerns of people, particularly

families with young children. The State should be prepared to give harbour to those young people in circumstances that are so crucial to our living standards.

I turn now to the administrative reform process—another major area of concern which the Opposition will regard as a top priority. Administrative reforms must proceed not only quickly but also properly. Major signs indicate that Government members are willing to play political games with the whole administrative reform process. During the State election campaign they attempted to unload onto the Criminal Justice Commission matters of Labor Party policy, including the issues of homosexual law reform and the personal use of marijuana. On two occasions Sir Max Bingham has had to gently rebuke the Government and reject its view on homosexual law reform, which he believes is a social issue that most properly should be dealt with by politicians. In common with those conservationists who perhaps narrowly voted in the ALP member for Maryborough only on the basis that they expected that a Labor Government would stop logging on Fraser Island, the other supporters of the Government must now feel cruelly cheated on the issue of homosexual law reform.

As to poker machines—the double standards of the Government on the reform process have been very clear. During the election campaign, the social issues of homosexual law reform and the personal use of marijuana were considered inappropriate policies to put before the people. Those issues have been hived off to the Criminal Justice Commission. However, the Government feels competent to make a decision on the introduction of poker machines. The history of poker machines in this country is riddled with references to the most insidious forms of organised crime, up to and including the Mafia. As recently as last October in this House, the Minister who will be chiefly responsible for the introduction of poker machines to Queensland declared that the body that he has now charged with overseeing the introduction of poker machines, namely, the Casino Control Division, was corrupt. It is interesting to note his sudden about-face on that issue after the election. Suddenly that division was no longer corrupt because the Minister was in Government and the Government desperately needed the income from pokies to fund its promises and programs. In this case the Criminal Justice Commission process and social responsibility were suborned for a fistful of dollars, which is clearly a travesty and is not what was intended for the commission.

The Premier's personal budding record on reform has been flawed very early indeed. Recently, when asked whether the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission would be a permanent body, Mr Goss declared that the commission would be around "for a while" and that he had "no firm views" on the issue of permanency. The previous Government had a totally unambiguous and firm view, namely, that the EARC and the CJC should be permanent.

Last October in this House, when the former Opposition leader spoke on this matter, he argued vehemently for the permanency of the commission. He is now less enthusiastic, and I believe that I know why. This Government has its own agenda for what it wants to happen in the public service and in other areas of reform. That agenda has been held sacred throughout a long period in the wilderness and it is now being framed by the Government's very large band of outside advisers. Because the Government really does not have a clue about how to do the job, it has had to fall back on outsiders, including some from Griffith University. Not one member of this Government has the slightest experience of running a Government department, let alone a Government. As a result, the Government has employed men who it believes know how to do the job. The Government does not want the EARC or other necessary administrative reforms—of which we heard so much before the election—getting in its way.

The Opposition will not let the Government get away with that. The National Party recognised and accepted the need to subject the administrative processes of the State to independent inquiry. The National Party brought to this House the legislation enabling the establishment of the CJC and EARC. As the Opposition, we will ensure that the Government lives up to the commitments that we gave to this House when we were in

Government and to the commitments that the Labor Party made during the election campaign.

Two other principal issues that will dominate the role of the National Party in Opposition as they did in Government are the economy and the related issue of industrial relations. Despite the sniping of the Treasurer, the Queensland economy is the best in the nation by a country mile, and it has that status because of the sound and conservative budgetary practices of successive National Party Governments. National Party Governments consistently brought down balanced budgets. They imposed on Queenslanders the lowest State taxes in the nation. They consistently ensured that they kept the Government superannuation funds, the third-party insurance fund and the workers' compensation scheme fully funded.

This is directly the opposite of practices in the Labor States, and its significance in meeting the Government's responsibility to its citizens can hardly be overestimated. One has only to look at John Cain's Victoria, where that State's workers' compensation scheme, Workcare, has unfunded liabilities of more than \$7 billion. Because the South Australian Government has not met its obligations, within 20 years it will go broke meeting the pay-outs on superannuation. This is the inevitable legacy of raping the so-called hollow logs. It has happened elsewhere in the country because Governments, particularly Labor Governments, have an uncontrollable urge to spend. But a person cannot responsibly spend more than he earns. That is a truism now very painfully evident in our debt-ridden society and it is a truism that the National Party Government of Queensland, over 32 years, always heeded. At times it meant that spending on even quite crucial areas of need had to be subjected to the rigorous test of whether it was affordable. In Government, as in life, the coat has to be cut according to the cloth. There is absolutely no point in mortgaging the future to the hilt to pay for the needs and wants of today. It is not just bad book-keeping, it is also creating a time-bomb for future generations. We can all see that, at the Federal level, that attitude has led to external indebtedness of more than \$180 billion.

Now there is a new Labor Government on the landscape, one with a 32-year-long list of spending priorities. If it is unwilling to apply the same vigorous test of affordability practices as that applied by the previous Government, it can go only one of two ways. It can raise taxes or it can rob the hollow logs. I strongly suspect that it will start with the hollow logs. It is politically the most expedient way, because there is no immediate voter backlash, whereas tax increases carry an immediate political risk. However, the longer-term danger is horrific. One has only to witness the state of the Australian economy and the economies of Victoria, New South Wales in post-Wran trauma, and Bannon's poor old South Australia. To all intents and purposes, they are broke. If they were sold up tomorrow, their assets would not cover their liabilities. The dangers of overspending are clear. The propensity of Labor Governments to overspend is equally clear, so the protection of the tax levels and the hollow logs of the Queensland economy will be a top priority of the Nationals in Opposition.

Our role in industrial relations will be similar. The Labor Party is dominated by the unions. One has to look only at the Government's front bench to see that union power leads to political power in the ALP, and that the two are inextricably intertwined. So we can expect to see from this Government moves that greatly extend the power of the unions, at great cost to our society. The process is already under way, and it began within hours of the election. Before the final count was completed, union thugs were in the car park of this House heavying cleaners, under threat of their jobs, into joining a union. So we are back to a closed shop—if you are not in a union in Queensland now, comrade, then you are out. Nothing could be more conducive to turning back the clock in this State, where action against the abuse of union power turned our power industry from one with the worst industrial relations record in the nation to the one with the best. Side by side with that goes the cheapest non-hydroelectric power in the nation. Now we are going to see a mass of pro-union moves from this captive Government.

We are told by Mr Warburton that we will see the end of voluntary employment agreements, which provide workers with real benefits in return for real increases in

productivity. Even the Federal Treasurer, Mr Keating, now recognises, through his backing of enterprise agreements, that productivity is a key to our future as a nation. However, this State will be the little brother of the Canberra regime, which also thinks that sound industrial relations negotiations can provide 12 per cent tax cuts and 6 per cent wage rises in one year for the return of a 1 per cent increase in productivity. That does not add up. It is a major factor pushing this country towards Third World status.

Because of the nature of its win on 2 December, the new Government of Queensland has claimed a mandate. But that mandate was not based on dismantling the industrial relations system and returning it to the failed formulas of the past. If we are ever to regain real prosperity in this country, not the false impression of it built on borrowed money and borrowed time, we all have to address the issue of productivity. We also have to address the future. That was the challenge that the National Party first addressed in Government 32 years ago. The future it made was the transformation of Queensland from being the Cinderella State of the Commonwealth to the State with the most dynamic economy in the nation and the State with the most envied life-style.

In recent years, in ever-increasing numbers southern refugees have been pouring over our border. They have come here for far more than the sunshine. For all the recent attention to the negatives, the positives are clear and significant. Those southerners have been coming here to find jobs, which have been created in record numbers, to bring up their children and to provide their families with a better life-style. Apart from the climate, the National Party Government of this State provided that enticement.

Now we are faced with a new challenge. Only part of it is a defence of the good things, the great things that this party achieved across the broad span of 32 years. The bulk of that challenge will be the opportunity, free of the rigours of day-to-day Government administration, of making the National Party such an attractive alternative Government that it wins the next election and ensures that the progress of Queensland continues. The National Party will have the time to remodel its policies in a way that more closely reflects the aspirations of Queenslanders. Despite the fact that the National Party finally disappointed a majority of Queenslanders, it is a great party—a great institution. It recognises that the trust of the people cannot be taken for granted. It can and will regain the trust of the people. There are 50 000 people out there who believe in it deeply enough to be members. There are 26 National Party members in this House. We will all be working together to rebuild our party into the model conservative force of the twenty first century: the natural, the obvious, the only real choice for Queenslanders at the next election.

Our basic creed will remain unaltered. We will remain the low tax party; we will remain the economically responsible party, and we will remain the small government party. When we are returned to Government, we will again bring down balanced budgets. At the next election, when we are returned to Government, we will again bring down balanced Budgets. We will refine our policies to help Queenslanders achieve good, productive, full lives for themselves and their families.

Our eyes and our efforts will be on the future. We will convince young Queenslanders that the best and the only responsible approach to Government is a conservative approach. And, in the meantime we will try to keep this Government on track so that it does not mortgage the future, ruin our economy and our life-style, or in any other way abuse the trust of the people. We will not do so in a negative way.

The National Party will back this Government when it proposes sensible action that will benefit the people of Queensland and advance the cause of open government. We will also advance our own visions for a better future, both as it relates to the broad picture and to the conduct of this House.

In that context, it is significant that, on the very first day of this Parliament, it was the National Party which first brought forward the issue of Westminster reform when it proposed that the method of election of Speaker of this House, and his subsequent standing, should more closely reflect the Westminster model. That was a genuine attempt at initiating parliamentary reform, and our offer to enter formal discussions on this topic still stands.

Although I am disappointed that Mr Speaker did not see fit to consider positively the suggestion, I am pleased that the Premier saw merit in the proposal. When all is said and done, however, the reform process goes beyond individuals and it is this Parliament that will decide, be it in five or 50 years.

This Government has talked about the importance of freedom of information legislation, but did not deem it important enough to form part of His Excellency's agenda for the Government. It should have appeared.

I agree that FOI legislation could provide a great safeguard against bureaucratic and political excess and give Queenslanders access to information in the hands of the Government. So, let us get on with it.

Two viable models exist, in Victoria and at the Commonwealth level. All that this House needs to do, and the Parliament and EARC are quite capable of doing it, is to ensure that some of the problems associated with the legislation elsewhere are not repeated here.

Freedom of information legislation has had some problems both in Victoria and at the Commonwealth level. In Victoria, Premier Cain tried to narrow the Act by passing regulations allowing him to determine which papers should be defined as Cabinet documents rather than letting the courts decide. A Supreme Court challenge was made to that attempt and the Government eventually lost in the High Court.

Cain also passed regulations declaring a number of Government agencies exempt from the Act, which for a while enabled him to hide the very politically damaging problems of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation. He placed the corporation under the umbrella of the Rural Finance Corporation, which was an exempted agency.

Newspapers in Victoria have found that FOI legislation does not open the floodgates of information. On several matters they have had to take their requests to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

The Commonwealth legislation has also undergone some teething problems. Citizens have found that the Commonwealth FOI legislation does not necessarily mean ready access to information. People can end up with very little after a great deal of effort and, often, expense. The wait for information is often too long, but the Act is working well, particularly with the process of constant review being carried out by the Administrative Review Council. This Government could begin work on such legislation tomorrow and have it very quickly before the House.

Other very important matters were also deemed inappropriate, or not important enough, for the Governor's Speech. They include many worthwhile reforms that the National Party will back, and I move that the question before the House be amended by the addition of the following words—

"However, the House regrets that the initiatives following, which were supported by the present Government during the recent election campaign, have not been listed among the proposed Bills to be placed before the House and, noting that satisfactory working legislative models of them exist in other parts of Australia, requests the introduction of appropriate Bills to implement them with the minimum of delay—

- (1) Freedom of information, based upon the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act.
- (2) A comprehensive administrative appeals system, based on the Commonwealth Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act.
- (3) A comprehensive code for judicial review of administrative action, based on the Commonwealth Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act.
- (4) Administrative independence of the Supreme Court and District Courts, based upon Parts III and V of the High Court of Australia Act.

(5) A comprehensive system of parliamentary committees, based on the system operating in the Senate, and the abolition of the right of the Ministry to prevent disclosure of information to the Parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts."

I commend the amendment to the House.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.28 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker, in seconding the amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply moved by the Leader of the Opposition, I firstly take this opportunity to reaffirm my allegiance and that of my constituents to Her Majesty the Queen and her most worthy representative, His Excellency the Governor.

I also extend my congratulations to the Speaker on his election to that high and ancient office. I wish him well in the difficult task ahead.

I also wish to express sincere appreciation to my constituents in the electorate of Surfers Paradise who, despite a Statewide move to the Labor Party, have again, in extraordinary political circumstances, placed their trust in my ability to represent them during the life of this Parliament.

On 2 December the people of Queensland gave notice that they required more of the Governments they elect. Since that day, all they have got is more government.

Above all, the people of Queensland voted for reform. For our part, we have taken stock of our role as Her Majesty's Opposition and intend to play a major part in the reform process. We are wholeheartedly committed to that course.

I extend my congratulations to all new members of this Parliament, and I trust that their stay here will be an interesting and an enjoyable one. I remind them that the reform process started in the Forty-fourth Parliament. It was the previous Parliament, and it was the National Party in Government, that set up the Fitzgerald inquiry. It was the National Party Government that created the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission and the Criminal Justice Commission arising out of Mr Fitzgerald's recommendations. It was the previous National Party Government that appointed the new Commissioner of Police and created the implementation unit. The agenda for reform that is before the Forty-fifth Parliament had its beginnings in the previous Parliament with the party that now resides on the Opposition benches.

We seek, therefore, to have an input into the way that the Government undertakes the reforms it has proposed. We will not oppose for the sake of opposing, a trait perfected by those who now sit on the Treasury benches. Rather we will seek to provide valuable input into legislation affecting Queensland and Queenslanders. We will preciously protect our right to bring on debate whenever we believe it appropriate.

The amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition is evidence of our commitment to reform and I trust that it will enjoy the support of all members in this Parliament. The amendment requires a positive response because, either by design or deception, the Government has not addressed many of the issues on which it campaigned so heavily. A massive void is developing between its promises and its performance. The mistakes of the past tell us that we need effective freedom of information legislation in accordance with the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry. The Goss Government should immediately outline its timetable for the introduction of freedom of information legislation. It should also clearly spell out those areas of Government activity that will be exempted from inquiry. It should do so now—not next year, not the year after, not just before the next State election. Only then will the electorate be able to make a reasonable judgment on whether the actions of this Government match its rhetoric. The Opposition today is pleased to provide the Government with this opportunity.

It is appropriate that today, a little over three months since the Goss Government was elected, we speak of its performance. As the Leader of the Opposition indicated, the Goss Government inherited the healthiest State economy in Australia. It is the only State in which compulsory third party, public service superannuation and workers' compensation schemes are all actuarially sound. The Treasurer would not accept my

interjection this morning during question-time. He inherited a situation in which stamp duty receipts are running at \$200m over the Budget estimate. Those opposite could not have walked into another Government in which the economic performance was so proven and the economic situation so good.

The first three months of this Government have produced little more than vindictive attacks on the public service and barrells of political rhetoric penned by the new elite in the public service. The Parliament has already seen the presentation of legislation to create a Public Sector Management Commission. I do not want to canvass that matter today but I do wish to point out to the Parliament the double standards and the hypocrisy of the Goss Government. On one hand it says that it champions fairness and equity in public service appointments, yet, behind the scenes, it has created an elite group of advisers attached to the Premier that is constantly churning out political propaganda. I believe that, whereas six people worked on the fifteenth floor under the administration of Joh Bjelke-Petersen, Mike Ahern and Russell Cooper, 18 people advise the present Premier. I am sorry; it is now 25. He has appointed a few more.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: They have to have all the minders for the Ministers up there, too, because we have also seen the Goss Government refine the principle that the Cabinet is irrelevant.

Queensland has the only Government leader in Australia today who has to make an appointment to see his private secretary. The "A Team" runs Queensland and it has made the Goss Cabinet irrelevant.

Mr Stephan: Sometimes the private secretary is not available.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Gympie said, sometimes the private secretary is not available to meet with the Premier.

These unelected high priests of political manipulation who now haunt the fifteenth floor of the Executive Building are Labor's new breed of faceless men. Time and time again, when he was in opposition, the Premier spoke about the green and gold pass. He has introduced the red pass, and he has introduced it in a very savage and vindictive manner. Let me make it perfectly clear that we have never challenged the Government's right to appoint the people whom it wants in ministerial offices, but we do object to the holier-than-thou attitude of those who sit opposite us in this Chamber. It would be very interesting to know from the Minister who is presently in charge of the House whether the gurus on the machinery of government committee on the fifteenth floor have yet, three months after the election, finalised ministerial staff appointments. Because the whole structure of government has been in absolute upheaval, it is impossible to get telephone calls returned and questions replied to .

Mr Randell: I wrote to the Minister last December and I haven't got a reply yet.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Mirani said, he has been waiting months, and that is typical of the hiatus in the public service brought about by the vindictive nature of the Premier and his senior advisers.

Attacks on the public service are legendary. The attacks on the public service which occurred in Queensland on 2 December were something else altogether. The wastage of public money in demanding that the most senior of officers take six weeks' paid leave and then placing them in exile at a so-called research division was excessive to say the least. The Government has yet to make available the actual cost to the taxpayer of this expensive and vindictive exercise at the Goss Gulag. Then there was the way that the executions were carried out. On the Friday, the Treasurer of this State assured the Under Treasurer—the second most senior public servant in the State of Queensland—that his tenure was secure, that he would remain in that position. Then, at 5 o'clock or 5.30 p.m. the following day—24 hours later—we saw the execution of John Hall as Under Treasurer of the State of Queensland. The execution was carried out not by his Minister,

not by the Premier, but by another public servant under orders. Where is the decency in that form of public administration? There has been example after example of the vindictiveness and the vitriol that has been perpetrated by this Government. The Opposition is concerned that this style of government will be reflected in the operations of this Parliament.

Members of the Opposition read with interest the *Courier-Mail* of 26 February, wherein the Leader of the House, this new-found democrat—at least for 24 hours—proudly proclaimed that the Government was determined to ensure that Westminster principles were respected. The newspaper article stated—

"The Government has already signalled an end to 'government by bulldozer' and said it was determined to ensure Westminster principles were respected."

I am referring to a statement made by Mr Mackenroth, the Leader of the House. The article continued—

"He said it also was time for opposition parties to be given a better go during such periods as question time."

What happened this morning? Six questions were asked. For close on half an hour Ministers were bellowing on with ministerial statements. The Premier said that that would not happen under his new order—the brave new face of democracy in Queensland. The Leader of the House further stated—

"Members have not had the opportunity to raise matters and it has been necessary to use other devices and measures to get those matters up.

We will ensure that members have the opportunity to raise matters that concern them—and I would like to see them play by the rules."

The new Government and the new Leader of the House said, "We'll fix it." What happened? On the first working day of the new Parliament the Opposition was gagged twice in one hour.

Mr FitzGerald: These people supported it, too.

Mr BORBIDGE: Supported by the members of the Labor Party opposite.

The Opposition was gagged to howls of "Get used to it" from the Government benches—the Treasury benches. The Deputy Premier and the Leader of the House said, "Get used to it." What happened to the fine rhetoric of a few days before? What happened to all the double standards and the hypocrisy of the Labor Party when it used to condemn the former Government every day over the alleged abuse of the operations of Parliament?

Matters of extreme public importance that were current on that day, such as the sacking of members of the Port of Brisbane Authority, went unheard, while at that very moment Executive Council minutes providing for the sacking of four more authority members awaited execution in the Executive Council Chamber, which is just a little walk from here. Members of the Government did not have the courage or the decency to debate the matter. They know full well that, once the Address in Reply debate is before the House, under Standing Orders mechanisms do not exist for members to propose that a definite matter of public importance be discussed.

Other issues have arisen, such as the admission by the disgraced former vice-president of the State ALP, Ken Goodhew, that he had deliberately stalled the Cooke inquiry to ensure that Labor was not damaged electorally. The involvement of at least one Government Minister warrants full and frank debate. Members of the Opposition are waiting for the opportunity.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we seek the Chair's assistance in ensuring that the arrogance and the vindictiveness of this Government is not reflected in the Parliament. This Government has much to worry about. It is not delivering. It has already been found wanting on issues of ministerial propriety and accountability. Its secret ministerial code

of conduct, which the Premier refuses to release, just keeps being amended when Ministers are caught out.

Mr FitzGerald: "Finetuned", he said.

Mr BORBIDGE: Finetuned.

Mr FitzGerald: What a fiddle!

Mr BORBIDGE: Finetuned and fiddled, as the member for Lockyer said.

Yet every day we sat on the Government benches the Leader of the Opposition, who is now the Premier, said, "Table the guidelines." That is another example of the rhetoric falling far short of the delivery. The Government is changing the rules to suit the game. Whilst the Premier's ministerial code of conduct remains a secret document that can be amended secretly, it is not worth a cold crumpet.

This Government has also been silent on a number of very important issues. I refer to the Cape York spaceport, which is potentially the most important single project in the industrial development of Australia and which has been placed effectively in jeopardy by dithering, inaction and indecision. The Goss Government has permitted Canberra to take control of the agenda with recent statements by the Federal Environment Minister, Senator Richardson, pointing to a two-year joint Federal/State land-use study as a prerequisite for the spaceport at Cape York.

Mr FitzGerald: Do they want it or not?

Mr BORBIDGE: As the member for Lockyer asks, "Do they want it or not?"

I am telling the Government now—and I hope——

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member says that the Government does not want it.

Mr Beattie: No.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am sorry, I misunderstood the honourable member. I thought that he said that he did not want it.

What I am saying to the Government today—I hope that I am proved wrong—is that if it delays for two years the commencement of construction work on the Cape York spaceport, there will be no spaceport on Cape York. Senator Richardson's new scenario was quite apart from my experience in office, when in discussions with Senator Button in Canberra we had reached an in-principle agreement setting down a timetable for legislative and other governmental support for the project. Senator Button was very supportive of the project; Senator Richardson, in concert with Mr Goss, has now seized control. What the Government does not realise is that countries in proximity to the equator are looking at the viability of commercial spaceports. Already, E-Prime, one of the major aerospace companies from Florida, is talking to the Indonesian Government about a commercial space-launch facility there. There are proposals for a commercial spaceport in Hawaii. A private consortium is working towards a similar facility in Florida in the United States, and there are other examples.

Mr Wells: Wasn't it Joh's idea to have a spaceport?

Mr BORBIDGE: What I am saying to this Government as constructively as I possibly can is that by dithering and dawdling the Cape York spaceport will never come to fruition.

Mr Wells interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: This Government seems confused by the complexity and magnitude of the project.

Mr Wells interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: Neither the Premier nor the inane Minister who now interjects understand the concept one iota. Since 2 December, they have had the opportunity to implement the space industry development strategy that was endorsed by the previous Government. It is the blueprint for State Government action to facilitate construction of the spaceport at Cape York, but it is gathering dust in the Premier's Department. That strategy document received approval in principle from the Federal Government through Senator Button. I want to try to get the message through to the academic/philosopher opposite who interjects—the Attorney-General whom Queenslanders have inherited—that in Australia there is only a very limited window of opportunity before another near-equatorial commercial spaceport project comes into being, in competition with Cape York. The State Government ought to move rapidly and not dawdle indefinitely with studies.

The Goss Government should immediately set out an administrative and legislative timetable for the development of the spaceport. If it fails to do so, it runs the risk of ensuring that the single most important industrial development project in Australia does not come to fruition. It is all very well for Senator Richardson to say that the site is not convenient; it is all very well for Senator Richardson to say that the State Government should wait two years until the land-use study is completed; but it will be interesting to see whether or not the Federal Government intends to wait two years for an economic impact study on the new RAAF base at Cape York. It is a fair bet that it will not, and that, if it can implement construction proposals in that regard, it should be able to act similarly in relation to the spaceport. Any continued failure to facilitate this project and any action that does nothing to advance the project will have the effect of undermining it. I renew my call on the Goss Government to brush off the dust from that strategy and implement it forthwith.

I am also concerned that this Government may have bungled the massive China Steel Corporation mill proposed for Gladstone. The China steel proposal, which would represent a unique opportunity for Queensland to expand its industrial base through investment of up to \$8 billion, is another example of the Goss Government's inaction. The Goss Government has been so busy purging the public service that it has not been governing. The Minister for Manufacturing has been dithering around, not knowing whether or not secret tender documents have been sent to Canberra at a time when the Prime Minister has been actively lobbying for the project to go to Newcastle. For more than 12 months, in the face of strong competition from other quarters both in Australia and overseas, the previous Queensland Government had been working hard on the China steel project.

Mr Stephan: Do you think that the Minister is now aware of what is happening?

Mr BORBIDGE: I have no idea. I do not know that the Minister even knows what day it is.

Despite having the jump on other contenders, this inept Government—either wittingly or unwittingly—has furnished highly sensitive tender documents to the Federal Government at a time when the Prime Minister is lobbying strongly for the project to go to Newcastle. How naive can any Government be? I make the point that I do not necessarily blame the Minister for Manufacturing. I believe that the action was taken on the advice of the wonderful group of academic advisers who haunt the fifteenth floor of the Executive Building.

It is emerging that the Goss Government is considered to be a branch office of the Federal Labor machine. It is unable to make any concrete decisions at all, without phoning home first. Queensland has an "ET" Government. The first three months of the Goss Government will surely be remembered for two things: the first is its witch-hunt in the public service, and the second is its massive indecisiveness.

Let me cite another example that illustrates the style of the Goss Government. The previous National Party Government was able to secure the Indy Grand Prix for the

next five years. The staging of that event would have resulted in massive worldwide television coverage that would have been transmitted to approximately 130 million viewers. The new Tourism Minister jumped in, boots and all, like a Rugby player who had entered one scrum too many. Soon after the election he announced that the grand prix would be dropped and that he would not waste \$20m of the taxpayers' money. At that stage he had not even read the briefing notes. The only commitment given by the previous Government was a loan of \$1m from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to Queensland Events Corporation to kick-start the event. Typical of the Minister's style of shoot first, ask questions later, by that decision he showed only vindictiveness rather than good judgment based on the facts. The uproar from the Gold Coast community has since prompted that Minister and the Government to rethink the matter and reread the briefing papers. After three months in office, however, the prospect of holding the Indy race in Queensland is fading fast.

I am reliably informed that the New South Wales Government is now close to prising the grand prix from Queensland for its Eastern Creek circuit. That represents another lost opportunity for Queensland. On conservative estimates, \$30m per year in income would have been derived by the tourism industry and the Gold Coast area.

What action, if any, have the Minister and the Premier taken to prevent such a move? The answer is that they have taken no action at all. The Minister has spent most of his time getting offside with the harness racing fraternity and defending himself against allegations that he accepted donations from the Federated Liquor and Allied Industries Employees Union. The Minister and his colleagues may well be overawed by their elevation to the Treasury benches, but they have a great deal to learn about the running of Government in consultation with private enterprise.

The simple fact is that, because of the lead-time required to arrange corporate sponsorship, if a firm decision is not made on the Indy Grand Prix as soon as possible, there will be little chance of salvaging next year's event. Government Ministers—thanks to the sound financial management of the previous Government—may not need to worry too much about next year's Budget, but private companies have to allocate expenditure well and truly before the next financial year begins.

Almost on a daily basis Queenslanders have heard about the Goss Government's commitment to social justice. Today I wish to mention a matter that relates to my electorate. One of the first actions taken by the Goss Government was to close down the police post that the National Party Government opened in Cavill Mall in the heart of Surfers Paradise. Prior to the election the previous State Government made an agreement with the Gold Coast City Council. The agreement was to the effect that if the council built the police post, the State Government would ensure adequate manpower.

One of the first actions of the Goss Government has been to ensure that that major break-through in keeping the centre of Australia's major tourist destination safer than it was previously was negated. The former National Party Government put the police post there, but the Goss Government closed it down. Perhaps one year the Minister for Police might get around to answering his correspondence. Already there has been one stabbing in the immediate vicinity of the former police post, which I dare say would not have occurred if it had still been there.

The people of the Gold Coast are concerned about the level of commitment, or lack of commitment, of the Goss Government. We have seen the decision to axe the grand prix and the closing of the police post. We understand that the Labor Party privately considers that the Gold Coast has done too well under successive conservative Governments. After the pilots dispute \$2m was pumped into far-north Queensland, yet Queensland's premier tourist destination has received effectively nothing.

The Labor Party's only Gold Coast member of Parliament, the member for Albert, has closed down his electorate office at Runaway Bay and moved to Beenleigh, some 45 minutes from the northern Gold Coast community, where the bulk of his constituents are, and only 10 minutes from Mr Goss' electorate office. We know the reason why he has done that, because the member for Albert has told us. When asked whether he was

going to be a oncer, he said, "No, not after we fix the boundaries." Because areas such as Runaway Bay and Paradise Point are tory, he wants to get rid of them. At the time, we challenged the Premier to dissociate himself from the comments of the member for Albert. However, he has failed to do so.

Mr Littleproud: Guilt by association.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the member for Condamine said, it is guilt by association.

In addition, the Gold Coast has lost a \$40,000 grant to the Point Danger air sea rescue base, which was promised by the former National Party Government. We have also seen a failure by the Goss Government to honour a stamp duty refund for Gold Coast Lifeline. The list goes on. The Goss Government and the Labor Party have made it clear that they want to get even with the Gold Coast.

The Government thrives on vindictiveness. If it maintains its stupid get-even-at-any-cost mentality, it will bring about its own downfall. Many Government members are uncomfortable at some of the actions that have been taken. The Minister in charge of the House at present, Mr Eaton, is an honourable and decent man. There are many others. I am sure that privately they are equally concerned about and not happy with certain traits in the management of Government that has developed in recent weeks.

As we enter this new era of change and reform, it is vital that the supremacy and sovereignty of Parliament are preserved. This morning at question-time, the Premier condemned the coalition because it intends to return to this Parliament its sovereignty in matters relating to World Heritage and matters relating to international conventions that, over a number of years, Federal Ministers have signed in concert with regimes overseas with which members would not want to be seen dead. The Federal coalition says that, if elected, it will return to the States their sovereignty and powers that were always intended in the Constitution. Yet the Premier of Queensland does not want it. No doubt many other Government members do not want it.

Opposition members believe in the supremacy and the sovereignty of this Parliament. If the elected Government, whether it be conservative or Labor, commands the majority of seats in this House, so be it. However, what the Premier said today was a sell-out of Queensland's constitutional rights. When the powers that have been usurped from this Parliament by the Labor Party in Canberra are returned to it, I can imagine how uncomfortable the Premier will be. At that time, he might have to make a few more decisions and he might have trouble honouring a few more promises. I might add that he has not had difficulty in not honouring promises.

There is a special obligation on all honourable members in this Forty-fifth Parliament.

Dr Clark: It is the Forty-sixth.

Mr BORBIDGE: I am sorry. It is the Forty-sixth Parliament.

In Opposition the National Party intends to be vocal and energetic. It also intends to be responsible and to ensure that the Government and its Ministers abide by the standards that they so readily espoused in Opposition. They set the standards for themselves. On 2 December, the people of Queensland passed judgment. We accept that. However, the Labor Government cannot run away from the principles and standards that it espoused in Opposition and which were endorsed on 2 December by the people. Opposition members intend to rigorously ensure that the Labor Party in Government honours the trust that it received from the people of this State and that Ministers abide by the standards that they espoused in Opposition.

I have much pleasure in seconding the amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): I now call the honourable member for Brisbane Central. I remind honourable members that this is the member's maiden speech and that it is customary that that speech be heard in silence.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (2.30 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of satisfaction to participate in this debate on the amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. As you would know, Mr Deputy Speaker, it has taken me some time to get to the stage of making my maiden speech. I certainly intend to enjoy it.

At the outset it is important that I thank some very important people who have not only facilitated my election to this House but also provided me with necessary support from time to time. My special thanks must go to my campaign director, Alderman Joe St Ledger, and his wife Rita; the president of my electoral executive committee, Jack Camp, and his wife, Lou; the secretary and treasurer of my campaign committee, John Sargent, as well as all members of my campaign committee and the branch secretaries and party members in Brisbane Central.

Alderman David Hinchliff and Alderman Tim Quinn deserve special mention for their support, as does the secretary of the Kelvin Grove branch, Terry Wood, the secretary of the Fortitude Valley/Windsor branch, Dennis Bailey, the secretary of the West End branch, Brian Shannon, and the members of the Greek branch. Brian Shannon, who stood with me weekend after weekend on the corner at the West End shops, had a heart attack during the campaign. I am pleased that he is recovering. Brian is one of those Labor stalwarts who waited 32 years for the victory in December 1989, and he has certainly cherished and relished it. The party members of Brisbane Central worked extremely hard during my campaign, and I am very appreciative of their loyal commitment.

I also take this opportunity to thank my predecessor, Mr Brian Davis—who is well known in this House—and his wife Jean for their support and to wish them well in their future endeavours.

It would be unforgivable of me if I did not make special mention of the support that I received and continue to receive from my wife Heather and the understanding of my three young children, Larissa, Denis and Matthew. As many members in this House would know, family members are often the ones who suffer from having a parent in public life. Those members who have young families like I do appreciate the sacrifices that they have to make. Accordingly, I hope that in the future child-minding facilities will be provided within the precincts of Parliament House for official functions and as a support for members.

Without the support of my wife, Heather, it would not have been possible for me to have run the vigorous campaign that we ran in the lead-up to the 1989 election; nor would it have been possible for me over the years to have spent many hours away serving as State secretary of the ALP on the national executive and national campaign committees.

Although my children may not yet understand what Parliament is, I also thank them for being as understanding as young children can be. My daughter Larissa Jane turned five on 25 October 1989, just prior to the election, and my twin sons Denis and Matthew turned four on 2 January 1990, a month after the election. I am delighted that my family is able to be in the public gallery today to hear my maiden speech. I was extremely disappointed that my family was unable to be present at my swearing-in last Tuesday. My son Denis was in the Mater hospital after a 14-foot fall from our back veranda. Such are the problems of politics and young families. I trust that Denis will not jump over the gallery and join me in the Chamber today.

I pay a special tribute to two people who have had a significant influence on my political involvement—the late Dr Denis Murphy and the retiring Federal member for Brisbane, Mr Manfred Cross. As many honourable members would know, Denis Murphy was the former State president of the party and Manfred Cross was my predecessor as State secretary. Denis Murphy and I worked closely together as president and secretary of the party from 1981 until his death in 1984; prior to that, from March 1980, we served together on the administrative committee of the ALP.

The only certainty about politics, of course, is its uncertainty. A good illustration of this was the untimely death of the late Dr Denis Murphy. Denis was State president of the party officially from 1980 until he died of cancer in Brisbane's Holy Spirit Private Hospital on 21 June 1984. The late Dr Murphy must take a lot of the credit for laying the groundwork for the ALP's victory on 2 December 1989. Without his contribution, we would not have won the State election. Denis was reader in history at the University of Queensland and was widely recognised as an authority on Australian labour history. He was the first and only academic to become president of the Labor Party in Queensland. He authored and edited 11 books, including *Prelude to Power The Rise of the Labor Party in Queensland 1885-1915*, *Labor in Power*, *T.J. Ryan A Political Biography*, *Hayden A Political Biography*, and in 1983 he edited an edition of a book called *Big Strikes*. He was awarded the Australian Literary Foundation Award for his 1975 biography of T. J. Ryan.

Denis Joseph Murphy was born into a working-class family in Nambour in 1936, the youngest of eight children. His father was employed as a bridge carpenter by Queensland Railways. He did his study the hard way, obtaining his academic qualifications through part-time study while working. Before becoming a full-time academic at Queensland University, he taught at Nundah State School and Redcliffe State High School. In 1963 he joined the Aspley branch of the ALP and served time as State president of Young Labor. Denis was a respected and outspoken branch member delegate to the ALP's old Queensland Central Executive from 1968, becoming State party president not long after the national ALP executive, on the advice of the then Federal Opposition Leader, Bill Hayden, decided to intervene in the Queensland branch by appointing a new administration on 1 March 1980, 10 years ago last Thursday.

In 1972 and 1974 Denis unsuccessfully contested the Federal seat of Petrie. In the State election on 22 October 1983 he was elected to the marginal State seat of Stafford. His talents were such that he was immediately elected to the shadow Cabinet and given the shadow portfolio of Health. However, it was at the administrative level of the ALP that Denis made his most significant contribution before his untimely death a couple of months short of his 48th birthday. That premature death was a tragic loss, both for the Murphy family and the ALP as a whole.

Denis symbolised the modernisation of the Queensland ALP. He worked hard for intelligent, articulate candidates for the ALP who understood policy development and strategies; a democratic party organisation which responded to a broadly based democratic party membership; progressive policies which allowed Queensland to develop its wealth of resources but in harmony with its environment and heritage, and placed a sound emphasis on equality of opportunity and a particularly heavy emphasis on education, health and women. Denis would have been proud to see the large number of ALP members sitting in this Chamber today. But most important of all, Denis helped to turn the Queensland ALP into a party which wanted to, and could, win State Government with the aid of the latest campaigning techniques from within Australia and overseas. He was about winning.

When Denis became president, the party office, then located at 20 Charlotte Street, Brisbane, was understaffed and broke. It had a card system for membership. Now, thanks largely to Denis's leadership, and the work of Ian Brusasco, a former alderman of the Brisbane City Council, the Queensland ALP is one of the wealthiest branches of any political party in Australia. It has installed state-of-the-art technology and its membership records have been computerised.

But it was more than that. I remember the long hours spent searching for quality candidates and encouraging and supporting good candidates like Wayne Goss, David Hamill in Ipswich, Pat Comben in Windsor and Tom Veivers in Ashgrove to run in the 1983 election.

Denis had an historic view of the ALP's traditional support base in the country and amongst business. Accordingly, we spent hours winging our way to country communities across Queensland aboard a single-engined Cessna, piloted by Denis, but hired from the

Redcliffe Aeroclub. I must say that Denis was a brilliant academic and an inspirational political leader, but a woeful pilot, which made for many an interesting trip. However, on one of those trips in early October 1983, Denis' illness manifested. The State election was held on 22 October of that year. At the Redcliffe aerodrome Denis complained of severe back pain. He had been uncomfortable on the flight home, and on a couple of occasions he had paled noticeably as we winged our way over the mild turbulence of the Darling Downs. Denis' first operation in the Wesley Hospital took place only days later, just before the State election.

Denis won the seat of Stafford and, as I said earlier, was appointed to the shadow Ministry. At first he staunchly refused to believe that cancer was going to destroy him or his dream of an ALP State Government. Therefore, it was not until close to the June 1984 party conference in Townsville that Denis asked me to release a public statement to the effect that he would not be recontesting the presidency of the party at the conference. He died a few days later.

As I said, the only certainty about politics is its uncertainty. Unfortunately, Denis Murphy's contribution is now largely forgotten in the expediencies and uncertainties of Queensland politics. Today I have sought to set the record straight. I pay tribute to Denis Murphy not only because he was a friend, a colleague and a good mate but also because many party members and supporters in Queensland, in common with me, have a deep affection for Denis and his contribution to the ALP.

Manfred Cross played a significant role in the early stages of Denis' presidency of the ALP. He has been a close friend and adviser on many occasions when I needed advice, right from the early days of my campaign and, indeed, when I was the campaign director for Frank Gilbert in the former seat of Ithaca during the 1976-77 election campaign. Manfred Cross is well respected across the political spectrum. I thank him and wish him and Barbara well in his retirement. I am pleased that Manfred and Barbara are present today in the public gallery.

I turn now to Brisbane Central and the quality-of-life issues that concern my constituents. In recent years, because of a heartless and short-sighted Brisbane City Council and a previous uncaring National Party State Government, the quality of life of the residents of the inner suburbs has been under threat. In the years ahead my prime objective will be to protect the quality of life of the people in Brisbane Central and to work towards long-term planning to safeguard the future of the inner suburbs. All Governments and councils need to realise that quality-of-life issues will determine the make-up of future elected Governments. Indeed, urban and green issues will determine the majority in this Chamber.

I turn now to the Hale Street ring-road. The Lord Mayor, Alderman Sallyanne Atkinson, and the former planning chairman of the Brisbane City Council, Alderman Bob Ward, will go down in Brisbane's history as the heartless vandals of Brisbane. That is confirmed clearly by their pathological commitment to the rape of Petrie Terrace and parts of Milton by the Hale Street ring-road. The cities of the world are concentrating on public transport to move their residents and are avoiding constructing roads through inner-city areas. However, with the mentality of planners from the 1950s who have left such great legacies as Los Angeles, the Brisbane City Council is pushing a major road network through the inner suburbs of Brisbane.

The Lord Mayor was so heartless that she did not even have the decency to write first to the residents of Hale Street to tell them that, because of the council's Hale Street ring-road plan, they were going to be thrown out of their homes. How did those Hale Street residents learn of the Lord Mayor's great plan? They found out about it when journalists approached them to seek their response to a news conference that was held by the Lord Mayor to announce the ring-road plan. Many of those people had lived all their lives in Hale Street. Indeed, some of them had even been born there. Those people are now scattered across the city. Their lives have been disrupted and torn apart by an administration that is headed by someone who is more interested in getting her picture in the paper than in people's hardships and the effects of her council's decisions. Poor

Mrs Harris was forced to move to Chermside, and she has since passed away. Others such as Mr Barclay have suffered heart attacks and deteriorating health. The list goes on.

The houses of the residents of Hale Street were resumed, or they were forced to sell them at ridiculously low prices. The council talked constantly about paying those people the market value for their homes. However, because the Hale Street ring-road had been publicly announced and housing values in the area had plummeted, it was impossible for them to obtain a decent market value for their houses. The real test for housing values on resumptions should be whether someone can buy a house in the very same area with the money that is received for the resumed house. The Lord Mayor has refused to answer the question: where do those former Hale Street residents buy houses in the Paddington, Milton or Petrie Terrace area for as little as \$85,000? It simply cannot be done.

Of course, that is not the end of the heartlessness. The ring-road desecrated the graves at the church that I attend with my family, namely, Christ Church, Milton, which is one of the city's earliest. The council pushed ahead with indecent haste on the ring-road without any consideration for the sanctity of the graves or what it meant to the church, the parishioners who worshipped there or the descendants of those who are buried in the cemetery. I had the greatest respect, admiration and affection for the late Father Graham Perry from Christ Church, Milton, who fought as hard as he could to protect the dignity of the church and the cemetery. While preparing for a meeting about the Hale Street ring-road, Father Perry died of a heart attack. There is no doubt in my mind nor, in the minds of the parishioners of Christ Church, Milton, that Father Perry's death was directly attributed to the pressure of the Hale Street ring-road. The Brisbane City Council and the Lord Mayor have Father Perry's blood on their hands.

Church wardens Gailene Harrison and Lorraine Schenke mounted a legal challenge against the legality of the council's actions. The Supreme Court found that the council could not resume and desecrate the cemetery. So what did Lord Mayor Atkinson and the Brisbane City Council then do? They came to this House and had the National and Liberal Parties pass a Bill to amend the Paddington Cemeteries Act 1911 to allow the ring-road to go ahead. I noticed in the press that the Leader of the Liberal Party intends to make Hale Street an issue. Let me remind him that when this matter came to this House on 17 October 1989, the following people voted to desecrate the cemetery and the church at Christ Church: Knox, Lee, Lickiss, Santoro, Schuntner, Sherlock, Gygar, Beanland, Beard and Innes.

The Paddington Cemeteries Act 1911 was set up to put the council in trust to protect the cemetery. How could anybody ever trust the Lord Mayor and the Brisbane City Council again?

The Transport Minister, David Hamill, and I spent a lot of time talking to and trying to assist local people ravished and otherwise affected by the council's action. I was very disappointed and saddened that we have been unable legally to prevent the Hale Street ring-road going ahead. When the regional traffic study is completed by the State Government, I am sure that it will find that the Hale Street ring-road is not appropriate for Brisbane's traffic needs and that alternative plans are more appropriate.

The Lord Mayor was prepared to temporarily halt the cross-river bridge proposals to await the findings of the South East Queensland Passenger Traffic Study, but she is not prepared to defer the Hale Street proposal until the study is finished. I point out that Hale Street is a council road and not a Main Roads Department road. The double standards and hypocrisy of that are quite clear. The question is: why? The answer is very simple. The Lord Mayor's arrogance and pride got in the road of her judgment.

I turn now to the Paddington development plan. The Brisbane City Council's intrusion into the quality of life of the constituents of Brisbane Central does not end with Hale Street. Since it was elected in 1985, the council has consistently refused to enforce the town plan to protect the residents of Latrobe and Given Terraces from nightclubs and commercial expansion into residential areas. Daily, I receive complaints

from my constituents who are being disturbed every night of the week by the activities of patrons of nightclubs.

The plan was not approved in accordance with the law and consequently the Crown law office has advised that it is illegal. At the moment the council is screaming because it now has to do it properly. However, the mistake has been brought about by the poor handling of the council, and no-one else. The council is screaming because, with the council election only a year away, it is afraid of public opinion. To proceed with the plan again will provide an opportunity for further public comment and objection. The Crown law office advised that the plan was illegal and accordingly this State Government had no alternative but to send it back to the council to get it right.

The Lord Mayor often justifies her more than adequate salary on the basis that she is like the general manager of a big company. Any general manager of a company who made a botch of things as badly as the Lord Mayor has would, I think, be fired by the board or have a share-holders' riot on his hands. It is quite legitimate for people in the community to be asking what is happening in City Hall. Why can the council not get the legal procedures right? Why is it tangled up in its own red tape?

And poor old Alderman Bob Ward! The Lord Mayor decided that he was going to be the scapegoat for the Paddington plan debacle and the Hale Street public relations nightmare. He was demoted to looking after the buses. Poor old Bob, the council scapegoat!

Nobody, including me, wants to turn back the clock in relation to the cottage industries in Paddington. However, at the same time, no-one wants to live next door to a nightclub that has inebriated party-goers leaving at 3 a.m., with loud voices, the slamming of doors and even, indeed, the clanging of industrial bins at 6 a.m. as the garbage is taken away.

Quality of life means that people can enjoy their homes with their families in reasonable tranquillity without the noises and odours from nightclubs and restaurants in their back yard. It is all right for the Lord Mayor, who lives at Indooroopilly, and Alderman Bob Ward, who lives at Sunnybank, not to worry about cars screaming off at 3 a.m. or houses in back streets being resumed to provide car-parking for and access to nightclubs and restaurants in Paddington. They can quietly go home at night in their chauffer-driven cars.

It is about time that the Brisbane City Council enforced the existing town plan or got off its backside and rethought the Paddington development plan in accordance with the local wishes. There is no point attacking the State Government for its position on the plan, because that was a matter of law. Heavens above, Bob Ward is supposed to be a lawyer! If the Brisbane City Council had listened to local people it would not have had this embarrassing problem.

At the local meetings called to discuss the commercial density of this area, the local residents were given three options of commercial density; the least density being option 1 and the heaviest commercial density being option 3. The overwhelming majority option 1. But what did the council do? It adopted option 3 in the development plan, the heaviest commercial density, and in fact even put in more commercialisation than had initially been provided for in the third option. I hope now that the Brisbane City Council will start actually listening to people.

It is a statistical fact that the inner suburbs have a high percentage of elderly people. When the business people from these cottage industries pack up and go home, the elderly people who remain in these areas are often isolated and have little community support for most of the weekends and at nights. In many cases, if a tragedy or an accident occurs, they are left without neighbours to help them.

As I said, I do not want to turn back the clock, but I want to make sure that future planning protects the Paddington community. It is about time that the Brisbane City Council's performance was put under the spotlight and under the public and media microscope. The froth and bubble should be removed and questions should be asked

about the council's real performance. I was intrigued to read yesterday's edition of the *Sun*, which carried the huge heading "Immature" with a picture of Alderman Sallyanne Atkinson underneath. In the article she attacked the Premier, Wayne Goss.

The record needs to be very clear. The reality is that the council election is a year away. Everyone in this House needs to be aware that more of this nonsense will come from the Lord Mayor, who is carrying on like an ageing matinee idol simply to get a headline. There are enough Dame Nellie Melbas on stage without encouraging the Lord Mayor to carry on in this confrontationist and divisive way.

There are some good people at City Hall. Last night I represented the Government and the Premier at a citizenship award, and Alderman Phil Denman could not have been a more congenial host. As Deputy Mayor, he does a good job.

Let me move to parking, traffic and the need for an integrated transport system. Problems with parking and traffic and the desperate need for an integrated transport system will be specific issues that I will be pursuing as the member for Brisbane Central.

People live in the inner city not only because it has the charms of the hills and the old Queenslanders and workers' cottages, many of which have been renovated, but also because it is close to the city heart and has a rich culture and quality of life which is hard to surpass anywhere.

The problems associated with parking and traffic and the lack of an efficient public transport system are matters of great concern. If one lived outside London and worked in the city one would not think of driving to the city. One would either catch the London Underground or a bus. Back in 1979, when I studied the London tube, over a million people a day were using it.

In Brisbane we cannot keep choking the inner city day after day—we cannot have cars forcing their way into the city heart as well as competing for parking in the nearby inner suburbs. Improved public transport is a significant part of the answer to the traffic problems of the city—not building 6 000-vehicle car parks on the Expo site. Brisbane and south-east Queensland's population base is now sufficient to warrant a significant improvement in public transport expenditure.

It would be an absolute tragedy if the recommendations of the Brisbane traffic study providing for a series of cross-river bridges and, in particular a West End-Toowong bridge, were to go ahead. That is 1950s Los Angeles planning. The future lies in public transport and developments like the Gateway Bridge network. Only a philistine would recommend pouring traffic through the inner suburbs to use these cross-river bridges. Only the Brisbane City Council would be bloody minded enough to do it. That is one of the reasons why social planners have to be involved when bridges and roads are being planned, and when parking and traffic studies are being conducted. Social impact studies are essential before work commences. To conduct such studies without the involvement of social planners is like trying to revive a patient without a heart. Perhaps that explains Bob Ward's predicament and his demotion.

Let me now talk about a coordinated transport system and inner-city network. A citywide coordinated transport system is needed not only for trains, buses and Park'n'Rides, but also there needs to be a specific coordinated transport link for the inner city.

The inner city of Brisbane, which falls within the electorate of Brisbane Central, has four major commercial areas. They are the Expo 88 site, the Roma Street railway yards, the city heart and Fortitude Valley.

The Local Government and Housing Minister, Tom Burns, is currently coordinating an examination of these four inner city commercial sites following my successfully moving a motion in caucus to not only guarantee their commercial development and success, but also to provide, in cooperation with David Hamill and the Transport Department, an integrated transport link.

It is my view that each one of these four areas should be encouraged to develop a specific attraction of its own to not only cater for the people of our great city but also to attract tourists from interstate and around the world.

If a convention centre, perhaps even with a casino, were constructed at Roma Street, convention delegates could have a choice. They could use the international hotel and transport facilities already there, then perhaps go to the Expo site and precinct for cultural enrichment at the Cultural Centre, make travel arrangements, entertain themselves at the boardwalk in various cafes and restaurants; they could go to the city heart for a movie or other entertainment as well as some shopping or perhaps go further to the Valley for a Chinese meal or purchases at McWhirters.

Whatever the future of these four sites, there needs to be encouragement for highly individual developments and an integrated transport link to serve them all.

Buses by themselves are not the answer. Possibly there could even be a monorail to link the Roma Street site, the Expo site, the city heart and the Valley.

We need something imaginative to encourage not only Brisbane people but also tourists to use these facilities. I am a strong supporter of the revitalisation of the Valley and the McWhirters development, as well as Chinatown.

I would love to see the Valley become one of the most popular eating places in Brisbane. Its Chinese restaurants are amongst the best in the world and it has a range of other wonderful ethnic restaurants, including the Sri Lankan restaurant, Baba's Curry Place, in Brunswick Street. The revitalisation of the Valley must include the closure of the "sin triangle". An additional police presence is necessary to restore public confidence.

I welcome the decision by the Health Minister, Ken McElligott, to move the methadone clinic to another location this calendar year. I have inspected the clinic. It certainly does valuable work, and I applaud the devoted people who work there. However, it is simply in the wrong place and its relocation will have a significant impact not only on the traders in that area but also the Valley as a whole. It will also enable the people at the clinic to perform their work more effectively.

Ten years ago the Valley was one of the retail hearts of Brisbane but it has been allowed to deteriorate badly. Chinatown and McWhirters are the beginning of an exciting rebirth of the Valley. In my view, we need to fully support that rebirth by the additional police presence I referred to earlier, and perhaps by the placing of another Government department in the Valley to provide an increased consumer base for the restaurants and businesses there. The Fitzgerald inquiry revealed that the Valley had become an area of corruption. Like everyone else in this House, I am delighted that that is now changing. I intend to do everything in my power, in whatever capacities I have, to ensure that that process of change continues.

The Criminal Justice Commission will be looking at prostitution and drugs and in the near future this House will be debating changes to the law in some of those areas which will assist in the rebirth of this significant part of the city. It should never be forgotten that the Valley is one of the major gateways to Brisbane, especially for interstate and overseas tourists. It should become a gateway of which we are proud, not a graveyard of lost tourism opportunities.

The Roma Street railway yards redevelopment is presently in the process of being considered by the Government. It has the same significance as the Valley and, like the other sites previously referred to, it will play an integral role in the city's future. Together with the city heart, it will help determine the type of city Brisbane is to become in the future.

I was pleased to hear the assurance given to the House last week by the Transport Minister guaranteeing the future of SWARA, the Sunshine Welfare and Remedial Association, whose offices are adjacent to the Roma Street railway goods yard.

The City Mall is one of the attractive focuses of the city heart and something of which we can all be proud. The unfortunate occurrences of crime involving gangs and

other isolated incidents need to be redressed by a continuation of the additional police patrols put on by the Police Minister, Terry Mackenroth. I applaud Terry for the initiatives he has taken in that area, as well as in the Valley.

There needs to be an understanding that maintaining a police presence in the inner city will not be cheap, but it has to be there to guarantee public safety so that if people go to the city heart they feel comfortable about their safety.

Let me now turn to the Expo site redevelopment. I applaud the initiatives of the Government to move to get work started on the redevelopment of the Expo site. The delays that have taken place on the redevelopment since Expo finished at the end of October 1988 have been an unforgivable waste of public funds. In the long run there needs to be a full investigation as to the wastage of funds and the organisational shambles which followed the closure of Expo. Investigations should cover the period right through from the abortive River City 2000 plans to the \$100,000 spent by the Expo Authority at the end of 1988 to promote the second redevelopment plan which was subsequently scrapped and thrown into the bin. So \$100,000 went down the drain! It took until December 1989 for the third plan to be put on display and it was, realistically, a ghastly Hawaiian type of development stuck on the banks of the Brisbane River. The development was totally inconsistent with the natural qualities of Brisbane.

I am pleased that the framework approved by the Government and the Cabinet subcommittee will enable some flexibility with four of the major problems concerning the site. They are: the desperate need to solve traffic problems by reopening Grey Street; the removal of the beach concept which would cost at least \$2m to \$3m a year in filtration plant costs; the half-kilometre long commercial wall of 11 to 12 storeys at the back of the site—talk about the Berlin wall—and the elitist housing on the site. All of these matters will be considered as part of the development plan and, depending on the financial adjustments, appropriate decisions will be made. It should never be forgotten that the redevelopment of the Expo site must provide maximum open space and access not just to the people of Brisbane but to all.

I was disturbed to read in the *Courier-Mail* last Saturday, 3 March, an article headed, "Plan release 'would confuse public' ". In that article the chairman of the South Bank Corporation, Mr Vic Pullar, said that he was opposed to releasing the four plans submitted initially because that would confuse the public. What an arrogant attitude to be adopted by the chairman of the South Bank Corporation. He has the sensitivity of a Sherman tank. He should remember that it is the taxpayers who are paying for the redevelopment of the south bank and it is the taxpayers who have a long-term interest in what happens to that site. The most arrogant attitude possible was adopted by the head of a corporation partly appointed by Parliament. I hope that Vic Pullar and those associated with the south bank plans wake up to themselves and start realising that public opinion is important.

I do not often do this, but I applaud the editorial in that newspaper. It is headed, "No Expo lemons, thank you". In part, it reads—

"The South Bank Corporation, which started well but now seems to be having some trouble coming to grips with the increasing public disquiet . . .

Only the chosen concept, prepared by the Media Five group which gave birth to the Mirage resorts at the Gold Coast and in Port Douglas, was allowed to go on public display—and then in circumstances which effectively limited the number of people who could, or would, get near enough to look."

So there would be limited public input into the plan. It continues—

"But the people—and let us emphasise that: the people—have not been provided with sufficient information about the alternatives to make that judgment."

That came not from me but from the editorial of the *Courier-Mail*, which summed up exactly what is happening and what has been happening in regard to the Expo site. The editorial went on—

"The public showing of the chosen concept attracted 400 responses by way of suggested amendments."

What a wonderful response from 1.5 million people in south-east Queensland alone! The editorial continued—

"But given the slick marketing which graced the concept, where it was on show, and the absence of comparative data, a low response is no surprise."

Touche. Exactly right. I was heartened to read in yesterday's *Courier-Mail* an article headed, "Expo site's lagoon will be ditched". In the article, the Deputy Premier deals with four of the matters of concern that I have raised and says that changes will be made. I am delighted to have that enlightenment.

I now turn to multiculturalism. Brisbane Central is one of the most multicultural electorates in Queensland, something which I recognise contributes greatly to our life-style, culture and growing cosmopolitan air. It is the home of not only the Greek Community Club and the Italo Australian Centre and their respective communities but it also contains Chinatown and a significant section of the Vietnamese community, as well as Cyprus House, which Bob Hawke opened only a few weeks ago. It has significant populations from middle eastern countries and Europe generally. This multicultural mix is providing a richness to the culture of the city and helps us not only in trade but also in the development of a more sophisticated and rich social fabric, something from which we will all benefit. I am proud to represent all these communities in this Parliament and I particularly thank the members of my Greek branch who worked so actively and proudly for my election.

I turn to the issue of housing. Whilst I am in this place it will be my aim to work vigorously towards addressing the housing needs in my area and to work closely with the housing cooperatives—there are a number of hard-working cooperatives in my area—as well as SURG, the Southside Urban Research Group, the Red Hill/Paddington community group, the tenants union and other groups in my area that are interested in improving the quality of life and raising the quality of life issues I have referred to. However, it needs to be said clearly that, without adequate housing, it is impossible for families to build for the future. I have been delighted with the delegations I have taken to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Housing, Mr Tom Burns, and the sensitivity that he has demonstrated to public housing in this State, unlike the Neanderthal Man approach adopted by the previous Government. At last we are seeing some light for the problems associated with public housing. No longer will people have to live in caravans because of inadequate public housing.

It would be remiss of me if I did not mention the city's heritage, a large part of which is situated within the electorate of Brisbane Central. I look forward to my colleague Pat Comben, the Minister for Environment and Heritage, introducing heritage legislation in the near future to ensure that there are no more demolitions of heritage buildings, such as the Bellevue Hotel, Cloudland and the Commonwealth Bank building in Queen Street.

There is also a desperate need to address the social concerns of Brisbane, particularly the homeless. I have in my electorate many of the agencies that look after the needy, the homeless and the street kids, covering everything from the Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul through to Lifeline and the drug rehabilitation centres. They have been underfunded for a long time and urgently need our assistance. At a time when social pressures are continuing on families and young people, there is a clear need for Governments to be more humane and more understanding. American cities have beggars in the streets; we must avoid that at all costs in Australia, particularly in Queensland.

I conclude by thanking my close friend, solicitor Peter Channell, from Peter Channell and Associates, for his friendship, encouragement and support during my 13 months return to the practise of law after retiring as ALP State Secretary in August 1988 and before my election to this House.

Finally, and most importantly, I pay a special tribute to my late grandmother, Mrs Annie Esbensen, who had the difficult task of raising me from an early age in that wonderful north Queensland town of Atherton where I grew up. Her painful financial

sacrifices from her age pension enabled me to obtain a university education and a start in life. Her strength of character and determination will always be an inspiration to me. My memory of her and Atherton will always be special to me.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! Before calling the member for Carnarvon, I remind honourable members that he is making his maiden speech and that he should be heard in silence.

Mr SPRINGBORG (Carnarvon) (3.10 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise for the first time in this Chamber to deliver my maiden speech. I do so with a great sense of humility, having achieved the honour of representing the people of Carnarvon. It is certainly a goal that many strive for but few achieve.

I wish to take this opportunity to associate myself and my electorate with the message of loyalty to Our Most Gracious Sovereign, Her Majesty The Queen, a truly diligent and dignified person who continues to unite peoples and nations throughout her realms within the Commonwealth of Nations. The Queen is most certainly the catalyst for the healthy continuation and growth of democracy in this State and the Commonwealth. I wish to place on record my confidence in and support for her representative in this State, Sir Walter Campbell, for the way he carries out his duties in such a dignified and unassuming manner. I also wish Sir Walter and his good wife, Lady Campbell, a long and happy life.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I congratulate the Speaker on his election to the Chair of this Chamber. May I say that he will not have too much trouble from me. By all accounts from both sides of this House, he will be a very honourable, decent and impartial Speaker possessed of a deep sense of justice. I hope that his stay in the Chair will be a fulfilling and happy one.

I point out to members present here today that I have never written a speech in my life and I do not intend to start now. I feel now that it would be appropriate for me to talk about a few of my helpers in the electorate of Carnarvon, those ever so important people who helped me achieve this high office.

I refer first to my wife and family. As a few members in the Chamber may be aware, I was married on 28 October last year, only one month before polling day. My wife is sitting in the public gallery. I can only place on record my confidence in and admiration for her, because the day after we were married, I took her back to the electorate, put her on one side of the street and said, "Go up there and start door-knocking. I'll do this side of the street." My efforts paid off, as honourable members are patently aware.

To the other close members of my family—I thank my father, my mother and my three sisters for all the support that they have given me over the last five or six months, from winning the National Party plebiscite through to winning the seat of Carnarvon for the National Party. At the outset, my father was a little bit dubious because, since leaving school at the end of 1982, I was the main man on the farm. Subsequently, my father started to slow down a little bit. After I had reassured him that he had not lost a son and that I would be back on a regular basis to help around the farm, he became a little bit more confident. Now I must say that I can even detect an element of pride. I can only say that my mother is what one would describe as a typically adoring mother.

To my helpers in Carnarvon—I thank my campaign chairman, Mr Lester Dawson from my local branch of the Young Nationals, for the work and the help that he put into my campaign, firstly through the winning of the plebiscite and, secondly, the winning of the election for the National Party in Carnarvon. I am sure that members on both sides of the House appreciate that it is those unsung heroes who play an important role in our election to the Legislative Assembly of Queensland. Lester travelled around with me for about eight or 10 days in my attempt to elicit support so that I could win the National Party plebiscite. He drove the car and sat in the hot sun while I got out and talked to people. I am sure that I can rely on his support in the future.

To Jim and Beth Goodrich, the electorate council chairman and his wife—I can only thank them for the great assistance they were to me during the campaign. They were like another family to me. I am sure that over the next few years while I am in this place I can rely on their support and their advice.

As honourable members may well be aware, Peter McKechnie is the man whom I have succeeded in this place. As I travelled around the electorate of Carnarvon, it became patently obvious to me that Peter won the seat of Carnarvon through his own personal vote and not necessarily a vote for the National Party. Carnarvon has a hard core of Labor voters. However, Peter is well liked by people of all political persuasions. I believe that that stems from the fact that Peter, like other members in this Chamber, takes a genuine interest in the issues in the electorate and the issues affecting people on both sides of the political fence.

Because of his dedication to his family and because his wife was suffering from a grave illness, Peter McKechnie decided to retire from the Legislative Assembly. Mrs McKechnie came down with this new-fangled disease known as ME. I can only say that I thank Peter McKechnie and his good wife for the great support they gave to me during my campaign for election to the Legislative Assembly. I wish them a long and happy life together.

Carnarvon must surely be one of the oldest electorates in this State. It was created by the Electoral Districts Act 1872. Since its creation, it has been represented by 10 members, excluding me. As honourable members can see, there is a great tradition in the electorate of Carnarvon for members to represent the area for a considerable period. I hope that I will be no exception to that rule.

The main industries of Carnarvon are the growing of stone fruit—particularly apples—wheat, fodder crops and mohair; wine-making, grazing cattle and sheep, saw milling, and, ever increasingly, tourism. The major towns in my electorate are Goondiwindi, which has a population of 4 103, according to the 1986 census; Stanthorpe, which has a population of 4 139; Texas, which has a population of 817; Inglewood, which has a population of 966; and Wallangarra, which has a population of 413. The smallest town in my electorate that received recognition by the Bureau of Statistics is Yelarbon, which has a population of 232. To my knowledge, there is one smaller town, Leyburn, which has a population of just under 200. The overall population of Carnarvon is 18 599. Of course, that figure fluctuates as visitors come and go.

My beliefs and objectives are based on family values. I believe that, over a period of years, those values have been slowly eroded throughout the nation. I believe that maintaining strong family units will result in people belonging to a strong society. I believe that that is the position to which Queenslanders have to attempt to return.

I also believe strongly that this nation is yet to reach its full potential. Throughout the vast areas of Australia, there are unlimited resources. I do not believe that people should be overly pedantic on the issue of mining Australia's natural resources, full stop. However, when carrying out mining, developers have to be environmentally minded.

I have no doubt that this nation was founded on the sheep's back, as you, Mr Deputy Speaker, would be only too well aware. However, in the future, people must not become overly reliant on primary industries. I say that although I have been associated with primary industry for a long period and will continue to be for many years, even after I have ceased to be a member of this Parliament. It is extremely important that the fields of science and technology be developed in this nation. Australia's south-east Asian neighbours—countries such as Japan—are following the path of developing their technologically-based industries. The treatment received in Australia by scientists and technology-minded people—people who may be able to go out into the marketplace and invent products, thereby making a worthwhile contribution to this country's progress—has been absolutely abominable. One only has to look at the present Federal Government's treatment of the CSIRO, which has working for it some of the world's most brilliant minds. It is about time those scientists' skills were used, or Australia will be in danger of becoming a banana republic. It is as simple as that.

More students should be encouraged to undertake studies in science. As soon as they leave high school, they should be encouraged to take up scientifically-based careers. An attractive wages and career structure should be provided for them. Obviously, the effects of the humanities have crept in and influenced too much of society. Although there is nothing wrong with lawyers and academics, it must be remembered that society needs only a healthy balance. That is evident now in Japan . Hopefully, that trend will be evident in this nation in the near future.

During my period of representation as the member for Carnarvon, I will be pushing a number of issues. Among them will be the decentralisation of all secondary industries and the location of some of them in my electorate. Unfortunately, many companies that wish to establish industries tend to locate their businesses in the south-east corner of the State. I can understand their belief that the south-east corner of the State is where major transport and other infrastructure facilities are located. However, in my electorate there exists a fairly reliable water supply and a cheap supply of electricity. I would be only too happy to receive deputations from interested groups that wish to establish secondary industries in my electorate.

Earlier I mentioned tourism, which is of increasing importance in terms of Queensland's economy. I will be approaching the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing in the hope that he will be able to assist me in the establishment of more tourism-based industries in my electorate. Carnarvon boasts the Girraween national park, the apple and grape festival and wineries, which are located at the eastern end of the electorate, which attract a large number of tourists, and will continue to do so. The tourism potential of this State and other parts of Australia has not yet been touched.

I turn now to a topic that has received widespread attention throughout Australia. I make a plea for better roads to be constructed in Carnarvon. Over the next few years, I would like to see the roads in my electorate upgraded. To achieve that goal, it will be necessary for Queensland to receive a greater proportion of fuel tax revenue and spend those funds on roads. Unfortunately, there is no will on the part of the Federal Labor Government to increase the proportion of those funds received by Queensland. I point out, however, that because of the abominable state of Queensland's roads, peoples' lives are at risk. This is becoming increasingly the case, even in the more centralised areas of the State. The Government must be prepared to spend more money on roads. Recently, I almost became a victim of one of the bad roads in my electorate.

Mr Gibbs interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: The next time I am in a similar predicament, I will invite the honourable member for Wolston to join me.

I look forward to the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Housing visiting my electorate on 31 March to open the Goondiwindi Community Centre. At that time, I will point out to the Deputy Premier that many towns in Queensland need more housing. I endorse the sentiments of the member for Brisbane Central that housing is becoming an ever increasing and more important issue. Considering the number of inquiries that I have received, the provision of an additional 100 houses in Goondiwindi might not be enough.

I wish the Government the very best in its review of ambulance services. It is an issue that has always concerned me. When the Government and the members of the committee examine possible recommendations on ambulance services, I implore them not to consider regionalisation. That would mean that local ambulances would lose autonomy. We do not want our local ambulance having to ring Toowoomba in the middle of the night to ascertain whether a particular emergency case deserves their services. Ambulance services must be available immediately.

I propose that the review of ambulance services could investigate a concept in which emergency services are funded by the State Government and taxi operations, such as people being taken to hospital for X-rays, are funded by subscriptions.

In the near future, I would like an indication from the Government of its stance on the Broadwater dam near Stanthorpe in the eastern part of my electorate. For my electorate to reach its full potential in the area of primary industries, particularly small crops and fruit trees, more water is needed. That dam was approved by the previous Government just before it lost office. I hope that the present Government will continue with that project.

Daylight-saving is another topical issue. I am extremely pleased to see the member for Mount Isa in the Chamber. The member for Barron River has just left the Chamber. Last week, I was not surprised that they did not support the concept of daylight-saving. There is no doubt that in western Queensland daylight-saving interferes with people's way of life. Although in south-east Queensland the people achieve more leisure time, the people in the west do not. They might be required to play tennis locally at 8 o'clock at night. However, many farmers and primary producers work from when the sun comes up to when the sun goes down. Because the sun is still up, they cannot attend sporting events. As well, a problem arises with children who return home from school in the heat of the afternoon. Daylight-saving affects many families in the west. Furthermore, I cannot be convinced that the problem of putting children to bed when the sun is up is caused by a lack of discipline. I cannot go to bed when the sun is up. Children operate on biological time.

It is a pity that the Minister for Land Management has left the Chamber. He intends to carry out a review of freeholding and to implement rent increases on Crown land. I inform him that not all people on the land can afford to pay large increases in rent. I wish that certain members of the Government worked on the land. If they did, they would discover that, with high interest rates, a lack of incentive and low commodity prices, it is difficult to make ends meet. People on the land cannot afford to pay increased rental.

The Minister can conduct his review of freeholding, but he should not put an end to freeholding. Many people have been on land for 50 or 60 years. In future, when they can afford it, they would like to guarantee themselves security of tenure by freeholding their properties.

The subject of one vote, one value will be raised in this Chamber frequently in the next year. Opposition members do not know what EARC will recommend. However, from my experience in the last few months in my electorate, I sympathise with the honourable members for Gregory, Mount Isa, Cook and the other large electorates in Queensland. They must spend a great deal of effort and money in travelling throughout their electorates. Stanthorpe has more than 100 community-based organisations. Each of those organisations expects the local member to attend its change-over dinner. As well, I have 30 schools in my electorate, and it is a relatively small electorate.

Prior to the election, National Party members were consoled by the belief that the Labor Party required more than 51 per cent of the vote to gain Government in this State. However, it received 50.8 per cent of the vote and managed to achieve more than 60 per cent of the seats. The claim of a rigged electoral system in Queensland was one of the greatest furphies that was ever perpetrated in the history of Australia.

The Labor Government has been given a mandate by the people of Queensland to change direction and to clean up perceived wrongs. I implore Government members not to embark on vindictive campaigns in an endeavour to get even for events that might have occurred in the past. The people of Queensland want to see good, open, accountable government.

As I move around in my electorate, people continue to complain to me about the lack of accessibility of some Ministers. Although I admit that I have been able to get replies from some Ministers, I must say that some of them have not been responding as quickly as I and many other people in the general community would like. That is one part of its act that the Government could improve on immediately. It would do the Government the world of good to be magnanimous in victory.

My attempt to gain a seat in this place began at a very young age. At a time when a lot of the people around me—the so-called armchair experts—were complaining that politicians were ruining the country and making all the wrong decisions, I resolved to do something. I felt that perhaps there was something that I could achieve. So I immediately began campaigning to win a seat in this place. Admittedly, it happened a bit sooner than I expected. I expected that it might happen when I was about 30 or 35 years of age. That was not to be the case. However, let me say that I am just as ready now as I will ever be, and I believe that I am just as competent now as I will ever be. I realise that I have a lot to learn. However, I cannot be convinced that because one comes into this place at 40 or 50 years of age, one knows everything. That is not true. One never ceases to continue learning until the day one dies. Even a person who has been in this place for 40 years continues to learn. It is an ongoing process.

My views, my opinions and where I am going will be shaped by the people of my electorate and by members on both sides of this House. It will be a learning experience for me. I do not intend to stay in this place for a long time and to break records of 40 or 45 years as a member of Parliament. If I can stay around for 15 years, notwithstanding the redistribution, that might be enough for me. Retirement at 35 years of age is a great scenario.

The Westminster system of Parliament is extremely significant. It is the whole basis of our democracy. Although it may have run off the track on some occasions, I believe that the National Party has tried to uphold the basis of democracy. The Labor Government will find itself in exactly the same position as the previous Government. Governments are not perfect. They are destined to make mistakes. I will be prepared to give this Government a bit of credit where credit is due. I hope that Government members will be prepared to give the Opposition a bit of credit and listen to constructive suggestions, opinions and ideas that members of the Opposition may put forward.

In conclusion, I thank all honourable members for listening to me with few interjections. I hope that my stay in this place will be a fulfilling one and a long one, and that I will be able to achieve a lot for the people of Queensland and for the people of Carnarvon.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): I remind honourable members that the member for Yeronga is also making his maiden speech. I would like it to be heard in silence. I call the member for Yeronga.

Mr FOLEY (Yeronga) (3.34 p.m.): I have come to this place to achieve change.

In opening the First Session of this Forty-sixth Parliament His Excellency the Governor very properly observed that the Government was elected with a clear mandate for change. Nowhere is that impulse for change stronger than amongst the people of the Yeronga electorate. They had grown weary, then angry, at the official excesses of the past, the lack of respect for civil liberties, the neglect of environmental protection, the lack of equal opportunity for women, and the arrogance and hatred that have passed for public debate.

On 2 December 1989 the people of the Yeronga electorate went to the polls determined to put an end to the old order and to introduce a new order to the governance of this State. This was an unusual election. It was not a mere contest between political machines, much less between differing social and economic philosophies. For many citizens it became a choice between civilisation and barbarism.

The commission of inquiry constituted by Mr Tony Fitzgerald, QC, laid before the public evidence which shocked the conscience of all right-thinking people. This evidence pointed to a signal failure in the institutions of the democracy. Men and women who had never before voted Labor did so on that occasion. They did so under the force of a moral imperative—to rid this State of corruption and to restore decency to the public institutions which uphold the rule of law.

Yeronga has never before been a Labor seat. It epitomises the sea of change which has overtaken Queensland politics.

Modern politics is not only about negotiating the divisions between classes; it is also about remedying the injustices between the sexes, among races, and among different age-groups. Modern politics is about finding innovative solutions to a high-technology future while conserving that fierce love of liberty which has been our heritage since Magna Carta.

The people of the Yeronga electorate deliver a clarion message to this Parliament. It is the same message which echos from Barron River to Redlands and to Mount Isa. The people want politicians with a new set of values and a higher standard of political ethics, who are willing to contribute to a more informed debate on the issues confronting Queensland at the turn of the century.

It is time to reassess the role of the politician in this Parliament. The convenient assumptions of the past are of little help. As the twenty-first century looms upon us, it is no longer good enough to recite yet again the sterile nineteenth-century quarrel between socialism and free enterprise or capitalism. Throughout the globe, and particularly in Eastern Europe, that tired dichotomy is being exploded. The Berlin Wall is coming down. It is time for a fresh start, for some clear thinking and plain talking.

Let me start at the beginning and examine the source of our power to make laws in this place, the relationship of this Parliament to the other institutions which uphold the rule of law in Queensland, and the salient political issues that confront Queensland today. In 1859, the power to make laws in this Parliament was first set out by way of Letters Patent, issued by Queen Victoria, erecting certain territory into a colony under the name of Queensland, and an Order in Council providing for the constitution of the colony of Queensland. Power was thereby given to the Queen with the advice of the Legislature to make laws for the "peace, welfare and good government" of the colony.

Over 13 decades to this day, that formula has persisted as the only effective limit on the sovereign power of this Parliament to make laws, save for those areas where the Australian Constitution authorises the Commonwealth Parliament to make valid laws. It is salutary to remember that, for the seven decades before 1859, this land that we call Queensland was part of the colony of New South Wales and that the power to make laws resided in Sydney and London. For at least 40 millennia before that, the power to make laws and the ownership of this land on which we gather today was in the hands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Tragically, the Aboriginal right of land ownership and power to make laws were not formally recognised under British law. Unlike some other British colonies such as the North American colonies, no treaty was entered into between coloniser and those colonised. By a convenient legal fiction the colony of New South Wales was regarded not as a conquered colony but as a settled colony. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council considered this question in the infamous case of *Cooper v. Stuart* (1889) 14 Appeal Cases 286 and held as follows—

"There is a great difference between the case of a colony acquired by conquest or cession, in which there is an established system of law, and that of a colony which consisted of a tract or territory practically unoccupied with settled inhabitants, or settled law, at the time when it was peacefully annexed to the British dominion. The colony of New South Wales belongs to the latter class. In the case of such a colony the Crown may by ordinance, and the Imperial Parliament, or its own legislature, when it comes to possess one, may by statute declare what parts of the common and statute law of England shall have effect within its limits. But when that is not done, the law of England must (subject to well-established exceptions) become from the outset the law of the colony, and be administered by its tribunals. In so far as it is reasonably applicable to the circumstances of the colony, the law

of England must prevail until it is abrogated or modified either by ordinance or statute."

We know now that it is plainly untrue to say that the colony of New South Wales, including Queensland, "consisted of a tract or territory practically unoccupied with settled inhabitants, or settled law, at the time when it was peacefully annexed to the British dominion." We know now that for countless generations this land was home to many great Aboriginal and Islander nations. The songs of many of those nations will never be heard again. The dreams, the pantheon of gods and the great rules of family life have been, in the case of many tribes, lost to posterity forever.

That profound error by the Privy Council still smoulders at the base of Australian jurisprudence.

Modern anthropology teaches us that many Aboriginal societies inhabited this land with complex sets of laws governing all aspects of secular and spiritual life. But we need not go that far. Every Queenslanders who has read *Tom Petrie's Reminiscences of Early Queensland*, which was written by his daughter Constance Campbell Petrie, will know of Aboriginal laws and customs, which included laws governing marriage, initiation, cooperation in peace and war, kinship relationships and relationships with the land and sea.

In recent years attempts have been made to redress that historical injustice. Commonwealth and State Governments have moved to recognise Aboriginal land rights and to recognise certain aspects of Aboriginal customary law. Regrettably, in the past the Queensland Legislature has been a symbol of inflexible and uninformed hostility to such moves. The force of Queensland law was used to choke Aboriginal and Islander community development with paternalism and discrimination.

So great was the clash between this Legislature and the Commonwealth Legislature on this matter that in 1975 the Commonwealth, under that great Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, introduced the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Queensland Discriminatory Laws) Act specifically to strike down certain laws of this Parliament that discriminated unfairly against Aboriginal and Islander people. In 1978 a clash between Queensland and the Commonwealth under the Prime Ministership of Mr Malcolm Fraser over Aurukun and Mornington Island led to this Legislature's introducing difference local government legislation for those two communities—an anomaly that survives to this day.

Those days of fruitless conflict between Commonwealth and State should be put behind us. Cooperation, not confrontation, is needed between Commonwealth, State and local government.

As legislators, it is timely for us to remind ourselves that there are two great legal traditions of this land, namely, British and Aboriginal.

The recognition of Aboriginal and Islander customary law in certain areas has already been examined by the Australian Law Reform Commission. For example, conflicts of law arise in certain traditional Torres Strait Islander adoptions for which the Succession Act and the Adoptions Act offer no satisfactory solutions. If a Torres Strait Islander dies without having made a will, the intestacy rules provide for the distribution of property to the issue, including children adopted under the Adoptions Act. However, no provision is made for children who are adopted in accordance with Torres Strait Islander custom.

History will judge this Forth-sixth Parliament on its treatment of the Aboriginal and Islander people. Instead of laws which promote conflict, discrimination and repression, we would do well to heed the duty imposed since Queen Victoria's time to make laws in this area for peace, welfare and good government. Such laws should include provision for land rights and the recognition of Aboriginal and Islander customary law.

Let me turn now to the place of this Parliament among the institutions which uphold the rule of law in Queensland, namely, the courts, the Governor and the public service, including the police.

Our legal system is said to be based on representative and responsible government. This is the basis of the proposition that we live in a free, democratic society. This Assembly is representative in the sense that members are elected by the voters—the adults—of the State. The right to vote is now considered a human right, an incident of citizenship in a democracy.

In medieval and even colonial times the right to vote was considered a property right, an incident of the ownership of property. The original qualifications of electors to the Legislative Assembly in 1859 were drawn up on a property basis. In modern times this has given way to manhood suffrage and, more recently, to adult suffrage.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides in Article 21(3)—

"The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures."

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides similarly in Article 25(b) for the right of "universal and equal suffrage." This principle is not enshrined in Queensland law.

The Elections Act and the Electoral Districts Act provide for different quotas of electors in each of four electoral zones throughout the State. Mr Fitzgerald, QC, identified the need for review of the electoral laws in his 1989 *Report of a Commission of Inquiry Pursuant to Orders in Council*. He observed at page 127—

"A fundamental tenet of the established system of parliamentary democracy is that public opinion is given effect by regular, free, fair elections following open debate."

The Electoral and Administrative Review Act 1989 now provides for electoral laws to be reviewed by a commission and a parliamentary committee. This review process will be of fundamental importance in ensuring a fair and honest basis for representative government in Queensland.

Mr Deputy Speaker, 1989 was not only the year of ascendancy of the Goss Labor Government but also the bicentenary of the French Revolution. Moreover, it was the tricentenary of the birth of the French writer Baron de Montesquieu. In his celebrated work *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu first articulated the doctrine of the separation of powers—that elementary doctrine which so eluded former Premier Bjelke-Petersen in the witness box at the Fitzgerald inquiry and so confounded former Premier Cooper on ABC television. The doctrine may be put simply: in a free society the liberty of the citizen is secured by keeping separate the Legislature's power to make laws from the Executive's power to administer laws and from the judiciary's power to hear and determine disputes according to law.

Under the Westminster system the Executive is selected from amongst the members of the Legislature; that is, the Ministers are selected from the members of Parliament. Under the doctrine of responsible government the Executive is subject to control by Parliament and holds office by the sanction of Parliament. This doctrine of responsible government was abused by the unseemly dominance of the Executive over the Parliament during the era of Premier Bjelke-Petersen and his National Party successors. The Government of the day used its numbers in this House repeatedly to gag debate, particularly when debate focused on a matter embarrassing to the Government.

The principle public opportunity for the Parliament to render the Executive accountable—question-time—became a standing joke amongst the citizens of Queensland. Long-winded, evasive answers from Ministers were interspersed with irrelevant invective

against the questioner. The practice adopted by other Parliaments of using parliamentary committees to investigate and review complex matters was virtually ignored. By these devices the doctrine of responsible government was abused in Queensland. The Executive far too often regarded Parliament as a mere rubber stamp for the decisions taken by Cabinet.

The power of the former Executive to frustrate the proper public airing of issues through Parliament combined with a sinister determination to suppress dissent in the community at large.

In the election year 1986 the former Government shamefully used public funds to bring Supreme Court defamation actions against Labor Opposition members who in public debate raised the issue of corruption. We must never again allow taxpayers' funds to be abused in this way. Proper guidelines need to be established to ensure that abuses of this nature do not recur.

This was not the only device used by the former Executive to suppress debate. We have witnessed the repeated use of the police force to suppress peaceful demonstrations by students, trade unionists and other concerned citizens. We now know that police officers of the Special Branch were used to gather information and prepare files on citizens involved in perfectly legitimate activities such as writing letters to newspaper editors or participating in public protests. We may never know how many careers were prejudiced by this squalid use of a secret police force. One is left to wonder in disgust at the prejudice against a generation from the 1960s to the present day, a time in world history when more than ever there has been a need to question old assumptions, to speak out and to raise new ideas. All of these devices for the suppression of debate took place against a steadfast refusal on the part of the Executive to allow public access to Government information. This needs to be changed by freedom of information laws to guarantee public access to Government information.

Reform of the Executive branch of Government has been sorely needed to overcome the politicisation of the public service. It has been most gratifying in this respect to see the Premier, the Honourable Wayne Goss, introduce the Public Sector Management Commission Bill to this Assembly as the Government's first Bill. It paves the way to fundamental reform.

It would be easy for us to forget the long, dark years of the hillbilly dictatorship over this State. I resent the damage to my generation done by the Bjelke-Petersen era. Since I was six years old, I have known no State Government other than those comprised of the Country Party, the National Party and the Liberal Party. I refrain from describing these as conservative Governments. A truly conservative Government respects the liberty of the individual, the right of free speech and the importance of democratic institutions. These were not conservative Governments; rather, they were agrarian socialist Governments with a dangerously radical disregard for democratic institutions. They were supported by a supine Liberal Party whose members, with a few notable exceptions such as the honourable Bill Hewitt, abandoned any commitment to a serious philosophy of liberalism.

We have lived through a dark period of human history in which the organs of the State have been used to thwart the doctrine of responsible Government. One further device used by previous Governments to frustrate the doctrine of responsible Government has been the excessive use of the Governor in Council to make delegated or subordinate legislation. In Parliament a new law has the potential to be debated and held up to public scrutiny. No such opportunity for debate arises when new laws are made not by statute, but by regulations or Orders in Council through the Governor in Council.

One spectacular abuse in this arena has been the repeated invoking of state of emergency provisions under the State Transport Act to authorise the Governor in Council

to make orders during industrial disputes and even during the 1971 Springbok Rugby tour. Such is the apparatus of tyranny. If dignity is to be restored to this Parliament, the public must be assured that the great issues of the day will be debated in this Assembly, and not merely hidden within the minutiae of Government regulation.

The doctrine of the separation of powers is of especial importance in ensuring the independence of the judiciary. In a free society it is of fundamental importance that citizens who go before the courts of the land should feel confident that their causes will be tried without fear, favour or affection. In this respect the politicisation of the judiciary must be carefully avoided. It is a sad and shameful thing to recall how the former Queensland Government politicised appointments to the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court by passing over the late Honourable Mr Justice James Douglas. It has now been revealed in evidence before the Fitzgerald inquiry that Cabinet was made aware of a postal vote cast by Mr Justice Douglas. He was said to have cast a vote for the Australian Labor Party. This breach of the sacrosanct confidentiality of one's vote is itself a most grave matter. The Cabinet decision to pass over Mr Justice Douglas will linger in the memory of all those who love justice as an outrageous symbol of the barbarism of the old order.

As parliamentarians we need to be vigilant to ensure the independence of the judiciary. The sentencing discretion of the Supreme Court judiciary was wrongly fettered by the mandatory life imprisonment imposed by the Drugs Misuse Act. This repugnant provision will be abolished. Thus the trial judges in the Supreme Court will again be able to ensure that the punishment properly fits the crime.

An important aspect of the independence of the courts lies in their capacity to review administrative action where there has been a breach of natural justice or the improper exercise of an administrative power. It is fundamental to the rule of law that a citizen should be able to approach the courts to call into question the lawfulness of executive action. The common law in this area has grown into a tangled thicket of cases. The complexity and the cost to the average citizen of bringing such an application before the Supreme Court are formidable deterrents.

In other jurisdictions the Legislature has moved to simplify the law, requiring decision-makers to give reasons for their decisions, codifying the grounds for seeking judicial review of administrative action, and enabling a trial to be held before a single judge. This reform is long overdue in Queensland and will be examined in the electoral and administrative review process. Such measures as these are necessary to ensure that the courts are effective and accessible to citizens, who turn to them for the protection of their liberty.

All these matters, taken together, have produced the passion for reform on the part of the Queensland people. Democracy is not a clock-work machine which moves through time in a pristine state. It requires constant attention to its institutions, eternal vigilance to ensure the liberty of citizens, and energy to explode the pious humbug which always surrounds the excessive centralisation of power.

As we come to address the great issues of this and future generations, we should do well to recall the words of the former Governor, His Excellency Sir James Ramsay, at the opening of the Law Courts on 2 September 1981, warning of the danger of "too much order with too little law".

I turn then to address certain of the major issues confronting this Forty-sixth Parliament. The economic development of this State is the basis for ensuring that families in the Yeronga electorate and throughout the State enjoy a reasonable and secure standard of living. If the best results are to be achieved, economic development requires sound regional planning and a cooperative effort from management and labour.

In recent decades the potential for economic development has been retarded by a primitive approach to industrial relations. Conflict, not cooperation, has been the order of the day. The previous Government commissioned Mr Ian Hanger of Queen's Counsel

to review the industrial laws of Queensland. His report was greeted with approval by both management and the trade unions. Yet his recommendations were ignored by the previous Government.

Instead, amendments were made to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act to introduce so-called "voluntary employment agreements". That description is a misnomer because the agreements in question cannot be truly said to be voluntary. They are made between employees and an employer under conditions of profoundly unequal bargaining power. The most recent amendments took away the basic safeguards of trade union involvement in the preparation of the agreements and the involvement of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

There is a real need to ensure flexibility in dealings between management and labour. The trade union movement has shown this flexibility in the approach, for example, of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and, for example, in the flexible approach adopted by the trade unions in connection with World Expo 88. I look forward to the abolition of those misnamed "voluntary employment agreements" and their replacement with a system of industrial law as proposed by Mr Ian Hanger, QC, which would ensure that cooperation and problem-solving replaced conflict and abuse of power. That will lay the foundation for sound economic growth in Queensland.

An issue of particular concern in the electorate of Yeronga is the neglect by the previous Government of the position and rights of women in our society. I am mindful that a majority of voters in the Yeronga electorate are women.

It gives me great satisfaction, as a member of this House, to be flanked on both my left and my right by women members of this Parliament. I think I am the first member of this Legislative Assembly to ever have the honour of having a woman member of Parliament sitting on both my left and my right.

Unlike other Australian States, Queensland has failed to introduce legislation to prohibit discrimination against women and to promote equal opportunity. The Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act does provide remedies for women who are the victims of sexual harassment or discrimination in areas such as employment and education. However, the constitutional limitation on the Commonwealth that its judicial power may be exercised only through the Federal courts results in a lengthy and cumbersome procedure involving a conciliation stage, a hearing before the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, and then the prospect of a further trial before the Federal Court. In other States the establishment of equal opportunity tribunals has provided just, inexpensive and accessible remedies to victims of sexual discrimination.

This Government, in its 13 short weeks, has made history in appointing the first female members to the benches of the Supreme Court, the Magistrates Court and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. The Attorney-General in particular is to be commended for the initiative and the promptness of this action.

It is not sufficient to provide merely a legal framework for the establishment of rights for women. If we are to give proper respect to the freedom of choice of mothers and fathers and to the welfare of children, the problems of child care must be tackled. More quality child care places are needed, such as those in the soon-to-be-opened child care centre at Arnwood Place, Ekibin, which was developed without any financial assistance from the former State Government. I welcome the commitment of this Government to provide more such child care places. In particular, I welcome the proposed initiative in the area of work-based child-care.

Just as we must do more to care for the young, so too must we do more to care properly for the senior citizens of our community. I pay tribute here to the fine work of groups such as the Annerley-Moorooka Senior Citizens Club which provides a wide range of activities for senior citizens. Such bodies deserve our support and encouragement.

I welcome the Government's commitment to introduce a senior's card to improve access by senior citizens to a wide range of services, including health care, podiatry and transport.

The coming years will see a greying of Queensland's population. We must prepare for a society in which the elderly constitute a larger proportion than at present and in which there is a correspondingly smaller proportion of the population in the work force. Other States have moved to reform the law to cater for the special needs and problems of the ageing. One problem, for example, which is attaining more widespread recognition is the frequency of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Alzheimer's disease is characterised by short-term memory loss and a progressive degeneration of mental functions.

Where, say, an elderly parent foresees the possibility of suffering from Alzheimer's disease or some other form of dementia, he may give to his son or daughter a power of attorney to look after his contracts, cheques and other property. At common law that power of attorney becomes null and void when he ceases to have legal capacity. Other States have introduced legislation to provide for an enduring power of attorney, that is, a power of attorney which endures after the donor of the power, say the elderly parent, loses the capacity to understand what he is doing. This reform enables a person to make orderly arrangements for his affairs to be managed within the family rather than have to rely upon the Public Trustee. In that way, it helps to promote dignity and security for the elderly person and to assist families in the delicate process of caring for an elderly family member.

I am delighted that the Minister for Land Management, Mr Eaton, will be introducing into the Forty-sixth Parliament legislation to amend the Property Law Act along those lines. That legislation, with a package of safeguards to prevent the power of attorney from being abused, was recommended by the Law Reform Commission as far back as 1987, but was never introduced by the previous Government.

Education reform is close to the hearts of many in my electorate of Yeronga, as indeed it is to citizens throughout the State. No real progress can be made towards equality of opportunity without an effective education system. Sadly, under the previous Government, education spending plummeted to the lowest level of any Australian State. That placed a huge burden on parents of schoolchildren, such as those in the parents and citizens associations of the Yeronga State School, the Yeronga State High School, the Moorooka State School and the Graceville State School, and those in the parents and citizens associations of Saint Sebastian's School, Yeronga; Saint Brendan's School, Moorooka; Saint Elizabeth's School, Ekibin; Mary Immaculate School, Annerley; and Christ the King School, Graceville. Those parents have been obliged to provide much-needed basic school equipment. It has been pleasing to see the action taken by the Minister for Education, the Honourable Paul Braddy, to introduce 900 new teachers to Queensland schools and 1 500 new tertiary education places.

The area of social welfare was dismally neglected by the previous Government. I am assured by my colleagues in the social work profession that I am the first social worker to be a member of this Parliament. As such, I am delighted to see the progressive approach being adopted by the Minister for Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, the Honourable Anne Warner, to the needs and rights of families. The decision to allow more liberal access to adoption information reflects modern thinking on the welfare of the adopted child, and the Government is to be congratulated on its initiative.

The environment is an issue of very great concern to the people of the Yeronga electorate. In recent years there has been a break-through in public awareness of the need to think globally and act locally to protect our planet. The residents of Tarragindi and Moorooka are determined to ensure that Toohey forest is protected. I join them in that determination. Toohey forest is an island of natural beauty amidst the urban sprawl. We must guard this urban forest jealously.

Decision-making on the environment entails a better and more open approach to land-use planning. For too long, decisions on land use have been made behind closed doors with no public input. Within the electorate of Yeronga there is a prime riverfront site currently occupied by the decommissioned Tennyson Power House. I am determined to ensure adequate public input into the decision-making on the future of that site.

The great challenges to the future of our urban environment come from such matters as traffic and noise. It is no longer good enough to assume that traffic volumes must grow even higher. We must consider the rights of local residents to a livable environment. Ipswich Road and Beaudesert Road are classical examples of high-volume main roads which cut through the middle of urban communities. With the projected demographic explosion in south-east Queensland over the coming 20 years, we must insist that our planners develop a more sophisticated approach to the use of rail and other public transport, lest we go the diabolical way of Los Angeles. Because of the impact of main roads, the suburbs of Annerley and Moorooka have already changed in character. Over recent decades, in the future, planning effort must be made to direct traffic, particularly heavy transports, away areas. I commend the initiative of the Minister for Transport, the Honourable David Hamill, in commissioning the South East Queensland Passenger Transport Study.

In all of these reforms, we must ensure that we do not lose track of those remarks with which I commenced this address, namely, that no problem is so great that we should trade off our democratic institutions. No issue is so urgent that we should irrevocably give away our heritage of civil liberties.

I turn finally to give thanks to those whose hard work and long-sustained effort led to my now representing the seat of Yeronga. To my mother and my late father, I owe more than words can speak. I record a special thanks to my wife, Lesley, and my stepchildren, Libby, Geoffrey, Hamish and Alex for their unflinching support. I record also my deep thanks to my campaign director, Mr Bruce Gillman, and to all the members of the Labor campaign team for Yeronga—Ms Patricia Tavuzzi, Mr Geoff Dickie, Ms Leslie Mackay, Mr Peter Coom, Mrs Ailsa Head, Mr Barney Underwood, Mrs Joan Goodman, Myrtle and Frank O'Neill, Janelle and Peter Applegarth, Diane and Peter Channel, Catherine and Sean Reidy, Robyn and Ken Boyne, Joan and Col Baker and those countless others who put in the long, hard work to bring about the political change.

The future of politics will see many citizens drawn to groups with a particular interest in issues, such as the environment, civil liberties, electoral reform and the rights of disadvantaged groups. As one who has spent many years working in that arena of community politics, I am greatly honoured to be a member of this Forty-sixth Parliament, which will be one of the great reform Parliaments in the history of this nation.

Ten years ago I joined the Australian Labor Party in the belief that it was the only political party seriously willing and able to achieve social reform. It was founded 99 years ago, at a time when my own great-grandfather worked on the railways in central Queensland and down the mines at Mount Morgan. As I have reread the Speech of His Excellency outlining the program of this Government, I see a blueprint of action for social justice which is as urgently needed today as it was in my great-grandfather's time. I am more convinced than ever of the importance of the Australian Labor Party. It remains the single most important vehicle for social reform in the history of Australia, at least since colonisation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! In calling the honourable member for Nerang, I point out to honourable members that he is making his maiden speech and that I would like it to be heard in silence.

Mr CONNOR (Nerang) (4.14 p.m.): On behalf of the electors of Nerang, it is with great pleasure that I affirm my loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. All Australians are very much aware that the monarchy provides an important safeguard.

I congratulate Mr Fouras on his election as Speaker of this House. Mr Deputy Speaker, I congratulate you on your election as Chairman of Committees.

Many friends, both from within the Liberal Party and outside it, supported me prior to and during my campaign. Although there are too many friends to mention here, each and every one of them played a special and essential role in the events leading up

to my election as the member for Nerang. I say a very grateful "thankyou" to my electorate.

Many of the leaders and former leaders of industry, the legal system and the public service live in the Nerang electorate. Many have made a magnificent contribution to society and have chosen residences within my electorate in which to enjoy their retirement. To those people who have helped build Australia, I say, "Thank you."

Before I mention a few specific matters of concern in my electorate, I wish to relate an old Chinese proverb, which states, "Never be boastful; someone may come along who knew you as a child." I just hope that, on my journey through life and throughout my term in this Parliament, I can keep that proverb in mind.

Nerang's problems are numerous and are probably not unlike those of many other electorates. The electorate needs an effective resolution of traffic-flow problems; maintenance of and improvement in the provision of services to schools; provision of suitable sport and parkland areas; improvement in the security of private property against theft; and provision of fire-fighting and several other essential facilities.

All honourable members would have heard the following question, "Would you buy a used car from this man?" In public opinion polls, politicians are given about the same level of credibility as used-car salesmen.

One day I telephoned a used-car salesman and inquired about the state of the market. I asked, "How's it going—selling heaps?" He said, "No, we sell good used cars!" Life is funny. During the last 12 years, I have been involved in an industry that is closely aligned with the motor vehicle industry. For the most part, I built motor homes for car dealers to sell. The industry is filled with many colourful characters, especially the salesmen. Politicians have much in common with used-car salesmen. Some policies have much in common with used cars. However, to be fair to the used-car dealers, there are very many reputable ones. Those operators pick and choose the best vehicle from trade-ins, and they sell only the best. They wholesale—that is, sell to other dealers—what is left. But then there is Slippery Sam, who buys cars wherever he can get a deal. Slippery Sam may sometimes call these vehicles a "price leader", which, in other words, means "rough"; that is, they have had very hard lives, are full of rust and have had numerous prangs. Sam usually has a huge team of detailers who "tart up" this price-leader for all it is worth. They have usually read the industry's best seller, *How To Sell Your Car For More Than It Is Worth*. Slippery Sam calls his customers "punters", and is often heard to say that a car is "clean", "tidy", "straight", "original", a s. . . box, "a good jigger"—depending on whose car it is. It might be good enough for it to be his "drive car"—that is, it is the best car in his lot. He may consider a car to be worth about "five spot", which is \$500; "five big ones", which is \$5,000; "maybe five and a bit", which is \$5,100 or \$5,200; and "maybe even five and a half if she doesn't need paint and has nothing to spend". Sam says—

"She drives well, one owner with log books, she's not an ex-renter, with full history, a collector's item . . . , many extras, mint condition, suit new car buyer, anyway, 'What's it worth?' "

Does that not sound like a politician?

The Slippery Sams of the motor vehicle industry usually say—

"If I gave you . . . \$5,000 for it, would you sign up today . . . do you have to talk it over with your wife . . . how can I help you to decide . . . what would I have to give you to decide today . . . do you need finance, what's the equity in your car . . . is this exactly what you're looking for . . . time waits for no man . . . he who hesitates . . . it's the last one . . . I can only hold it for you until . . . if it was red, would you buy it today . . . do you want it rustproofed, when would you like it, tomorrow, or would Thursday do . . ."

When a person is trading in a car, the discussion usually is as follows—

"What do I have to pay to own it?"

"Any encumbrances?"

"What's the residual?"

"Have you done a title check?"

"Is title clear?"

"How much is owing on it?"

"What's the pay-out?"

"Where are the books?"

"Cash or cheque?"

"He's a sharp cookie."

"If you would like to sit here I'll get the order form."

"Now that was \$4,500 for your car wasn't it?"

"Who wants to buy a car?"

"Sign here, you won't regret this decision Ray, I can call you Ray, can't I?"

"I made a squillion."

That is how I saw the car industry. I was never a used-car salesman, but I have always found salesmen's rhetoric humorous and their invective interesting. It stamps them as what they are, just as it does for parliamentarians.

Coming to Parliament, I was looking for some direction. I read a quote from a notable political wit, Terry M. Townsend, which states—

"One of the principal qualifications for a political job is that the applicant knows nothing much about what he is expected to do."

If that is the case, then I am eminently qualified.

With that quotation in mind, I felt I needed to study how to speak in Parliament. I learned that one cannot call a member a liar, even if the member is a liar, and that some things are simply not said, such as calling someone a windbag, a hypocrite or a villain, and mentioning a gerrymander. I have heard that one fellow once commented, "If I described the honourable member as a wit, I would only be half right."

There have been other very memorable sayings in Parliament, such as, "The public debt is not paying its way." Another caused the Hansard staff no end of trouble. A member stated—

"The wool which those sheep would have grown if they had not died will not be sold this year."

Another member once said—

"I spoke of this strike, but the Premier denied ignorance of it."

For a maiden speech, I think the classic was—

"The people who make up my electorate are very optimistic, otherwise I would not be here."

I wonder from which party that honourable member came?

A more recent example by a member in the House is to be found in a speech made during a debate centred on the dairy industry. A member of the previous Government asked—

"Is it true that the only things you've ever milked are cars?"

Probably the aspect that I find most interesting is the jargon used in Parliament. The Parliamentary jargon to which I refer, is as follows—

"Upon our election . . . Honourable members with our political will, we will move towards, our position with an attitude, that extends to principle."

"It is my understanding ,under my proposal, I shall respect the wishes of, will seek to and act quickly."

"My learned colleague is under the illusion we need a smooth passage through Parliament . . ."

"Don't you worry about that, I am bitterly opposed. His promises, have a dreadful smell, raising grave doubts, on his ability to act impartially. It put in question, his independence."

"I commented publicly, in the light of this cronyism. This is clearly, yet another backflip, with roaring hypocrisy, on the floor of Parliament."

"This is a farce! Where is his consistency on this issue? I called on him today to apologise for his remarks."

"He is power mad, it is now clear. He's outlined his policy, ducking for cover, unable to back up claims."

"There was no sign of action, to protect our livelihoods, it would mean a return to . . . , comrades, social injustice."

"We need award restructuring, a social wage, a better standard of living and quality of life. But what about environmental issues, and jobs for the boys? . . . He was howled down."

"Our micro economics reports are a major thrust."

"I stand accused of being a union basher, a fascist, and a feminist."

"Is it a socialist, communist plot, with reds under the bed?"

"Hog wash, BLF, BWIU, ETU, ACTU, AWU, FEDFA, RTA, VEAs, SBDC, CJC, EARC, QTTC, TLC, ISD, STD, DID, RIP."

"Corruption. We need a freeze, a ceiling on and a floor under . . . otherwise the bottom will drop out . . ."

"We need to call a review, to reassert its authority, confirm or deny reports, not let them off the hook. There are growing fears."

"Today they condemned open and accountable government. Department heads are a waste of taxpayers' money."

"It was significant that he had now come forward over gross misuse of funds to protect their positions after repeated allegations, of slush funds, members outrage and lining their pockets."

"The dispute they refused to acknowledge."

"Their latest electoral stunt is rampant consumerism, shame, shame, shame, fiscal drag, bracket creep, creep bracket bracket, qualification inflation, wages blowout, tight monetary policy, current account deficit and wages breakout."

"We need an accord with demand and supply, in equilibrium, a pipeline to tax indexation, no hollow logs already in the system."

"We need a housing package, an industry package, mortgage relief, pension relief, what a relief!"

"It's gone off the rails, they're all party hacks, union heavies, with party affiliations; left wing, right wing, centre left faction, new right, old guard, new guard, mud guard."

"The best thing that can be said of him is that on the whole, all things being considered he might have been worse."

"Where's the status quo, the establishment? We have wets, dries, big 'I's', little 'I's'. We're under funded, under staffed and under review. We don't want empire builders. We need improved efficiency, with a daily diet of complaints."

"There are insufficient safeguards, for the rank and file, with ballot rigging, rorts, shams, bagman, debts forgiven, gifts and junkets."

I think that with a little practice, I could speak like a politician. However, many people would not know what the hell I was talking about.

I read once that the reason that statues of politicians look so unnatural is that statues keep their mouths shut. It was once said that a political platform is just like the one on the back of a streetcar—not meant to stand on, just to get in on.

I turn now to Harbourn town. Bordering on my electorate is a proposed site for the largest shopping centre in the southern hemisphere—Lewis Land Corporation's Harbourn town. I congratulate the Minister for Local Government for his decision on that project. I hope that the Lewis Land Corporation will still see fit to take the project to the Gold Coast City Council, as I believe that, if it is handled properly, the project has merits. I wish that the Minister had made his decision a little earlier. It would have saved me a couple of days' work on my speech.

More and more, society is turning to town-planning, with its checks and balances, to ensure that the standard of living in each neighbourhood is not diminished, but improved. When town-planning checks and balances are tampered with, the community, quite rightly, becomes alarmed. However, the use of ministerial rezonings means that residents are intimidated when they wish to protect their interests. Under normal rezonings, a relatively low-cost appeal can be made to the Local Government Court. Under a ministerial rezoning, a Supreme Court challenge is required. So what do we have? Because they are afraid of losing their life-savings, or worse, individuals, families and small-business operators are too scared to take on the much richer speculators and big businesses.

I leave honourable members with this proposition: which would they like to buy—a car that was made to look good or a good car? Like old bomb cars, old worn-out policies and practices should end up on the scrap heap where they belong. Unfortunately, it is much easier to sell a policy that is made to look good than it is to sell a good policy. We sell policies, not cars. One must remember that, if a customer does not get satisfaction, he will not buy again.

As we enter the last decade of the twentieth century, we continue to mortgage our children's future. This must stop. Our national credit card has reached its limit. The wealth-creators of Australia spend too much time filling out forms and not creating wealth. Our standard of living continues to drop. Governments create the red rape; it is up to them to remove it.

Unemployment is also beginning to rear its ugly head again. In years to come, overcoming unemployment will be our biggest battle, and every obstacle that we put in the way of business will result in the loss of jobs. There is no aspect of business that is not affected by Government regulations. Businesses are reeling from excessive Government regulation and are wearily withdrawing from the losing battle. It was once said that, if all the bureaucracy in Australia started to run efficiently, the rest of Australia would stop, totally bogged down from answering their queries and filling in forms. It is like the old saying, "What's the definition of an elephant? That's a mouse built to Government specifications."

However, a much more imminent problem is facing this State right now. Businesses are going broke by the hundreds, and, if something is not done, soon it will be by the thousands. It is to be expected that many new businesses will go broke. That is the normal, private-enterprise, natural-selection process—survival of the fittest. In fact, approximately 80 per cent of new businesses go broke in the first five years of their operation. They are the businesses that are badly managed or undercapitalised, or have other corporate ills.

At the moment in Queensland, we are not going through the normal sorting-out process with businesses. We are seeing a Labor-inspired commercial depression, with long-established businesses going to the wall. Many businesses, especially state-of-the-art cutting edge type businesses, the ones on which we are counting for our export-led recovery, are extremely capital intensive. A business can be extremely competitive when money is borrowed at 15 per cent interest and can be a disaster when it is borrowed at 20 per cent interest. No manager, no matter how good he or she was two years ago, could have second-guessed the Federal Government on its interest rate policies.

Many truly excellent businesses are now facing bankruptcy. Queensland and Australia cannot afford to see these businesses—our commercial backbone—annihilated by financial broadsides from Canberra. I might add that most of these businesses that are facing oblivion are in the small-business sector and employ more than half of the private sector work force. The ramifications, should a snowball effect take place in our commercial landscape, are horrendous. One large business falling over will take another half-dozen or more with it until—well, your guess is as good as mine.

An inquiry needs to be instigated now into corporate failures in Queensland. That inquiry should take into account the present level of business collapse, other imminent business failures and the cost to the community in terms of employment, industry upheaval and loss of revenue. It must have a very short lead-time. Within three months, it must come up with interim proposals, at least. Some form of moratorium on financial repossessions may be required.

It is almost the norm in the business world for the owner of a small business to use his home as security for the business overdraft. Labor's high interest rate policy will cost these people not only their businesses but also their homes. To recoup their loans, which have been inflated by crazy interest rates, the financial institutions will repossess these homes and sell them on a rock-bottom market at bargain basement prices. This could have another consequence, that of dramatically reducing the value of homes because of the glut of mortgagee-in-possession auctions. Because almost every sector of the Australian economy is underpinned by real estate values, this problem will then overflow into every facet of the economy. It would take Australia more than 10 years to recover from a corporate melt-down of this magnitude. I will leave honourable members with that thought.

To my wife Ann, who is in the public gallery, I offer my thanks. Above all, to the finest people I know—the people of Nerang—I say, "Thank you for putting your trust in me. Judge me by what I do."

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Perrett): Before I call the honourable member for Townsville, I remind the House that this is his maiden speech and I ask that he be extended the courtesy of the House.

Mr DAVIES (Townsville) (4.33 p.m.): On 2 December 1989 the Queensland political barometer registered a change for the better. The air freshened up and that thing that I call "Cyclone Corruptional", which had ravaged the State for the past 32 years, wreaked havoc on our life-style and smothered every corner of the State with the smell of corruption, was blown away by this fresh wind of change—a change to Wayne Goss and Labor.

We believed we could win, and we did. The mood was that the corrupt Nationals and Liberals or, as I call them, the "Corruptionals", had been there too long—far too long. The mood for change was overwhelming.

People realised that a coalition was not the answer. They knew that that would simply be more of the same. They knew that Don Lane, who rorted the parliamentary expenses system, was a Liberal for most of his life. They knew that a lot of his \$533,000 superannuation pay-out accumulated while he was a Liberal. They knew that corruption of the police force existed while the Liberals were in coalition. They knew that while the Liberals were in coalition people who opposed the coalition were victimised or arrested.

That 32-year period seems like a bad dream. The destruction caused to the State by that political cyclone—"Cyclone Corruptional"—had been enormous and, in essence, that was because the corrupt electoral system had given us a dictatorship. With this corrupt electoral system, the "Corruptionals" always had a rails run in elections. The Fitzgerald commission recognised that and recommended the establishment of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission to clean out this corruption.

I will give honourable members some examples of what I mean by electoral corruption. For the National's Vern Johnson to win the seat of Gregory, he only needed a majority of the 8 135 electors. By contrast, for Labor's Ken McElligott to win the seat of Thuringowa, he needed a majority of the 27 890 electors. I was born in Longreach and I appreciate the tyranny of distance and the disadvantages that country people face. But is living in Longreach, compared to Townsville, a 3 to 1 worse proposition every minute of every hour of every day of every month of every year? I think not!

Similarly, the Leader of the Opposition, the National's Russell Cooper, in the seat of Roma needed only to win a majority of the 8 220 electors. Labor's Geoff Smith needed a majority of the 20 651 electors to win the seat of Townsville East. To win the seat of Townsville, I needed a majority of the 23 016 electors, yet the National's Don Neal only needed a majority of the 8 601 electors to win Balonne. Is it right that in these three National Party electorates there are only 24 956 electors, who are represented by three members of Parliament?

In Townsville there are only three members of Parliament for 71 557 electors. Is that fair? Of course it is not fair. It is downright corrupt. Yet a former Premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, is on record as saying, "How can they say boundaries make an honest Government?" He certainly knew the truth. But on 2 December the Nationals and the Liberals—the "Corruptionals"—were called to account for their sins of the last 32 years. They gave Queensland the following—

- corruption;
- nepotism;
- cronyism;
- waste of public funds;
- publicly funded political advertising;
- no public accountability;
- no foreign land ownership register;
- pandering to overseas interests;
- little in the way of foreign investment controls;
- a few back room deals for the boys and girls, the relatives and others; and
- private enterprise—very private enterprise, so private you had to be in the club to do business.

They gave us scandal after scandal.

The National and Liberal parties created many scandals. Honourable members will recall the electoral scandal, the scandals in the police force, the scandals in the QIDC and the land scandals that are too numerous to mention. Let me go down memory lane for a moment to remind honourable members of the scandals surrounding political donations. I am sure that honourable members will remember the brown paper bag scandals, which were mentioned recently, the Kaldeal/Joh for PM scandal and the Bundaberg hospital scandal. Do honourable members remember the Special Branch scandals and the dossiers that were kept on members of Parliament and others who might have been opposed to the Government? There was also the Springboks state of emergency scandal. Honourable members will recall the scandals in the quangos, involving Allen Callaghan and the Queensland Film Board of Review, and the \$400,000 Bond defamation scandal. They will recall also the Russ Hinze loan scandals and the Sir Edward Lyons TAB betting scandal. Closer to home in Townsville, which did not miss out, there was the Ward 10B scandal and the Srebniak land-swap scandal. The National and Liberal parties have shown little care for anything. They have cared little about the environment, rainforests and pollution. They have shown little care for foreign investment controls, education, the disadvantaged groups in society, women with young children, families and, more importantly, for anyone who had the temerity to vote Labor.

The people of Townsville vote Labor. In the past, if a community such as Townsville supported a party other than the "Corruptionals", it was ostracised. In a cover-up attempt the Nationals and Liberals would say simply that Townsville was anti-development, which is hogwash. Townsville has had a succession of positive Labor mayors who concentrated on balanced development before balanced development became popular. I pay tribute to Perc Tucker, who was a former Leader of the Opposition, and to Mike Reynolds and Tony Mooney. The reality is that Townsville votes Labor. Therefore, in the past it was ostracised. That was made patently clear by former Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen when Townsville dared to throw out a National Party Minister, namely, Max Hooper. The National and Liberal parties gave up for a while, but they had another go later on by engineering what was supposedly a safe National Party seat. Heaven forbid, Townsville got Tony "Buckets" Burreket as its parliamentary representative. For three years all Tony did was lunch at the North Queensland Club, hand out cheques and bucket the Townsville City Council. Everyone tells me that that is all he ever did, that he did nothing for Townsville. That poor fellow had a fixation with the Townsville City Council from which he could not escape.

That is enough for the bad news. It is now time for the good news. On 2 December 1989, Wayne Keith Goss became the first Labor Premier of this State for 32 years. North Queensland now has the best representation that it has had for those 32 years. The Townsville region has three members in the Goss Labor Government, namely, Geoff Smith, Ken McElligott and me. Our northern neighbour Cairns also has three representatives in the Goss Government, namely, Keith De Lacy, Lesley Clark and Warren Pitt. Cook has Steve Bredhauer; Mourilyan, Bill Eaton; Mount Isa, Tony McGrady; Whitsunday, Lorraine Bird; and Mackay, Ed Casey. Five of the Cabinet Ministers are from north Queensland, including two from Townsville.

The Government's policy initiatives are or will be based on: the family, women, child care, coastal protection, pollution control, environmental protection, recycling, women's personal safety, law and order, education, seniors, regional economic development, corruption control, ministerial codes of conduct, a 10-point economic plan, foreign investment policy, housing for all Queenslanders, small business, public sector reform, literacy, inland tourism, export development, rural development, roads and transport, the drug trade, fire services, the arts, and a return to the Westminster system.

This Government is implementing the recommendations of the Fitzgerald report. It will address the problems of the homeless youth and will ensure that tourism development is environmentally sensitive. The Government will ensure that its regional economic development strategies are put into effect, and it will respond positively to the problems of the north. To use the words of E. G. Whitlam, this Government will give north Queensland "a fair go".

Since my decision to nominate for the seat of Townsville some 22 months ago, I have been asked constantly, "What made you decide to stand for the Australian Labor Party?" Although I have always had more than a passing interest in politics, in pure political terms I was apolitical. Until that time I had little interest in party politics. Via the ballot-box, I preferred to support—probably rather naively—the individual candidates who I thought would do the best job. However, the revelations of the Fitzgerald inquiry caused an irreversible change in my thinking. As the Fitzgerald inquiry progressed, my thinking changed from disbelief to dismay and, finally, to disgust at how corrupt the State had become. I wanted to help rid the State of the corrupt National Party Government.

Had it not been for a quirk of fate I may have been only helping out behind the scenes. Until the election I was a partner in the large Townsville accounting firm of Towers Hart Davies Tardiani. In November 1988, an old client and friend Jack Nugent, who is a retired police inspector, was talking to me. We had known each other for about seven years and had always enjoyed a very frank exchange of views. On that occasion our conversation was about the Fitzgerald inquiry. Jack obviously perceived—and I might add that it was not hard to perceive—that I was angry about the state of politics

in Queensland. Quick as a flash Jack asked me if I would like to contest the seat of Townsville. Before I made the decision to throw my hat into the ring I had to be satisfied with the integrity and the concern of both the alternative Government, the Australian Labor Party, and its leader Wayne Goss. Various meetings with Wayne Goss convinced me of his commitment and leadership abilities.

Because the private sector is the principal employment-creator and because I have a background in accounting, commerce and local government, I needed assurances on economic management. My family position and community involvement needed other assurances. Research on Labor's policies convinced me that it was not only the most responsible and caring party but also that it had the best policies for sensible economic development, which I have just outlined. As a result, I decided to contest the seat of Townsville. The rest is history.

The support from my wife, Lyn, my children Chris, Andrew and Erica, my strategy committee, my campaign director Mike Reynolds, AM, my campaign team, poll-workers and many others, which would extend to about 200 in all, was magnificent. The campaign was extremely successful, and I acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to its success. Because there are too many of them, I will not attempt to name them.

Unfortunately, though, Jack Nugent lived only long enough to see the Labor Party win the election. He died in the Townsville General Hospital on Boxing Day 1989, having fulfilled his ambitions to see Labor win Government in Queensland, to see his "adopted son", as he referred to me, win Townsville and to meet the new Premier, Wayne Goss. Wayne was able to visit Jack in hospital on his goodwill visit to Townsville on Tuesday, 19 December. Jack's wife, Joyce, and I are grateful for that gesture.

During the election campaign my own family suffered a personal tragedy with the loss of my brother Spike at Longreach last October. He was a comparatively young 47. Only just a week before he died he had been on the telephone getting the good oil from me on how the campaign was going. He will be missed by my family, my mother, sister Marian and her family at Inala, brother Wayne and his family in Sydney, brother Mike and his family at Longreach and brother Garth and his family in Townsville. His wife, Trish, has a wonderful, supportive family—Evie and Harry Searles, Tom, Dave, Brian and Barbara Searles, and their wives and husbands, also of Longreach.

Apart from my family connection with Longreach, there is a bond between the people of Townsville and Longreach of which most people would not be aware. There are literally thousands of people now living in Townsville who used to live in Longreach. Although we have chosen to live on the coast, the bond is still there. Many of us travelled back to Longreach for the opening of the magnificent Stockman's Hall of Fame. Although Townsville is now my home, Longreach will always remain my second home. It is where I was born; it is where I grew up and it is only a little way down the road from Barcardine.

My association with Townsville commenced in 1973 when I moved there to study at James Cook University. Fortunately, two of my brothers, who were in the Australian army, were stationed at Townsville, which influenced me to choose the northern city over Brisbane. It is generally accepted that Townsville and its island suburb, Magnetic Island, are Australia's best-kept secrets. I do not know whether they will remain that way.

Townsville is the capital of the Magnetic North region, located on Cleveland Bay some 1 500 kilometres north of Brisbane. With a population of just under 120 000, Townsville has all the big-city benefits with the most friendly, hospitable atmosphere imaginable. Not surprisingly, residents love this city. One of the focal points of the city is its award-winning Flinders Mall. This shaded, palm-fringed pedestrian way is one of the first stops for tourists. On Sundays the mall plays host to the cotters' market, where local artists, craftspeople and entertainers display their goods and talents. A short walk down Flinders Street East will take one past imaginative and faithfully restored turn-of-the-century buildings.

The Great Barrier Reef Wonderland complex, a unique and fascinating complex which includes the world's largest walk-through coral reef aquarium, museum and Omnimax theatre, is also located on Flinders Street East. Just nearby, right next to the ocean, is the five-star Sheraton Breakwater casino-hotel, the only casino in north Queensland and only the second in Queensland.

Townsville is overlooked by Castle Hill, an imposing monolith that offers panoramic 360 degree views and a terrific overall perspective of the city's layout. It provides magnificent views across the water to Magnetic Island, seven kilometres away, and it is a favourite spot for photographers. Townsville has many delightful and well-designed parks and gardens. This sounds like a travelogue, doesn't it? The Anderson Park Botanical Gardens, the Strand, Anzac Park and the Queen's Gardens offer everything from lagoons and tropical gardens to ferneries and miniature rainforests. A natural feature, the Town Common Environmental Park, is known worldwide for its abundance of bird life and wildlife.

Probably the most "must go to" place is Magnetic Island, which is just 20 minutes away by a regular ferry service. Part of this island has been declared a national park. Approximately 2 000 people live on the island, many of them commuting daily to Townsville.

Townsville is a city of unlimited opportunities. It is a city which, in the post-war period, has progressed rapidly to become the unofficial capital of north Queensland. I am sure that honourable members who represent the Cairns region will not mind my saying that. This history of growth and development has as its impetus an extremely diversified economic base. Core sectors of the Townsville economy include—

- heavy industry;
- meat-processing plants;
- the port of Townsville;
- major military establishments;
- education and research facilities;
- tourism;
- public administration; and
- transport.

In the field of heavy industry, Townsville owes much to the resource riches of the hinterland area. In particular, the major link between Townsville and Mount Isa has been and remains vital to the economy of both cities. Mount Isa Mines Ltd has been the catalyst for much development associated with the major copper refinery in Townsville and the export of its products.

Along similar lines is the contribution to the city of the Yabulu nickel treatment plant. As the Greenvale nickel ore body is exhausted, one of the major issues facing the city is the environmentally safe and efficient importation of nickel ore to ensure the plant's future. A number of options are being explored amidst a good deal of controversy within the local community. Fortunately, it is in Ken McElligott's area. I am pleased to say that the relevant Ministers of the Goss Government have made it a priority to stay abreast of this important issue. Dallhold Nickel Management Proprietary Limited, the operator of the refinery, has put forward a scheme to import ore via Halifax Bay. This proposal is subject to approval by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, which is commonly referred to as GBRMPA. The Government will abide by the decision of the authority.

However, the Government has not been sitting idly by. Plans are well under way for the necessary port and south-side redevelopment works and the upgrading of the rail corridor through the city. Some of those agreements have been put in place only in the last two weeks. These plans are vital to the future of the project because it may be necessary to import up to 4 million tonnes of nickel ore through the port and ship it

north to Yabulu each year. With others in the Government, I will be working to ensure that the Yabulu nickel refinery remains a vital component of the city's economic base.

The other major heavy industry I should mention is the regional cement works run by North Australian Cement Limited. It is quite true to say that this major operation has produced the foundations upon which a great deal of north Queensland rests. The plant is capable of serving north Queensland for many years to come. It is my sincere hope that it will also increase its role as a major exporter of product to south-east Asia and in the Pacific rim countries.

The Goss Labor Government has identified Townsville as a critical element in the implementation of our export development strategy for Queensland. Townsville is the principal port outlet for a range of primary and resource industries located in the broader region. Our commercial links with the rest of the world are extensive, with very rapid growth in our trade with Papua New Guinea over the last few years.

I am sure that the Government's export development strategy will enhance this role further. In particular, the horticultural export promotion program has great scope in developing the agricultural potential of the surrounding Burdekin and Herbert River districts. That potential extends to both sea and air export cargo.

The beef industry export development program will also serve Townsville well, given our two major export meatworks run by F. J. Walker Limited and Queensland Meat Exports Limited. These meatworks are major plants run as efficiently and competitively as any in Queensland.

One point that I would like to make in relation to these major export industries and associated infrastructure is the quality of the work force which drives them. Townsville is often referred to as a working man's town. We are proud of that distinction, as it indicates the primary role the city plays in the generation of wealth, and therefore jobs, here in Queensland. We are workers, hard workers, and we have a proud tradition of industriousness, productivity and achievement. That spirit is keenly displayed by the Townsville trade union movement. The Townsville Trades and Labor Council is heavily involved in moves to increase productivity in Townsville in order to create more jobs, better pay and conditions, and stronger industries. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with unions doing that?

Weak, inefficient and uncompetitive industries do not withstand the ravages of economic slowdowns. It is in the interests of workers and management to seek improvement. Let me give honourable members a small example of that. While other Australian ports are crippled with inquiries into waterfront practices, in Townsville the Waterside Workers Federation has recently been setting Australian speed records for unloading ore shipments. They are proud of their productivity. They are also sending out a clear message that if nickel ore does come through the port of Townsville, their efficiency can be relied on. That is typical of the working spirit of Townsville.

The Townsville economy also benefits strongly from the large public sector presence in the city. Almost one third of all pay packets in the city are attributable to public sector employment. To some extent, this provides a stabilising effect on the local economy when other industry sectors are affected by cyclical downturns in economic activity. We have seen a recent example of that with the pilots dispute. Townsville has come through basically unscathed.

The largest public sector employer by far is the Department of Defence, with the Australian Army's Lavarack Barracks and the Royal Australian Air Force base at Garbutt. Service people and their families form a very important part of our community. They experience unique social problems of accommodation, education, social dislocation and adaptation to new social environments. As their representative, I will be doing my best to represent them as efficiently and as effectively as I can. Townsville benefits markedly from the economic contribution of our defence service community. This contribution is set to increase during the 1990s with the recently announced establishment of the Australian Artillery School at an estimated cost of between \$70m and \$100m.

Education and research are also major public sector employers and are major planks in the city's infrastructure in their own right. In 1990, for the first time, the James Cook University of north Queensland broke the 5 000 mark in enrolments. The additional tertiary places made available by the Goss Government early this year, soon after election, contributed to that. The university trains graduates in a broad range of disciplines to cater for the technical and specialist needs of the north.

Under the Goss Labor Government, education is a priority and I support that strongly. Education is the future for our children and, through them, Queensland's future. I am pleased that we were elected on a comprehensive and detailed package of policies to improve education in this State. The TAFE colleges, the high schools and the primary schools will all benefit under Labor's policies. We are going to educate Queensland. More importantly, all students will benefit. I am keen to ensure that the under-expenditure on education of the past, particularly on TAFE colleges, is rectified.

Townsville also leads the nation in certain fields of research. One of the most interesting areas is the cyclone structural testing station at James Cook University. Work at the station has led to a marked improvement in the State's building code. Overseas interest in the station's pioneering work is high.

James Cook University, along with AIMS, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, leads the world in the area of marine science. Unravelling the mystery of the coral polyps' breeding cycle is but one of the major scientific breakthroughs of the 1980s. This pioneering work into understanding the Great Barrier Reef and the marine environment is entirely appropriate given the role of Townsville as one of the major gateways to the Great Barrier Reef. With its work in the field of aquaculture, particularly prawns, AIMS is set to contribute markedly to the Queensland economy into the next century.

The CSIRO also has a major research station in Townsville. In particular, much work is carried out on increasing the productivity of our agricultural sector. Work on pasture improvement and grass strains has already added millions of dollars to rural output.

The Queensland Treasury also makes use of the James Cook University. It may surprise some members to know that the Treasury's Queensland State model is being developed by the Treasury within the economics department of the James Cook University under the guidance of Dr Peter Crossman. I am keen to encourage the research activities carried out in Townsville. I will be working to ensure that the application of this research benefits Queensland as much as possible.

Living so far from the capital of the State, north Queenslanders have traditionally looked on Townsville as the administrative and commercial capital of the north. Both the Commonwealth and State Governments have a strong presence in Townsville with major staff establishments. That is entirely fitting to ensure that the people of north Queensland are not disadvantaged in the provision of and access to public services. I will be working to ensure that this situation remains adequate in services such as police, health, education, housing and welfare.

As to the future—under the policies of the Goss Labor Government Townsville is set to grow rapidly. There is a plentiful supply of low-cost industrial land. Although Townsville is located in the dry tropics, it has one of the best water supplies of any city in Australia. When full, stage 2A of the Ross River dam holds between four and five years of water supply for the city at current consumption rates. There is also access to the waters of the mighty Burdekin Falls Dam. The pipeline to the that dam was officially opened after seven years of desperate drought. However, it is ironic that, on the day it opened in November 1988, the rains came tumbling down. Stage 2A of the Ross River Dam was filled within six months, and the Burdekin pipeline was relegated to an expensive insurance policy. Nevertheless, it will be needed in the future, and is benefiting the Burdekin area. However, water supplies for the present and future development of the Townsville region are assured.

Townsville is also well supplied with energy to sustain and develop major secondary industries. We have electricity, coal and the likelihood of natural gas. The Bowen Basin gas fields are one of the largest in the world. As yet, following their discovery and feasibility testing by local Townsville firm Curtain Brothers, they are untapped. I will be working within this Parliament to ensure that the wealth of the Bowen Basin gas reserves is harnessed for the benefit of Queensland. Rather than the public construction of gas pipelines, which levy charges more akin to a form of taxation, I support the policy of the Goss Government to encourage private investment in such pipelines. Townsville has the heavy industry to support a private pipeline from the Bowen Basin. Such a pipeline would not only serve existing industries but also open up new industrial and export opportunities.

I would like to see Townsville capitalise on its role as a centre for secondary mineral processing. Mount Isa Mines Limited has expressed interest from time to time in the construction of a zinc smelter in the region. That interest should be encouraged. One of the main deterrents to the establishment of a smelter is energy costs. I will be discussing this matter further with the relevant Ministers.

Of course, Townsville's position as a major transport centre will ensure that it is part of any future development in the region. We are the road and rail crossroad for the west, north and south. Our transport sector is very strong. However, there is a need to look at the adequacy of Townsville's public infrastructure in the area of transport. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the railway yards close to the city need to be moved and modernised. That program is being developed. Large parcels of land in close proximity to the city need to be freed up for development, offsetting the costs of relocation. I support these moves and I have had discussions with the Minister for Transport and Consumer Affairs, Mr Hamill, in this regard.

The road system also needs some upgrading; in particular route 15 around Castle Hill, which services heavy transport, tourist buses and car traffic, as part of the main roads system. Similarly, Boundary Street should be treated as the main heavy transport export corridor to the port. General public transport within the city needs some attention, and I will pursue this complex issue with the Minister.

I have already taken up with the Minister the need for a major upgrading program of the road system on Magnetic Island. I am pleased that, on his recent visit to Townsville, the Minister took the time to inspect Magnetic Island. The Magnetic Island road system is a sad testimony to the years of past neglect and broken promises. It must be improved for the safety of residents and to cater for the increasing volumes of tourist traffic.

On the encouraging side in the drive for development opportunities in Townsville is the regional economic development policies of the Goss Labor Government. As a mark of its importance, the portfolio of Regional Development now rests with the State Treasurer. The portfolio and the regional economic development plans for each of the 10 main regions of Queensland replace the Department of Northern Development which was, at best, part of a phantom portfolio, in line with the projects it pursued. I believe that Townsville will fare well under the regional economic development policies of the Goss Government.

One of the fastest growing sectors of the Townsville economy prior to the pilots dispute was tourism. Tourism in Townsville grew rapidly in the 1980s, despite the studious neglect of the city by the upper echelons of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation. While Queensland has enjoyed the expenditure of millions of dollars, Townsville has been left to row its own boat. The growth of tourism in Townsville is a tribute to the efforts of local tourism organisations, such as the Magnetic North Tourism Authority, which has worked with limited resources. It has, with limited finance, promoted the unique attractions of Townsville and the region extremely well.

In my opinion, one of the reasons that the QTTC abandoned Townsville in the early 1980s was that city's failure to adopt a development-at-any-cost attitude, as opposed to a balanced-development attitude. We would not allow bulldozers to ravage Florence

Bay and turn one of Magnetic Island's greatest unspoilt attractions into a \$100m stereotype tourist resort. We would not allow high-rise development along the city foreshores.

The Townsville community, the elected administration of the Townsville City Council and special interest groups such as the Save Florence Bay Association kept talking about a concept such as balanced development, life-style preservation and the environment. The QTTC and its followers simply walked away from a community which, in its view, was full of anti-development weirdos. I can assure the members of this House that there is nothing anti-development about Townsville. The Magnetic Quays project at Nelly Bay is testimony to that. Of course, the project has its critics, who are exercising their legal rights to object to it. I have no problem with that. However, I am very disturbed at the high costs and delays inherent in the court process for the determination of those objections. I am pleased that this Government is set to introduce reforms that will protect the right of objectors while streamlining procedures. It is long overdue.

The Goss Labor Government has a comprehensive policy for coastal development that will balance the competing views of these areas to avoid degradation of resources, life-style and the environment.

A further source of concern to me is the Townsville international airport. Lack of promotion, the rigid nature of bilateral and international airline agreements and a lack of local control have severely curtailed its development. recently, the Townsville-Thuringowa Development Board sent a submission on this issue to the Federal Minister for Transport and Communications. The recent IAC inquiry into travel and tourism identified deregulation of international airline arrangements as a positive move to bolster international tourism. I support that, as I believe that, owing to those institutional impediments, Townsville is not being allowed to compete on a fair basis with other international airports.

I turn now to the environment. I am pleased that the environment has reached the top of the political agenda for the 1990s. For too long the environment has been treated as a "free" good in the production equation of industrial decisions. The result of this "free" good approach is the imposition of externalities that the community at large must bear. Air, water, noise and visual pollution spring to mind, along with soil degradation, species loss and ill health. The problem is that the environment is outside our system of market assigned prices. The fact that it is "priceless" is in essence its strength and its weakness.

In the absence of a proper regulatory structure—or, more importantly, a properly resourced regulatory structure—no balanced approach between industry and the environment can be achieved. The Greens have played a major role in ensuring that the environment is valued by either price or regulation.

A balance must be struck in our use of the environment to ensure that it is preserved for future generations. This does not mean that every battle will be won to the satisfaction of all parties. It means striking a balance in our desire for development and jobs and the need for a sustainable development. In Townsville, the North Queensland Conservation Council has been at the forefront of the Green movement. In fact, the people of Townsville value their life-style and environment highly. In 1989, the effort put into the 100 000 Trees for Townsville campaign was magnificent and was the forerunner to other campaigns in Queensland and Australiawide. The role of companies and organisations, such as the Townsville City Council, the *Townsville Bulletin*, the armed forces, and the Trades and Labor Council, in the ongoing Greening of Townsville campaign was terrific. After the long drought of the 1980s, the city is rapidly shedding its brown image. One of the most interesting developments in the city is the third major botanical garden, the Palmetum. The Palmetum is devoted to palms and covers a broad range of habitats from rainforest to arid savanna. It is a unique centre for learning about the environment and is drawing international acclaim and attention. Townsville has its own version of the Kakadu national park right on its doorstep in the Town Common environmental

park. Sadly, owing to a lack of State resources in past years, the most has not been made of that major attraction.

I have had discussions with the Minister for Tourism and the Minister for Environment about the potential of that unique and environmentally significant asset. It is my goal to see the Town Common become a major environmental attraction in the years ahead to complement the Great Barrier Reef Wonderland Aquarium, Magnetic Island and other attractions. Along with the national park on Magnetic Island—which, by the end of this year will include Florence Bay, at long last—Townsville has a great deal to offer the tourist looking for a quality, nature-based experience.

Townsville is also conscious of its heritage. The old Supreme Court building on Melton Hill is a fine example of disrepair and the shameful neglect of the previous Government. The building, which is owned by the State Government, is in a parlous state. It is the third-oldest building in Townsville. Because of its historical significance, it is listed by the National Trust and it is on the Australian Heritage Commission register.

The Australian Heritage Commission's statement of significance says that the building is—

". . . historically significant as the only surviving timber and tin public building which dates from the early years of Townsville (1877) and as the Supreme Court Building in North Queensland from 1889-1975. The building is of some historical interest as the focus in North Queensland for performing arts before its conversion to a court building (1877-1888)."

Mr Deputy Speaker, that concludes my speech in support of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Speech by His Excellency the Governor. May I place on record my congratulations to Mr Fouras on his election as Speaker of this House. At least we in the Labor Party realise that the new fabric of Australia is a multicultural society. That is our future.

Time expired.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (5.14 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker —

Government members interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: In rising to speak to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, I express my allegiance to the Queen. I wish the Governor well in his deliberations and in his activities.

I note the greeting that I received at the commencement of my speech. I am sure that members opposite will show interest in what I am about to say, and that from time to time I will get some positive reaction from them. They will notice that I did not bring my troops in with me.

I have noted the comments made by the Governor in his Speech. Honourable members should be made aware of some of them. For example, it is interesting to note that the Governor said—

"My Government wants to see a genuine export culture develop in Queensland in the Nineties." Honourable members should realise that the Government must do more than it has in the last few months to develop that export culture and to give it the support that it rightly deserves.

Some of the legislation that will be introduced provides interesting reading. Mention has been made of legislation affecting fire-fighting services, which brings to mind the existence of several boards throughout the State. The present Government can utilise—or not utilise, as it sees fit—expert advice and cooperation that has been given to the community by people who serve on fire services, ambulance and hospitals boards.

The Government also intends to introduce firearms legislation. I noticed that, during the election campaign, members of the Labor Party were very quiet about that matter and that very little emphasis was placed on the need for reform in relation to firearms. The Government also intends to undertake a study of traffic flow in the Brisbane area.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of Committees. I am sure that the interest you have shown in the work of the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee and other committees will stand you in good stead in the discharge of your duties in the House during the next few years. I might warn you, though, Mr Deputy Speaker, that it will not be quite as easy in the future as it has been today. There will be debates that are more vigorous than you have witnessed today. I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government also on the results of the recent election.

It is interesting to note that, not long after the election, a Minister was made to realise that although words are cheap, promises must be paid for. Mr Comben is on record as having acknowledged that. During the last month or so, it has become evident that some of the Government's activity—or inactivity—is the result of promises that were made in the excitement and hype of the election campaign. Those promises now seem to have faded from view. I have no doubt that members of the Labor Party hope that those promises will be forgotten, but I can assure them that that will not be the case. I intend to mention a couple of those promises during my speech.

The member for Townsville, who has just resumed his seat, commented that his electorate now has an assured water supply. I point out that the former member for Townsville was very active in ensuring that the Townsville area had an adequate supply of water. The former member for Townsville led many deputations and advanced strong arguments for the construction of the pipeline. His efforts should be recognised because he shouldered a great deal of the responsibility associated with the project. Its completion can be regarded by him as a feather in his cap.

Reference was made earlier in this Chamber to the airline pilots dispute.

Mr Milliner: Do you support the pilots?

Mr STEPHAN: I hope that the honourable member realises that it was his friend, Mr Hawke, who was handling, or trying to handle, that dispute. A couple of months ago, Mr Hawke commented that there was no airline pilots dispute. I wonder if Mr Milliner remembers that comment? Mr Hawke said that the dispute did not exist, in spite of the fact that the airlines were not operating. Does the Minister presently in the Chamber support 100 per cent what was done by the Hawke Labor Government? Does he support the downturn in the tourist industry?

Throughout the period of the dispute, the adverse effects of the strike on the tourism industry were known throughout Australia. Although some centres have not been affected quite as badly as others, many tourism operators have gone down the chute because of that particular dispute and the manner in which it was handled.

Mr Milliner: I have one question: do you support the pilots? Is that what you are saying?

Mr STEPHAN: I support the proposition of getting the pilots back into aircraft and into the air again. That is not what Mr Hawke has been doing. In spite of that, the Minister and the Premier this morning stood shoulder to shoulder and defended what Mr Hawke has done. I notice that the Minister is now not prepared to back up that stand and that he is trying to duck for cover. That is not good enough. This dispute must be overcome and a satisfactory conclusion reached in much the same way as any other dispute would be resolved.

I can remember that a few years ago a dispute occurred in the electricity supply industry. At that stage, the lights were turned off in Queensland. It is noteworthy that since that time the lights have not gone out. I await with bated breath the Labor Government's decision to overturn the result of that dispute. I ask the Minister where

he stands in relation to those decisions. What course of action does he support? What proposal will he put forward in relation to that matter? Together with other people in Queensland, I anxiously await the Government's proposals.

The member for Townsville also referred to electoral boundaries and the so-called principle of one vote, one value. No doubt the honourable member realises that Australia is the only democratic country in the world that accepts one vote, one value. How can having the same number of voters in each electorate be justified when electorates such as Warrego and Gregory are so vast that their parliamentary representatives have to travel by plane to reach parts of those electorates? How can they be compared to electorates in the metropolitan area that could be traversed by bicycle before breakfast? How can parliamentarians in far-flung electorates be expected to be able to keep in contact with their electors?

Mr Randell: They want to close it up.

Mr STEPHAN: Yes. The principle of one vote, one value will not provide Queenslanders with equity in representation. The purpose of the EARC is to undertake a review. I await with interest the recommendations of that commission. To say that the commission will conduct a review is not to say that it will recommend a system of one vote, one value in Queensland; nor, as far as I am concerned, has that ever been the suggestion.

It must be remembered that the ability of a parliamentary member to effectively provide services for industries and people in an electorate and put people in touch with Government institutions must be taken into account. Other matters that should be taken into consideration are the area in which the electorate is situated, the ease of transport, the distribution of population, and the ability of people who live in the electorate to contact their parliamentary representatives. Parliamentary representatives must also, as far as possible, maintain a community of interest and achieve a balanced representation, ensuring that all areas have every opportunity to develop to their full potential.

Insofar as equality of representation is concerned, I point out that in the 1987 British election, the greatest number of voters in any single electorate was 98 000 whereas the lowest enrolment recorded was 23 000. Queensland's electoral system compares favourably with that of Britain.

Mr FitzGerald: That is the Westminster system, isn't it?

Mr STEPHAN: I believe it is. Everything depends on the interpretation placed by members on the opposite side of the Chamber on the term "Westminster system".

Statistics for the last election for the House of Commons in Canada reveal that the largest electorate had a population of 207 803 and the smallest electorate had a population of 16 973, a difference of 12 to 1. On Prince Edward Island, four constituencies had an average population of 30 000. Sixty other Canadian electorates had a population of more than 100 000 and 40 electorates had a population under 50 000. Those figures show a large difference.

In 1982 in America there were 435 members of the Congress. A number of seats were allocated to each of the 50 States. The allocation of the numbers in each electorate is based on the population and not on the numbers of voters. South Dakota, with a population of 691 000, returned one member. Nevada, with a population of 786 000, returned two members.

In the 1986 election for Japan's House of Representatives, the largest electorate had almost four times the population of the smallest electorate.

Honourable members should not get carried away and think that one vote, one value is the only way to go. They would not like to be constituents in electorates in western and central Queensland which do not have good roads or adequate transport facilities. I challenge Government members to travel in those areas on some of the roads

that are being downgraded by Mr Hawke and to experience the difficulties members in those areas face in making contact with people.

When answering questions in this House, the Premier stated that he stood shoulder to shoulder with the policies of the Labor Party in Canberra. I will examine some of those policies, in particular taxation, that have been in force since 1983.

Mr Milliner: You're a bore.

Mr STEPHAN: I realise that the honourable member does not want to hear what his friends in Canberra are doing. He is trying to distance himself from them. Has the honourable member invited Mr Hawke to his electorate recently?

Since Labor came to office in 1982-83, total tax revenues have increased from \$44 billion to in excess of \$100 billion at present. That is an enormous increase. Because Labor policies have introduced a whole range of new, increased and indexed indirect taxes on a host of consumer goods, the beneficial effect of any tax package has been negated. It is not in the interests of Australians to be paying increased taxation.

Commercial wrapping materials have been subjected to a new 20 per cent sales tax. Household wrapping materials have suffered a 10 per cent increase in sales tax. Take-away soft drink and food containers have been subjected to a new 10 per cent sales tax, as have Muesli bars and bathroom fittings. That is nothing to be proud of.

Under Labor, people's real disposable income has fallen markedly. Today, a taxpayer on average weekly earnings with a dependent spouse and two dependent children is \$56 a week worse off in real terms than he was in March 1983. A family with two dependent children, with both parents receiving average weekly earnings, is worse off by \$71. That is not a very good record to stand on.

Honourable members have heard some of Mr Hawke's famous statements. Government members pin them on their walls and read them every night. In 1984, Mr Hawke said—

"We've ploughed the fields and sown the seeds. In the very near future we will harvest the crop."

What a beautiful statement! It is a crop of increased interest rates.

In 1985, Mr Keating said—

"I still stand by the remark I made in the election campaign that I think there is an interest rate step fall ahead for Australia and its interest rate structure generally through 1985."

Also in 1985, Mr Hawke said—

". . . we can expect through the period of this year that there will be, I would expect, a lowering of the level of interest rates."

That is a brilliant statement! Yet the Government supports those Labor Party policies.

In 1987, Mr Hawke said—

"The Government's expectations that interest rates can begin to fall this year are based on a thorough and continuous assessment of all the factors which go to make up the total macro-economic picture."

Again in 1987, he said—

"We'll continue in 1987 to see a downward movement in interest rates."

We have not seen a downward movement at all, let alone continuing to see it. On that occasion, interest rates decreased by 0.5 per cent and Mr Hawke was claiming that he was brilliant to have achieved that fall.

Mr Veivers: The only downward motion was in his golf stroke.

Mr STEPHAN: That is possibly right, too. He is the man whom the Government holds up as its saviour.

In 1984, when referring to home-ownership, Mr Hawke said—

"We pledge ourselves to bring home ownership once again within the reach of ordinary Australian families."

He undertook to bring the level of home-ownership to the same level that it was when he took office. However, in that period home loan interest rates moved from 13.5 per cent to 17 per cent. Never in Australia's history have homes been less affordable. Never have home-loan interest rates been higher than at present. This man talks about home loan interest rates coming down when that has not happened since he took office.

Mr Ardill: When you haven't got a job, you can't buy a home.

Mr STEPHAN: The Hawke Government abolished from 30 June 1983 the tax rebate that was offered by the previous Government on home loan interest payments. It introduced a new capital gains tax and between 1985 and 1987 banned negative gearing on rental properties. It cut funding for the First Home Owners Scheme by \$25m in 1985-86, by \$37m in 1988-89 and by a further \$43m in 1989-90.

From the representations that I have received, I know that that scheme meant a great deal to the average wage-earner. It enabled the average wage-earner to buy his first home. Here is a successful scheme being abolished, and for what reason? Because it was successful, because it was promoting the cause for which it was set up, or because it supported the policies of one of the other States?

As a result of these actions, Hawke has massively increased public housing waiting-lists from 109 000 in 1982 to a staggering 194 000 in 1988. That is almost double. One does not have to go very far in one's electorate to realise that there is a long housing waiting-list at the moment.

Mr Beattie: You did nothing about it.

Mr STEPHAN: It is someone else's fault now, is it? The honourable member has rather a warped attitude.

The Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement was designed to provide assistance—

Mr Beattie: What about all the people in caravan parks?

Mr STEPHAN: A lot of people are living in caravan parks. Also, many people cannot get into caravan parks. The honourable member should not get carried away.

The qualifying income to buy an average price first home has doubled since 1985 from \$23,000 to \$46,000. That is a very real problem. It is part of the inflation problem that is presently being experienced and is hurting people.

Mr Prest interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: The member for Port Curtis can try to wind me up. I know that he does not like to hear what I am saying. He will just have to sit and cop it for a bit longer. If he does not like it, that is just too bad. The honourable member should be making representations to his friend Mr Hawke instead of patting him on the back all the time and telling him what a good job he is doing.

Since 1983, the real disposable income of people has also decreased enormously. At present people are not enthusiastic about going out and doing something for the community when they are not receiving any reimbursement for it, and why should they?

Now we get a bit closer to home and a bit closer to the promises that this Government made leading up to the election. I made note of Mr Comben's comment earlier that, "Words are cheap". The Government is finding that words are cheap. I have a copy of a letter that was sent to the residents of Cooroora by Wayne Goss before the election. It states—

"I believe Ray has the experience to know what's right and the courage to make it happen. That's why he's opposing the toll on the Maroochy River bridge.

Only a vote for Ray Barber will ensure the removal of the toll and the upgrading of Cooroora's roads."

What happened straight after Ray Barber was elected? He put his hand up with the rest of the Government members and said, "We can't do it. I didn't realise that it was going to cost that much. I didn't realise that it was going to cost \$75m-odd and that we would have to find that money."

This morning honourable members heard that last year Mr Burns asked a question and he was told very clearly what the cost of that road was going to be.

Mr FitzGerald: He forgot all about it.

Mr STEPHAN: He was not listening. All he wanted to do was to ask a question and interject. He was not prepared to listen to the answers that were given.

It is very convenient to be able to forget under those circumstances. How could anyone forget saying, "We will remove the toll from that road.", and immediately upon election turn round and say, "Oh, I'm sorry, we can't do that. I'm sorry, but we will have to have another look at the situation and see what else we can do. In the mean time, you just go ahead and pay the toll."

Those are the sorts of promises that people will remember.

Mr Booth: I think they'll think about it on 24 March.

Mr STEPHAN: I have an idea that people will be thinking about the attitude of this Government on 24 March when the Federal election is held. It must be borne in mind that the Premier said this morning that he stands shoulder to shoulder with the policies of the Federal Labor Party.

I turn now to roads and road-funding. It is amazing that this Government can find all the reasons in the world not to honour commitments that it made in the lead-up to the election. In my own electorate of Gympie there is a very bad black spot. An allocation of \$600,000 was promised by the previous State Government. The present Transport Minister has now seen fit to review that decision.

Mr Mackenroth: When was that promised?

Mr STEPHAN: It was promised last year.

This Government has seen fit to give that project the thumbs down. Other projects have also got the chop. A very good example is the South-East Queensland Driver Education Centre] in Gympie. It is the only driver education centre of its type in Queensland.

Mr Prest: You've done this one before.

Mr STEPHAN: I will do it again, too, mainly because it is another example of funding that was promised but has not been forthcoming.

Back in 1988 the then Minister promised funding of \$10,000 a year for three years. The present Minister has seen fit to overturn that decision. I am disappointed that the Minister should make that decision without finding out what is actually going on at that centre. He does not have any idea of what the driver education centre is all about.

The primary objective of the centre is to advance and develop road safety awareness in the community. It has done that particularly well. I have not heard of a person who has done an advanced driving course at that centre since it opened 10 years ago who has had a fatal accident.

I know that you, Mr Deputy Speaker, recognise the advantages of the driver education centre, because I have heard you say so on many occasions. That centre must be able to continue on its own initiative with support from the local community, including the local council and the service clubs that established it. I compliment the Rotary club for that initiative.

Each year, over 5 000 school students attend the driver education centre. Programs such as adult advanced-driving courses and learn-to-drive programs are offered at the centre. It is disappointing that the door for further Government funding has apparently been slammed shut. According to a newspaper report, Mr Hamill said that he was aware of the services that the centre offered to the motoring community and its contributions to road safety. However, the question of additional Government funding presents difficulties that Mr Hamill is unwilling to accept. One of those difficulties is that it will create a precedent.

If a community organisation that is willing to put together a package that is worth in excess of \$1m is not worthy of some sort of Government support and encouragement, I would like to know what is. Although the three-year grant that was made available to the centre by the former Transport Minister was not enormous, it provided encouragement to the local community which is presently supporting the centre.

The courses that are offered by the Gympie driver education centre provide practical student driver education. They combine theory and practical instruction that are designed to provide effective education for student drivers. The aims of the courses are to foster in student drivers correct and responsible attitudes towards driving; to teach and develop suitable safe driving skills; and to engender in students the need to be concerned, defensive drivers. The courses offered include three-day and four-day courses as well as a five-day course for special schools.

Courses are available also for ambulance-drivers and drivers who are employed within the forestry section of the Department of Primary Industries, who have played a very important role in the establishment and maintenance of the courses. Before ambulance-bearers are eligible to receive their final certificates they must take part in an advanced off-road driving course.

I turn now to the need to maintain timber supplies. Soon after the Labor Party came to office its spokesman on forestry, Mr Comben, made various comments about the inclusion of forestry areas in national parks. He made those comments without considering the effects of that decision on local communities and what the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Casey, has said. Although Mr Casey has defended the logging of Fraser Island, the logging of other forestry areas has not received his similar support.

The *Gympie Times* of 28 February 1990 stated—

"Minister for Primary Industries, Ed Casey, yesterday refuted claims by conservation groups that logging on Fraser Island had escalated in order to beat the Great Sandy Region inquiry."

Mr Comben: Are you in favour of logging?

Mr STEPHAN: Mr Casey's comments have not met with Mr Comben's approval. I notice that Mr Comben has been very quiet. Perhaps the Government has put a gag on him and has told him to keep quiet for a while and to keep out of the way.

The article in the *Gympie Times*, to which I just referred, stated further—

". . . the annual volume of hardwood mill logs which sawmillers were permitted to remove from Fraser Island was strictly controlled.

An allocation system applies to all log timber removed from Crown lands."

Mr Mackenroth: You won't be quiet for too much longer.

Mr STEPHAN: I am pleased that Mr Mackenroth is in the Chamber. Does he support the greenie movement and FIDO in opposing the logging of timber on Fraser Island or does he support the Minister for Primary Industries?

An article that appeared in the *Gympie Times* on 1 March 1990 stated—

"The Fraser Island Defenders Organisation conservation group says it will refuse to participate in an inquiry into the Island's future unless Premier Wayne Goss commits himself to the inquiry's recommendations."

Conservation groups have threatened to boycott the State Government's Fraser Island management inquiry and to blockade logging on the island.

Mr FitzGerald: Do you agree that Mr Casey will be a lot stronger in Cabinet than the other Minister?

Mr STEPHAN: I believe that he would have an edge over a couple of other Cabinet Ministers. Mr Comben is probably finding it a little bit difficult as a Cabinet Minister and is possibly out of his depth.

An article that appeared in the *Courier-Mail* of 28 February 1990 stated—

"The Fraser Island Defenders Organisation vice-president, Mr Mike West, said FIDO would boycott the inquiry headed by Mr Tony Fitzgerald, QC, because it was nothing more than a 'cruel hoax'."

Mr Comben's friends are no longer supporting the inquiry. That is why a couple of days ago I asked him whether he supported Mr Casey's comments, and he said that he did.

Mr Comben: There are no problems over here.

Mr STEPHAN: It seems a bit strange to me that the honourable member is now making noises different from those that he was making before the election.

According to a newspaper report, Mr West said that, if the Federal Environment Minister, Senator Richardson, did not support a World Heritage nomination for the island, FIDO would urge an anti-Labor vote in the Federal election. Has the Government been able to negotiate with FIDO, or has it allowed FIDO to vote against it?

It must be realised that Fraser Island's forests have been logged since 1863. Conservationists say that replanted trees can never replace the valuable old forests and wilderness areas being lost on Fraser Island. That is a whole lot of rubbish! Over a period, from time to time blackbutt has been planted by the Forestry Department. It is planted to ensure that the species survives and that it is available. It may not be realised that Fraser Island is the world's largest vegetated dune system and that its forests contain the tallest rainforests growing on sand in the world. Satinay, blackbutt, brushbox and eucalypts flourish on the sand dunes. They grow up to 240 feet high. If that timber is locked up, what will be used to replace it to manufacture goods?

Mr Comben: Go back to Fraser Island and have a look. I have been there.

Mr STEPHAN: The honourable member is another one who is trying to make me finish and to stop me from making these relevant comments. He wants to wind me up so nobody knows what is going on.

If the Government achieves its objective of locking up timber supplies on Fraser Island, what will be used as a substitute? At present, some of the millers have made inquiries about obtaining timber to replace the that which will not be available if Fraser Island timber supplies are locked up. They have gone to the extent of going to Asia and negotiating with Governments there—and they have received a lot of support from them, too—in an endeavour to import some of that country's timber into Australia. In fact, a supply of timber was sent to Australia. When it arrived, the Federal Government said, "No more. You cannot do that."

It cannot be stated that imported timber will be available to take the place of timber that has been locked up. It just will not happen. Unless an alternative source is available to take its place, the same thing will occur in the southern part of Queensland as occurred in north Queensland, where 900 people were put out of work.

It must be realised that forests do have a cycle of birth, growth, death and decay. If the timber is cut down, other smaller species will grow in its place. I do not know whether it is realised that timber does get old; it reaches the stage when it is no longer of any commercial value and it also reaches a certain height beyond which no young vegetation comes up in its place. It will not be the same in 200 years, 300 years or 2 000 years, because the same species of timber will not be growing, anyway.

It should be realised and recognised that timber plays a very important part in the community. The amount of timber being cut and milled in the allocated forestry areas, which has been strictly controlled and strictly enforced by the Forestry Department over a long period, is a very small percentage of the total area of rainforest in Australia.

I believe that I could be excused for thinking that FIDO will use any excuse at all to try to halt logging on Fraser Island. The debate appears to be centred on the preservation of forest areas and the closure of existing forest areas completely, both on Fraser island and in the Cooloola region. This attitude illustrates a cavalier disregard for employment and the loss of wood and wood products for housing and furniture. Any reduction in the supply of wood from local sources will increase the \$1.5 billion annual Australian trade deficit in forest products. Surely it must be remembered that our forests are managed in a professional way by dedicated people in accordance with conservation-oriented policies. Central to such policies are multiple-use objectives, one element of which is the commercial production of wood.

It is important to realise that all the non-wood uses are financially assisted and supported by commercial logging, which occurs in the forest itself. Some areas of the forest are used for preservation, wildlife conservation, scientific values, stream protection and educational recreation for the public. We cannot ignore those uses and hope that they will go away. They will not. It must be realised that they play a very important part.

Before my time expires, I also want to comment on the Inskip Peninsula. I am pleased that Mr Comben is in the Chamber because for more than a month I have been in contact with his secretary in an endeavour to get a deputation to go and talk to him and Mr Gibbs. This morning Mr Gibbs said that I should not worry about talking to Mr Comben, that I should come along and talk to him. So I have now transferred my discussions to Mr Comben's colleague Mr Gibbs.

Mr COMBEN: I rise to a point of order. Yesterday I said to Mr Gibbs that, if he was meeting with the honourable member and the delegation, I would come to that meeting. I have bad news for the honourable member: I will be there, too.

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

Mr STEPHAN: There is no problem. I was trying to arrange a date for the deputation. Why is it that, before the honourable member wanted to even talk about a deputation, I had to send him a fax of the reason for the deputation? I have always done that when I have known what the delegation was about.

Mr Comben: Because I did not want to compete with the forces of darkness; that's why.

Mr STEPHAN: The honourable member is working in the forces of darkness at the moment, because he will not even talk to us about it. He will not even talk to the developers and the council about the development. He does not want to know about it. What we want to know at the present time is: what are the Government's policies? What is the Minister thinking about? What will he agree to? Will Mr Comben look at the plans that they have and come to a resolution when they come here?

Mr Comben interjected.

Mr STEPHAN: I am pleased about that. It must have been only in the last half hour. At that point I contacted my office during that time and it had not heard from the Minister.

I am pleased about that and I thank the Minister very much for his action under these circumstances. After trying for so long, I thank him for his prompt action. I only hope that the next time I take a deputation to him that it will not take a month to meet with him.

The Minister has some very personable and energetic staff working for him. I hope that he supports them and that he communicates with them so that they know what he is doing and are able to relate his intentions to other Ministers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! I remind honourable members on both sides of the House that if they are going to interject, it should be from the seat that is allotted to them. Before I call the next member, the House will adjourn for dinner until 7 o'clock.

Sitting suspended from 5.55 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! As this will be the maiden speech of the honourable member for Cook, I should like it to be heard in silence.

Mr BREDHAUER (Cook) (7.30 p.m.): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. It gives me great pleasure this evening to make my maiden speech. May I begin by congratulating you, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your appointment as Chairman of Committees and as occupying the chair tonight as Mr Deputy Speaker. I ask you to convey to Mr Speaker my congratulations on his election. I am sure that both of you will do your job extremely well and impartially.

On 4 April 1978, Robert William Scott rose in this Chamber to deliver his maiden speech as the member for the electoral district of Cook. Bob came to be regarded throughout his distinguished career as a man of high integrity, and with an enormous capacity for work and travel, as is required to represent effectively the needs of such a vast electoral constituency. He and his wife Jenny are held in high esteem by the residents of far-north and north-western Queensland and by parliamentary colleagues and associates alike. I regard myself as being extremely fortunate to have had such first-rate role models and such loyal supporters and friends as Bob and Jenny Scott to assist me over the initial hurdle of my entry into Parliament.

To proudly and successfully raise the Australian Labor Party banner once again in the basically conservative electorate of Cook is testimony to the hard work of Bob Scott and, before him, Eddie Wallis-Smith. Through their individual efforts, the Labor Party has a proud tradition of strong support within the Cook electorate.

It was with great interest that I read my predecessor's maiden speech. I am conscious of the many changes that have been effected in a wide range of matters which affect the living standards of my constituents. I refer, for example, to the fact that, when I first had personal experience of the Cook electorate in 1984, numerous centres in the electorate had no telecommunications; communication was by radio telephone which, I can assure honourable members, is a very difficult way of communicating. I am also conscious of the new hospitals that have been constructed in recent years in Georgetown, Cooktown, Croydon and other centres. Undoubtedly, during the course of Bob Scott's representation there were numerous advances for the people in that area. One also becomes acutely aware, however, when one looks at the maiden speech made by Mr Scott, that many issues about which he spoke have not been resolved but have merely evolved and, further, that many issues simply have not been addressed.

That this should be the case in spite of the efforts of many individuals, such as Bob and Jenny Scott, and organisations is an indictment of the previous Government's attitude towards the Cook electorate, which is a vast and remote part of this State. To my mind and that of many others, it buries forever the myth that the National Party stands for country Queensland. Its continued neglect of the bread-and-butter issues affecting residents of remote areas, and its skewed priorities towards a privileged few, have left a legacy that only the commitment to reform of successive Labor Governments will redress.

It would be quite incredible, I am sure, for many honourable members to realise that basic services taken for granted in virtually every other town in Queensland, if not in Australia, are still not reliably available in many parts of the Cook electorate. Let me speak just briefly about that most basic of commodities—water. It would shock some

people to know that, in places such as Mornington Island, Horn Island and Thursday Island, which are in my constituency, water shortages are not experienced simply at the end of a period of prolonged drought but are a daily problem for most of each year, except perhaps at the height of the wet season. Until the recent rain, Mornington Island had a bore water supply which was brackish to the point of being almost undrinkable. On Thursday Island the Torres Shire Council has, since August of last year, been unable to connect the water supply to new residential dwellings. Because of the serious water shortage, the council has not been able to connect water to new homes constructed since August last year.

At Doomadgee and Cooktown, a perennial problem has only recently been alleviated, largely by the intervention of the Federal Government which has helped overcome long-standing water supply problems in those areas. The media reported last year that even horses that were brought to Forsawth for the race meetings would not drink from the town water supply. These problems are being addressed progressively with upgrading for Forsawth and a new dam and pipeline project planned and in fact under construction for Horn island and at Thursday Island.

The residents of these latter centres are extremely grateful for the recent announcement by the Premier, Mr Goss, of a further \$1.5m towards the Horn Island and Thursday Island water supply projects. They are more content, however, in the knowledge that funding arrangements for those water supplies are now the subject to cooperative discussion between State and Federal Governments and are not being used as a political bludgeon against Canberra, as the previous Government attempted to make them.

Whilst examining the track record of the previous Government in providing basic services, let me now turn to the outer islands of the Torres Strait and another basic commodity—electricity. There are in the Torres Strait 14 communities on inhabited outer islands whose populations range from about 50 to in excess of 400. Not one of those communities on the outer islands in the Torres Strait has an adequate reticulated electricity supply which could meet the demands of normal domestic usage. In fact, in all but one island people still rely solely on small privately owned generators for the modest amount of electricity they consume. The only exception—and I draw attention to the only exception in the outer islands—is the small island of Coconut, which has a population of about 130, where the much-touted solar energy experiment has been under way since November 1987.

No-one, least of all my colleagues on this side of the House, would question the need for energy generation to be increasingly a product of renewable energy sources. In these days of debate about the greenhouse effect and other environmental consequences of our profligate use of energy, we are all conscious of the need to move towards renewable energy sources and, more importantly, we are also very conscious of the need to become more economical in our use of power of various kinds. In accordance with what I once heard called the "show pony factor" of the former Government, the National Party expended \$1m on power generation for 130 people and who knows how much on glossy brochures and promotional videos prominently featuring the relevant Minister's photograph.

As a research tool in providing scientific data on solar energy technology, Coconut Island may well be a success. As a means of providing a reliable domestic power supply, it has failed to meet the needs of the people it serves. There are only two small stores on Coconut Island. When I visited Coconut Island several months before the 2 December election, I was approached by an extremely anxious store-keeper who, the previous day, had been visited by representatives of the Department of Community Services to disconnect the refrigerator and the freezer, which were the only appliances that he had connected to the reticulated system. The system was hopelessly inadequate in terms of meeting the needs and demands of daily usage. Because of their fear of short-circuiting Coconut Island's entire electricity supply, the people on the island have to be very conscious of the appliances that they use. Torres Strait Islanders are entitled to expect the same service from electricity supplies as other Queenslanders and Australians receive.

The Cook electorate has a population of about 25 000. Of that figure, approximately 55 per cent are indigenous Australians of either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. In their own unique way, those two cultures bring a distinct social and cultural diversity to my electorate and, more particularly, to the people of Queensland and to the nation of Australia. The eighties was a decade of rapidly increasing social consciousness by our non-indigenous population of the needs and aspirations of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. For most, this was highlighted by the focus on indigenous people during 1988.

There exists, though not universally so, a community perception that recognises dispossession and acknowledges as legitimate claims for the restoration of lost entitlement. If the eighties was a decade of education, then the nineties must be a decade of decision. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have made dramatic progress towards self-determination. Black councils have assumed many of the responsibilities for the day-to-day running of their communities, whereas once they were mere tokens. Black teachers, health workers, skilled and unskilled tradespeople and labourers, administration and clerical staff are all competently handling jobs that until recently the former Government discouraged them from even attempting.

For the benefit of those members who may not be familiar with the Community Development Employment Program, I point out that it is a Federal Government initiative which, in lieu of providing social security to the Aboriginal and Islander members of their respective communities, pays an amount that is equivalent to the total social security bill for a community. In addition, the communities are paid an administration fee so that the council can administer those funds. Subsequently, the people are encouraged to undertake productive community projects for which they are then remunerated the equivalent of their social security entitlement. That has restored pride to individuals and given communities a sense of purpose. I might add that the Federal coalition has announced that, should it be elected to power, that program is one item that will be axed. The abandonment of the program would be a retrograde step for all Aboriginal and Islander communities that operate the CDEP program.

Undeniably, many Aboriginal and Islander communities still have social problems. Those problems are not unique to Aboriginal communities. However, alcoholism, crimes of violence, child abuse, juvenile crime and other factors that were once alien to Aboriginal culture—in their terms, "not our way"—are factors with which they are now struggling. Most of those problems can be traced back to a common source. Consider the small Aboriginal community of Wujal Wujal near the Bloomfield River in north Queensland, a community that is under immense pressure from a diverse group of Aboriginal people who have been forced to live in each other's back pockets on a small parcel of land. Consider the present struggle that the people of Lockhart River are having in coming to grips with a multimillion-dollar tourist development on the northern boundary of their deed of grant area, namely, the Farndale development at Lloyd Bay.

Today, mention was made of the space base at Cape York peninsula, which is another issue that affects the Wutathi people who live in that area and who are extremely concerned about the implications of mining operations in their traditional lands—in particular, about problems arising out of sand-mining at Shelburne Bay. During the past two days, a delegation of people from Aurukun has met with two Ministers to express concern about the potential for deterioration of approximately 2 000 sites of sacred or cultural significance south of the Archer River where mining proposals are presently under consideration. Recently the Kowanyama community was disturbed when it was discovered that an application for an authority to prospect had been made in respect of land surrounding the mouth of the Mitchell River. The matters that I have mentioned are just some examples of complex problems where the primary issue is one of traditional attachment to the land and the exercise of some control over what happens on that land.

As a matter of priority, the Goss Labor Government will review the deed of grant legislation to ensure that the land cannot be alienated from Aboriginal communities.

The weaknesses exposed in this legislation have severely affected the confidence that Aborigines have in the security of their land title. This and consideration—I stress "consideration"—of an Aboriginal land tribunal will be fundamental among many changes to the relationship between the State Government and Queensland Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

The experience of the Federal Government is one of having successfully negotiated with the Aboriginal people of Weipa South for the establishment of a defence facility and is evidence that, with due process of consultation and negotiation, Governments can reach agreement with Aborigines over land use. Likewise, the protracted and at times, admittedly, rocky negotiations between the people of Kowanyama and commercial fishing interests, which led to the closure and management of some Mitchell River fishing grounds, indicates that, given the commitment, industry and Aboriginal interests can agree on land use.

The key to consensus arrangements such as these is empowering both parties to participate in negotiations. Land reform by empowering Aborigines and Islanders will assist, rather than impede, the processes of negotiation. In acknowledging that some environmental groups are genuinely consulting with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, it is important to recognise that, while there may be correlation, the agendas of Aborigines and Islanders and that of environmentalists are not identical. In particular, Aborigines have many reservations about the declaration of national parks. I might add that most of those reservations are groundless fears, based on the shameful scare-mongering of the National Party and the Liberal Party over World Heritage listing of north Queensland's rainforests. Access to national parks for fishing, hunting, camping and traditional foods and medicines is an important issue for Aborigines. A role in the management of national parks is another.

During recent times, but particularly in the lead-up to the State election, the Cook electorate achieved national attention through debate centred on the future of Cape York peninsula and the conservation value of areas of environmental significance. Undoubtedly, the policy of the Australian Labor Party towards the environment was a big electoral plus over the policies of the current Opposition parties. An integral part of this platform was the agreement that State and Federal Labor Governments would undertake a joint land-use study for Cape York peninsula. May I remind members present that, in the unlikely event that the Federal coalition is elected on 24 March, that arrangement will be under threat.

I am proud to say that our Goss Labor Government has already made significant progress towards the implementation of this election pledge. The State and Federal Environment Ministers have met; relevant Government departments will be submitting their views and plans; and when the terms of reference have been finalised, the Premier's office will be coordinating the land-use study. Over the period of the study, industry and interest groups, local authorities, Aboriginal and Islander groups and, more importantly, local residents will be encouraged to submit their views, and public consultation will take place.

I was interested in the travelogue given earlier today by my colleague the member for Townsville who mentioned the beautiful sites within the environment of his electorate. I can assure honourable members that if I were to commence a travelogue of the Cook electorate, it would be a long process; but I can also assure honourable members that I could uncover areas that are equal, in terms of beauty and of environmental significance, to those that can be found anywhere else in this nation.

Cape York peninsula is a vast area. It contains many features of great environmental importance, including rainforest habitats, unspoilt coastlines and tropical wetlands. The challenge of Cape York peninsula is unique. Here is an opportunity for a controlled conservation plan, which enables the economy of the region to prosper through sensible use of natural resources but preserves important features for future generations. The Goss Government must, and will, get it right.

Gone are the days of the privileged few exploiting their political associations to freehold land at little cost and achieve windfall gains. The Goss Government's freeze on freeholding of land has been widely acclaimed. The matter of land tenure and particularly the inconsistent application of land policies by the previous Government has caused many people consternation, frustration and hardship. The elimination of political interference in land matters will be welcome.

One such land policy which needs to be reviewed involves the assessment of living area in the grazing industry. Within the Cook electorate there are many large pastoral holdings. Absentee owners, underutilised property, leases bought for speculative gain and minimal, arguably non-compliance with lease conditions are regular features of some properties.

At the same time numerous people see a future in much smaller leaseholdings which, with their families, they can work to full capacity and make a comfortable living. Such people should be given the opportunity to start on the land.

I could not leave my discussion of issues in the Cook electorate without commenting at some length on roads. For most residents of that constituency, a drive over rough, unsealed roads is not a holiday adventure but a daily chore to be endured. However, discomfort and expensive maintenance are not the only legacies of the road conditions.

It is fair to say that the economy of towns such as Cooktown, Georgetown, Croydon and Normanton is handicapped by the lack of reasonable all-weather access. Few people have unrealistic expectations. Most do not expect the roads to be sealed in the short term. I will be working hard, however, to ensure that a fair share of my Government's commitment to increased road-funding is spent on upgrading those roads.

The port of entry for most residents and visitors to the Torres Strait is the Horn Island airport. The short stretch of road from the airport to the Horn Island wharf, over which all passengers and air freight are generally transported, is also in need of road-funding priority. After a recent experience with a gold mine on Horn Island and some early rain this year, because the road was totally impassable, the stage was reached at which all people who landed at the Horn Island airstrip had to be flown by helicopter to Thursday Island.

Tonight, I did not intend to enter the debate on electoral reform. I was preparing to leave that to another time. However, comments made by the previous speaker in this debate, particularly comments in response to my colleague from Townsville, Mr Ken Davies, have encouraged me to enter the debate on the issue of electoral reform. Because I represent an electorate which covers 350 000 square kilometres of Queensland, I believe I can do so with some authority.

The supposed excuse for the retention of the zonal electoral system is to improve representation for people in remote parts of the State. I find it ironic that the Cook electorate, the most remote and the second-largest geographically of all electorates in this State, has over 50 per cent more constituents than the electorate of the Opposition Leader, whose electorate is only a few hours by good road from Brisbane. Cook has over 50 per cent more electors than Gregory and Balonne. That is not improving representation; that is corrupting the boundaries. To argue one vote, one value on behalf of improving the service for people in country and remote centres is a total furphy. The way to service the residents of a large and decentralised State such as Queensland is by upgrading the resources and the facilities that are available to the local member, not by corrupting the boundaries. Alternatively, in many seats the representation could be improved by improving the representatives.

I have saved until last an area that is of particular significance to me but is also a vital concern for all residents of my electorate. For the people of Cook, education is not a matter of packing a child off to the nearest school each morning and attending a parents and citizens association meeting once a month. A country school is often a focal point for the entire community. For Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the success of the education system will have an important bearing on the future of their cultures.

For many families, the wrench of a young child leaving home to attend school is a traumatic experience.

Although physical facilities in many schools in my electorate have improved, there are still substantial areas of need. When I speak of improvement in physical facilities, I acknowledge in particular the efforts of the Federal Government and the lack of effort by the previous State Government in improving the schools in the Torres Strait where most of the funding came out of a visit in 1984 by the then Federal Minister for Education, Susan Ryan, with the Federal member for the area, John Gayler.

Murray Island and Horn Island are the two areas in which new schools are required. In the case of Murray Island, when land matters are finalised, a new replacement school is required. In the case of Horn Island, the now substantial and growing population of schoolchildren—approximately 70 students—being ferried by private or contracted boat to Thursday Island definitely warrants the establishment of a new school.

One of the great debilitating factors in delivering quality education to children in those remote areas is the high staff turn-over. In common with my colleague the member for Mount Isa, Tony McGrady, I am an ardent advocate of the need for a system of incentives to encourage well-qualified teachers and their families to transfer willingly to remote centres and stay longer than the minimum two-year stint.

The campaign by the Queensland Teachers Union over more than a decade for a better system of staffing country schools is worthy of the support of all parliamentary members, but particularly those from country areas who have been silent in the past. An integral part of this encouragement is that any teacher who transfers to a remote centre should be housed, where appropriate, in air-conditioned, secure accommodation of a standard similar to that which they would expect to occupy in another city or town.

I will pursue, as a matter of priority, the upgrading of security in teacher accommodation to a standard such that occupants need not fear for their personal safety or that of their property. That this Goss Labor Government regards education as a high priority is now a matter of record. I will pursue the commitment to increase teacher numbers, to reduce class sizes, to increase the number of tertiary places, to review the TE score and to ensure salary justice for teachers as the forerunners of a better deal for Queensland children, parents and teachers.

In concluding, I thank my wife, Jan, and other family members for their support. My stepmother and my late father were very important in helping me to reach the position in which I am today, as well as my eight brothers and sisters and their families, a good crowd of whom are present in the gallery this evening.

I am grateful to Bob and Jenny Scott and my electorate secretary Catherine Dunne for their loyalty, hard work and friendship.

I should also mention the Federal member for Leichhardt, Mr John Gayler, who will be re-elected on 24 March and will take his part in the next Labor Government in Canberra, and who has also been of valuable assistance to me.

To Dick Quaid and the members of the Weipa and Thursday Island branches of the Australian Labor Party and to all members and supporters throughout the Cook electorate, I offer my thanks and congratulations for their hard work during the campaign and for bringing home the bacon for the Labor Party on 2 December.

To the constituents of Cook, I offer this pledge: I will always make the service and support of the people I represent my highest priority. It is with a great sense of pride that I have assumed my seat in this Assembly following the support of those constituents on 2 December. Once again, they have placed their faith in a representative of the Australian Labor Party. On this historic occasion I, as their representative, am part of the first Queensland Labor Government for 32 years. Their faith will be repaid by a period of accountable, reformist Government that will deliver to them the services that have been so sadly lacking throughout the years of former Governments.

Mr LESTER (Peak Downs) (8.03 p.m.): At the outset, on behalf of the people of the electorate of Peak Downs, I offer allegiance to the Queen.

I also take this opportunity of thanking from the floor of this House the people of Peak Downs who supported me so terribly, terribly well in the last election.

Mr Hamill: All 3 000 of them.

Mr LESTER: Unfortunately the honourable member opposite has decided to insult the good people of Peak Downs who have stood by me so very, very well over a long period of time.

Despite the difficult circumstances, the result in the electorate of Peak Downs at the last election was something of which I was extremely proud. It certainly must have made the Labor Party candidate, Paul Bell, feel very, very sad to be so convincingly defeated.

Mr Smyth: There was a 14 per cent swing in the primary vote.

Mr LESTER: That just shows how much the honourable member knows. He has not allowed for the CEC. When it comes down to it, the Labor Party got about 39 per cent of the vote. Paul Bell got about 39 per cent of the vote.

Mr Hamill: What was the effect of daylight-saving on the result?

Mr LESTER: The honourable member is trying to cloud the issue.

I have exposed the fact that Paul Bell did not do very well at all. This poor fellow on the other side of the Chamber did not get his facts straight. He forgot that there was another candidate—a conservative candidate. Of course, what counts is what proportion of the vote Paul Bell, the Labor Party candidate, ultimately got. He got approximately 39 per cent of the vote.

The Transport Minister asked me what was the effect of daylight-saving on my vote in the electorate of Peak Downs. The people of Peak Downs do not want daylight-saving.

Mr Hamill: You did. You were running around campaigning for it.

Mr LESTER: No, I was not.

Mr Hamill: Yes, you were. You were spending buckets of money buying votes.

Mr LESTER: I must correct the honourable member opposite.

Because the people of Brisbane had decided that daylight-saving was very, very important to the whole of the State of Queensland, there was a need for somebody to at least offer a democratic choice. In fact, as it was some 17 years since daylight-saving had last been canvassed, I suggested that there should be a trial, and that suggestion was taken up. That is democracy at its very, very best. A fair trial was conducted. It was necessary that that be done.

Mr Hamill: You were found wanting.

Mr LESTER: I was not found wanting.

Mr Comben: Now you've been caught. It wasn't a fair trial. You spent more on entertaining with one meal than I've spent in three months.

Mr LESTER: I point out to the honourable member opposite that it was necessary for me to go around explaining the daylight-saving trial. I was asked to do so by Cabinet. Because it was almost a seven-day trip, it was necessary to provide some morning teas and some dinners.

During that trip, the former member for Cook, Mr Scott, attended a smorgasbord dinner, which was the only way to cater for such a large number of people. If I recall

correctly, Mr Scott, who was a member of the Labor Party, said, "Thank you very much." I am sure that Mr Schwarten enjoyed his cup of tea in Rockhampton. He is nodding his head in agreement. Mr Schwarten took part in the discussions in Rockhampton and said that he was very pleased to attend that function. The dinners that were provided during that trip were small in comparison with those that are provided in Brisbane by some Ministers when they entertain people. I accept that, on occasions, Ministers must provide meals for the people whom they entertain.

I notice that Mr Braddy has returned to the Chamber. For his information I point out that members of the Government are criticising me because I provided an afternoon tea at which he was present. In fact, Mr Braddy spoke at that meeting and had a cup of tea. I see nothing wrong with that. I was pleased that he attended and contributed to that meeting. As I toured around the State I found that many Labor Party members attended meetings, including the member for Mount Isa, who also had a cup of tea and cakes.

Mr McGRADY: I rise to a point of order. I ask the honourable member for Peak Downs why the Cairns people were given a smorgasbord lunch and the people of Mount Isa were given only a sandwich.

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

Mr LESTER: If I had visited Cairns first and then gone to Mount Isa, the situation would have been reversed, and no doubt the honourable member for Mount Isa would have attended the supper.

I believe that I have very effectively exposed the fact that Labor Party members were keen to attend those functions and to partake of the meals that were provided. I see nothing wrong with that. After all, it was their duty to attend because there was really no other way that discussions could be held. If the people in the country cannot be given the same meals as Ministers in the city give to people—

Mr Hamill: You said, "Let them eat cake."

Mr LESTER: Mr Hamill will find that when he has to entertain people here in the city, it will have to be done at the Sheraton or somewhere similar, where a meal costs approximately five times what a similar meal would cost in the country.

Most Ministers realise that, from time to time, they will have to entertain people. No doubt Mr Comben will have to entertain environmental representatives. Government members should not criticise other members of this Parliament before they have the facts. All Ministers have attended those dinners, which are necessary.

I think we are square on that issue. I regret that Government members have delayed my very important speech.

Mr Booth: You turned it back onto them.

Mr LESTER: Yes, I turned it around on them. I would not have done that if they had not raised the issue. Have Government members ever heard me personally criticise any member of this Parliament?

Mr Hamill: Yes.

Mr LESTER: When?

Mr Hamill: Nev Warburton. You always used to have a go at Nev Warburton.

Mr LESTER: I have never personally criticised Nev Warburton.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Parliament is not the place for members to question each other. The honourable member for Peak Downs will continue to speak to the amendment moved to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr LESTER: I am sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I was provoked.

I thank all the people in Peak Downs who have helped me over a long period.

Mr Milliner: Who are they?

Mr LESTER: I do not need many people to help me, because my natural ability is recognised.

I congratulate all the new members of this Parliament, including those from the Labor, Liberal and National parties, and wish them well. I am sure that they will all do their jobs to the best of their ability. This is not the easiest job in the world, and from time to time and in many ways it places a lot of strain on members.

I am very proud of my past achievements in the Department of Industrial Affairs, the Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training and, for a short time, the Police Department. I pay tribute to the former head of the Department of Industrial Affairs, Ian Staib. He was an outstanding permanent head who was very loyal to the department. He was not political in any shape or form. In fact, he brought change to the department. Its achievements were very, very significant and in the best interests of the people of Queensland. It was disappointing to me to find that Ian Staib's abilities were not appreciated. At present that poor fellow is under a great deal of stress. He felt that, irrespective of who was in charge, he had given all to the public service. I certainly wish him all the best for the future. I take the opportunity on the floor of the House to say, "Thank you, Ian Staib, for a job particularly well done."

The Workers Compensation Board took the lead, having been to some extent amalgamated with the Division of Occupational Safety, which allowed additional funding to be provided for preventive accident care. We were having great success in achieving many results.

Much was also achieved in the Consumer Affairs Bureau. It would be fair to say that throughout Australia the Queensland Consumer Affairs Bureau was generally regarded all round as being the best. I know that Mr Milliner was my opposite number for part of the time and that he was very fair in his dealings with me. I think together we would agree that the Consumer Affairs Bureau did a very good job.

Mr Hamill: It was me.

Mr LESTER: The honourable member did a good job, too. At one point Mr Milliner was my opposite number; then the honourable member came along.

Mr Milliner: I have got it now. I am looking after it now.

Mr LESTER: Good. The honourable member has been left quite a good ship to run.

Mr Milliner: I will improve it.

Mr LESTER: If the honourable member can improve it, that is good. That is what democracy is all about.

Mr Milliner: Don't you worry about that.

Mr LESTER: I think the honourable member should worry about it, though, and try to make it a little bit better than it was before, because that is in the interests of all Queenslanders. It is very important that we always try to improve on what we are doing.

Mr Palaszcuk: What about the bullet-proof vests?

Mr LESTER: I will come to that. They arrived today.

I am very disappointed that the present Government seems to have taken a big, long whip to the VEAs. I would have thought——

Mr Hamill: I beg your pardon?

Mr LESTER: Voluntary employment agreements.

Mr Hamill: No. The first bit.

Mr LESTER: Whip.

Mr Hamill: Whip?

Mr LESTER: Yes. In other words, the Government plans to axe them. I do not believe that is in the best interests of Queensland, because two of Queensland's best companies, Power Brewing and Metway Bank, may be affected.

Mr Milliner: What do you think about the Hanger report?

Mr LESTER: At the moment I am talking about VEAs.

Two Queensland companies have voluntary employment agreements with their employees, who work on an incentive basis and who are very happy with that. As honourable members would have read in the press, those companies are making profits, unlike some other companies in Australia. We can be very proud of them. I caution the Government to give grave consideration to the matter before it cancels those two VEAs in particular.

The daylight-saving issue has been canvassed. I had it written on my notes, but I do not need to go back to it.

Mr Hamill: No-one will accuse you tonight of reading your speech, anyhow.

Mr LESTER: No. I never read my speeches. With people like the honourable member to help me along, I do not need to.

Mr Comben: You don't get many prepared briefs these days.

Mr LESTER: I think this one is as good as any.

Government members interjected.

Mr LESTER: If we do not get on with the job, we will all be chipped by Mr Deputy Speaker.

I deal now with the Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training and what it achieved. The colleges were given their own boards and the employers were given an opportunity to have an input into them. I felt that a lot was achieved. From time to time Mr Deputy Speaker made representations to me about the Bundaberg college, and sometimes we were able to assist wherever we could. He often came up with some good suggestions, which were appreciated. One of the highlights of that department was the introduction of Project Pay Packet.

Someone made the comment that I engaged a public relations agency to try to boost my own image. That was wrong. That is not true in any shape or form. In fact, at the request of the public servants, the agency was engaged to try to promote Project Pay Packet. The money and the courses were available but the message about their availability was not getting across. As a result, the agency was engaged. From time to time I reported to Parliament by way of ministerial statements that department's achievements. It is a little disappointing to read in the paper things that are totally wrong. However, I do not need to enter into a debate on that.

As Police Minister I was very pleased that I was instrumental in helping select our new Police Commissioner, Noel Newnham. I do not think that I need to tell the department that he has been a very, very good choice.

I am pleased that I was also able to take steps to obtain the bullet-proof vests. They have arrived today. That is good news. The quicker members of the police force are wearing them and are trained, the better it will be.

Mr Palaszczuk: What about the role of the honourable member for Southport?

Mr LESTER: I do not think I need to go into that because, as he said, they do not fit him.

An effort was also made to improve remuneration to police. Three new patrol boats were bought for the department. I am very proud to say that I got on well with the union representatives. In fact, they gave me quite a lot of support. However, I will not speak in the Parliament about all of the support that they gave me because I do not want to use them politically in any shape or form. All I can say is that they were jolly good mates; they tried to help me make a better deal for the police force. To Mr O'Gorman and all of the union people I say, "Thank you for assisting me so very, very much."

I deal now with the electorate of Peak Downs. I am a bit concerned about a few things that the Labor Party seems to be having some difficulty with. One, of course, is the school of distance education. That school was, and hopefully still is, to be sited in Emerald. The reason for that placement is to service the areas throughout Queensland that now lack this service. By siting the School of Distance Education at Rockhampton, those areas will not be serviced and half of the radio beams will go out across the Pacific Ocean. That would be a dreadful thing. I caution the Education Minister, Mr Braddy, not to become too preoccupied with placing this school in Rockhampton. I do not see the purpose that will serve.

The placing of the school in the electorate of Peak Downs was not political. I will explain how it happened. There was some contention as to whether it should be sited at either Emerald or Rockhampton. A ballot of eligible voters was supervised by the Education Department. The decision, backed up by the Education Minister, was that it should be placed at Emerald.

In view of that democratic vote—what we hear we are about is democracy and being democratic—to now take this away from the people who democratically voted on its location would be a crime—no, it would not be a crime; it would be terrible. I ask that this does not happen.

A mining office has been established in Emerald. On one occasion just prior to the election, the previous Minister for Mines, the Honourable Bob Katter, visited Rubyvale. He gave an assurance that the facilities offered in Clermont would remain. The new Government came in and immediately took away those facilities from Clermont—or it intends to. That is unsatisfactory. The citizens of Clermont are upset at that.

I am very proud of what has been achieved in the electorate of Peak Downs. I refer particularly to education. The Emerald State High School has been upgraded. Recently pre-school facilities were established at the Emerald State School. The size of the pre-school at the Emerald North State School has been increased, and its added special education facilities make it a centre for both primary and, to some extent, secondary education in Emerald.

Emerald also has a very strong Catholic school—Saint Patrick's School. Good, honest, fair competition has been provided by Saint Patrick's School to the two State schools. They all get on particularly well and do a very good job.

Mr Gibbs interjected.

Mr LESTER: I thank the Minister. I am pleased that he recognises the efforts of Saint Patrick's School. I will inform Sister Superior that he appreciates the school's efforts to support the education of our young children in Emerald. I am not biased. If they are praised, that is good. Coming from a Minister of the Crown, that is especially good.

Mr Mackenroth: Tell us about the motor mower at the Clermont Police Station?

Mr LESTER: I certainly hope we can get one; that would be very good. The Minister has now suggested that this is a possibility.

Mr Mackenroth: Your plan the day before the election backfired.

Mr LESTER: Does that matter? The fact is that it was not a motor mower for the Clermont Police Station, as the Minister well knows; it was a motor mower for all of

the police stations of the Central Highlands. The reason was that they were disappointed that Blackwater had one and Clermont did not. It has to be fair to all concerned. More people use this motor mower than is the case in Blackwater. It is fair to all concerned.

The police in the Emerald area would be very upset if they discovered that the Minister was chiding them, but I will not tell them.

Mr Gibbs: You could have used it for mustering as well.

Mr LESTER: You do not use motor mowers for mustering.

Mr Comben: In your case you do.

Mr LESTER: I think I should just get on with my speech. Mr Deputy Speaker will get annoyed at you fellows.

The electors are pleased that the Tieri State School now has additional facilities, including a badly needed tuck shop. Class room extensions have also been provided for that school. I thank the parents and citizens association for its assistance in obtaining those facilities.

In addition, the facilities at the Capella State High School have been improved. Those improvements include a new free-standing library, which was very necessary, and an additional TAFE-standard facility for manual arts. There will also be a music room and other facilities. The Capella State High School is now a top school.

In the Clermont area, the secondary school has been upgraded. That is good news for Clermont and the local people are enthusiastic about it. Recently I visited the school and I could see the new oomph in the Clermont students. Additional facilities have been provided.

Being a representative of an area is all about trying to achieve as much for the electorate as possible. To some extent this probably accounts for the electors of Peak Downs continuing to return me with a good majority over a long period of time. After all, people like to get things done in their electorates.

I am also proud of the achievements at what is now called the Emerald Agricultural College. It is about to commence enrolling female students for the first time. That is part of the requirement that a fair deal should be given to everybody. It also indicates that there is no chauvinism in any shape or form. I am proud that, when I was Minister, the courses at rural colleges were upgraded to provide for a form of associate diploma or accreditation to allow students to proceed further with their education. Previously, pastoral colleges provided students with good practical courses but were unable to give them accreditation so that they could undertake further studies. All educational facilities must provide students with the opportunity to further their education.

The Central Highlands College of Technical and Further Education has been able to expand greatly. It can now provide more courses in welding. Many block release courses are available in Emerald now, so students no longer have to travel to Mackay, Rockhampton and Brisbane. That is called decentralisation, which is very important. I trust that the new Government will continue to improve these facilities so that country people are not disadvantaged.

One great achievement while I was Minister was that the Central Highlands College of TAFE was able to persuade what is now the University of Central Queensland to provide university courses for students living in the Central Highlands. That meant that tertiary education was being provided for students in that area. After all, the people there are taxpayers and there is every reason why they should be able to avail themselves of such opportunities. That move was greatly appreciated by the people of the Peak Downs area.

Last year a degree in business management was provided. Soon to become available is a bachelor of arts degree, and there will be a diploma in teaching so that teachers can be trained in Emerald. That makes me feel very proud, too.

In addition, mining courses have been decentralised to some extent from Ipswich into the Central Highlands. I do not take anything away from Ipswich, but this move gives people living in the Central Highlands an opportunity to have on the spot training, which is good. I was very proud to be asked by the Central Highlands College to open its first tourism and hospitality course recently. The college has a hostel at which students can board.

It was pleasing to be able to provide a special outpatient centre as well as a short term bed centre on the gem-fields. It was unrealistic for the people living on the gem-fields to have no medical facilities. Usually, upwards of a couple of thousand people live there and, during Easter and during the winter season, the population could swell to up to 6 000 people who had no medical facilities. In its wisdom, the Government placed this facility there and it has been serving a very useful purpose. In addition, the Government was able to persuade the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade to provide a service on the gem-fields. The new medical facilities and the ambulance service have given great comfort to the people on the gem-fields.

In addition, the road between Rubyvale and Anakie has been bitumen surfaced. That was a wonderful step forward. Progressively, more bitumen surfacing is being provided on the road towards The Willows gem-field. There are two information centres there, one provided by the Government, at which people can stop off on their way to the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame. People were travelling through the gem-fields on their way to the Hall of Fame without stopping. That is fair enough, but my area wanted some of the tourist business. Tourists who now stop and have a barbecue there can look at a very good notice board that tells them all about the gem-fields. I understand that one or two have even decided to stop off and do some fossicking and they have picked up a couple of gems for their trouble. I notice the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing nodding, so he thinks that is a good idea.

Mr Gibbs: I think they should put you on the board.

Mr LESTER: Not just yet. Perhaps in time to come, but not just yet.

Mr Gibbs interjected.

Mr LESTER: The Minister is a delightful fellow in many ways, but sometimes he just has to spoil it by making comments that do not uphold the decorum of this most magnificent House.

Mr Gibbs interjected.

Mr LESTER: I understand that the Minister will be a guest at the Emerald One Hundred race meeting and I am sure that he will do a very good job.

The roads in the Peak Downs electorate have been maintained through progressive funding from time to time. Over the years, the roads have been improved dramatically. I hope that the Federal Government is defeated at the next Federal election. The Opposition is very disappointed with the Federal Government because of its road-building efforts.

Mr Palaszczuk: That is not unusual.

Mr LESTER: It is not unusual; it is a fact.

In 1983, Federal road-funding, through the taxpayers' contribution, represented 66 per cent of fuel tax revenue. Today, it has decreased to 23 per cent of the fuel tax revenue. That is not a very good effort.

Mr Palaszczuk: What are the exact figures?

Mr LESTER: I have just given the honourable member the exact percentages. That is really what counts.

I point out to the honourable member that, in real terms, the figures that I have cited represent a decrease of 30 per cent in road-funding. It is terrible to have a 30 per

cent decrease in the amount that is returned to road-funding when this country has been expanding, when more vehicles are using the roads and when more people are using buses and cars as a form of transport. As I said, it is not good that road-funding has been reduced by about 30 per cent.

Queensland receives only 21 per cent of its rightful share of road funds. Recently, that has dropped to 19.8 per cent. Queensland is not being given a fair go. Since 1983, fuel taxes and fuel excise have risen 186 per cent. It is obvious that Queensland has not been given a fair deal. For every 30c that the Federal Government receives from every litre of fuel sold, only 5c is spent on roads.

I have sympathy for the small-businesspeople in the State of Queensland. I realise just how difficult it is for them at present. Interest rates are killing small businesses. I do not believe that the Federal Government has been very sympathetic towards small-businesspeople. It seems to keep imposing all sorts of charges and imposts upon them, and that is making their position extremely difficult. Small businesses need to be given some incentive.

I am concerned that the present Government wishes to do away with voluntary employment agreements, which can be very beneficial to employees provided that the benefits, incentives and protection are written into the agreement. Voluntary employment agreements should not be taken away. If they are taken away, small businesses will cease to exist. The only businesses that will remain will be big corporate combines. That will take away from young people the incentive to get up, to have a go and to get into their own businesses. For a long time it has been an Australian dream to be one's own boss. When a person is unable to establish his own business, incentives are removed.

It is true that an overall balance must be struck. Some people must be parliamentarians; others must be schoolteachers and members of other professions. A balance includes people operating small businesses.

Mr Palaszczuk: What's wrong with being a baker?

Mr LESTER: I think that being a baker—not necessarily for me at the moment—has a lot going for it. It is one of the more noble trades in this world. All honourable members know about the fishes and the loaves of bread. Really, bakers are important people. We must ensure that apprenticeships in the bread industry and in other industries are continued.

Taxpayers, including those in the highest tax bracket, should pay no more than 39c, or 39 per cent, tax in every dollar that they earn. If such a policy was implemented, we would start to achieve something. High taxes are killing this country. If people are taxed too much, they stop earning money and Governments lose out because overall their revenue is less.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you for your tolerance towards members opposite. The people of Peak Downs thank you for being so supportive and always being there to assist me, with the help of everyone else, to make Peak Downs a better place.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! I now call the honourable member for Nundah. As he will be making his maiden speech, I would like it to be heard in silence.

Mr HEATH (Nundah) (8.44 p.m.): I am honoured to be able to rise in this House for the first time and to speak as the representative for the electorate of Nundah. I am proud of being, and very privileged to be, the first Labor member for Nundah for 33 years. This is, in fact, the first maiden speech from a member representing Nundah in 33 years.

I pay tribute to my predecessor, Sir William Knox, who ably represented the electorate and contributed to the people of Queensland as a long-serving Minister. Sir William's lengthy and distinguished tenure was terminated on 2 December, but not with any degree of malice from the electors of Nundah.

I further acknowledge Sir William's gentlemanly attitude throughout the election campaign and the gracious assistance given to me by him since the election. He has passed to me the ongoing files from his electorate office and has offered to make himself available if there are any matters on which he can help. This fine behaviour is rare, if not unique, I believe, amongst former members defeated on 2 December. I thank Sir William Knox personally for all of that. On behalf of the people of Nundah, I thank him for his earnest representation of them for so many years.

As Nundah's new representative in this Parliament, I am humbly and deeply grateful to those many persons who worked tirelessly and selflessly towards gaining what became a comfortable and significant election victory. I thank them all for their dedication and for their wise and sometimes invaluable advice. Paramount amongst them, of course, is my wife, Jean, who both assisted with and put up with the rigours of campaigning and did so with unflagging energy and good humour. These qualities and more were also freely given by my two beautiful daughters, Jackie and Jenny.

I offer a very special tribute and thanks to my campaign director, Kathy Warth, who willingly gave a whole year spent in dedicated pursuit of ensuring a Labor victory. The hard work and friendship given to me by Kathy is of such importance that, simply, without her I would not be here.

I also thank the key persons, the organisers and advisers behind my campaign—Wayne Swan, Susan Moriarty, Ken Wilcox, Jim Keim, John McCollow, Lew Evans and Lindesay Jones and, most importantly, the Labor Party members in the electorate who worked untiringly, not just for me, but throughout the period of recent history when Labor was temporarily out of office. Those party members and every other person in the electorate will welcome the return of open, fair and honest Government to Queensland. To all of those people I pledge my commitment to social reform and economic justice in this State.

After 33 years, the electorate of Nundah, deserves a fresh description to honourable members. It is one of the oldest electorates in Queensland. Being first proclaimed in 1887, it now incorporates the suburbs, or parts of the suburbs, of Northgate, Virginia, Wavell Heights, Nundah, Woolloowin, Clayfield, Hendra and Ascot.

Since 1887 it has been represented by just 10 members of Parliament and has never changed its historical base, which is quiet, suburban, and residential. It has a high proportion of elderly residents who will welcome, I am sure, this Government's commitment to introduce a senior's card to provide rebates and discounts for the financial betterment of retirees and pensioners. Nundah also has a high proportion of women who will applaud, again I am sure, the Government's wide range of policies and initiatives designed to benefit the women of Queensland.

The electorate contains a great number of retail shops, has a significant portion of residents associated with the racing industry and includes Eagle Farm racecourse. The area is very well endowed with educational institutions, including kindergartens and pre-schools, private and State primary and high schools, and the Kedron campus of the Brisbane College of Advanced Education. The electorate of Nundah is so blessed with such a wide range of schools and colleges that the issues surrounding and concerning education in Queensland assume a very high profile for the residents of the electorate. I am fortunate to be able to be involved with many very active p. and c. associations, whose dedication to providing the best possible facilities for the students of their schools is inspirational. Long-serving p. and c. presidents, such as Bob Galligan of Nundah State School and Roy Bone of Wavell Heights State High School, are well aware that innovative, hard-working and active p. and c. associations will be in the best position to benefit from this Government's commitment to give education the highest priority.

School principals, such as Ray Bielby of Kedron State High School—to mention just one—and their teaching staffs have created a wonderful environment of educational community surrounding their schools, with parents, staff and students all working together and all contributing to their goal of achieving the best possible education, the broadest range of knowledge for students and the best preparation available for the responsibilities

associated with eventually inheriting this planet, caring for it and its inhabitants, and running its institutions.

The world does not grow old; it grows young. The responsibilities of society are continually being taken from the old and shouldered by the young. The task of the older members in the community is to educate the young well. Students from schools in the Nundah electorate will be amply prepared to assume those responsibilities, thanks to the dedication of their parents and their educators. In order to assist the progress of such education, the Goss Government has pledged a huge increase in funds in its first term. It should be noted, of course, that this will bring Queensland up to the national average of per capita spending on education, and will need to be increased further in this Government's next term.

Students in Queensland finally have a Government which will not condone their treatment as a group that is not as worthy of assistance and facilities as are students in other States. Already we have seen the provision of 1 500 new tertiary places for Queensland school-leavers, and the engagement of 900 new teachers to address the problem of the need for a reduction in class sizes. Part of the funds will also be available to p. and c. associations to ease their problems of having to supply far too much of their school's day-to-day basic running requirements, which can be funded by the department. We have undertaken to review the generally unpopular TE score system, and to bring the pre-school year into the State education syllabus on a voluntary basis for parents, in line with, and in coordination with, the other States of Australia.

As a member of the caucus education committee, I will be well placed to ensure that the needs and views of the entire community of schools in Nundah are well represented in the Government. I will be calling on the Minister for Education to ensure that school facilities in near-city suburban electorates—such as Nundah—are upgraded in line with the requirements which will be found to be necessary as these suburbs again begin to attract younger families, and greater numbers of young children who will enter, follow and leave the education system, in some cases, entirely within the same suburb. This demographic change has already begun in my electorate and will accelerate over the next few years.

While on the general subject of youth, Mr Deputy Speaker, there is, sadly, a crime problem within my electorate largely involving theft and vandalism offences perpetrated by a small number of juveniles. Some residents of the area—justifiably angry and upset over losses and damage—have become angry towards youth generally. When I talk to them, however, I insist that the entire generation of schoolchildren and young persons cannot, and must not, be judged by the action or attitudes of a few individuals. I tell them—and I believe—that we must have faith in the youth of today, and in society's systems of education and family support for the benefit, and betterment, of Queensland's youth. Nevertheless, the needs and concerns of the residents—many of whom are elderly—who are suffering under the crime wave in the area are very real and must be addressed. The Government has already acted in several areas to reduce these problems, which are of long standing, and which were not addressed with any energy by the previous Government.

Since my election, I have become involved with the cause of the affected householders and took the step of organising, in conjunction with the member for Stafford, Rod Welford, a public meeting which was attended by 200 residents. The meeting was addressed by the Minister for Police and the Minister for Justice and Corrective Services.

The purpose of the meeting was threefold: firstly, to enable the concerns, opinions and suggested solutions of the residents to be included in a submission which will be presented to the Ministers for Police, Corrective Services, and Family Services. It will detail recommendations from the residents, and from Rod Welford and me, and will ask that the three Ministers act upon its recommendations for the benefit and safety of the home-owners of the electorate.

The second purpose of the meeting was to allow the Ministers who attended to see at first hand the seriousness of the residents' concerns, and to hear the emotion in their calls for assistance.

Thirdly, the meeting showed the residents that, by the presence of the two Ministers, and from the numerous representations which I have made on behalf of the house-holders, this new Goss Government is a Government willing to listen to their concerns and willing to act to redress their problems.

Already there has been a reorganisation of police patrols in the area, with the provision of more mobile patrols and more local patrols in the suburbs affected by the problem. Nundah police and mobile patrols have recently enjoyed some success with the detention of several of the more determined repeat offenders. They have been aided by wonderful support from the public. Residents are also banding together in a community spirit and have set up Neighbourhood Watch units to protect their property and person, and to assist the police in their tasks.

It must be noted that the Nundah police, who work under the handicap of being 50 per cent understaffed, deserve the highest commendation for their committed efforts in all areas of suburban police work. That is another situation which disadvantages the suburban community and which was allowed to exist and continue under the previous Government.

I applaud, and will support to the utmost, the Labor Government's intention during its first term in office to employ 1 200 new police in Queensland. I further praise its determination, in line with the recommendations contained in the Fitzgerald report, to reform the entire syllabus and the training facilities for police trainees and cadets. The Labor Government will provide Queensland with a quality police force, as well as a numerically strong one.

Those long-term changes, together with the shorter-term extra patrols and officers already being introduced, will be the genesis of relief for the residents of Wavell Heights and nearby suburbs from the crime wave that they have faced.

A further area that will need attention in order to bring an end to those problems is the sentencing options open to magistrates when young offenders are brought before them. To that end, the Minister for Justice and Corrective Services is releasing a Green Paper, which will allow for public comment and input. Because of the size of the problems in my electorate, I have gathered a huge mailing list of persons to whom I will send a copy of that paper.

The residents are aware that juvenile offenders are warned on their first appearance in court and that 84 per cent of those persons never offend again. Further, they are aware that the last thing that we should do to those offenders, some as young as 14 years of age, is gaol them. However, the residents are fed up with the youths being warned repeatedly, or placed under mild orders which seemingly have no effect on the more dedicated repeat offenders. They are fed up with seeing the police forced go through the same difficult processes of apprehending and charging those youths over and over again, only to find the same persons back in the suburbs almost immediately committing the same types of crimes.

I appeal to the Minister to pay great attention to the responses to the Green Paper which will come in—which will flood in—from my electorate. I will be asking the Minister for tougher community service orders to be imposed much sooner on repeating juvenile offenders.

The Nundah electorate contains another of Brisbane's notorious and longstanding problems—the traffic bottleneck where Sandgate Road passes through the Nundah shopping centre. Sandgate Road is one of the city's busiest suburban arterial roads, carrying well over 40 000 vehicles a day through the shopping area. There are four interested parties with concerns over the problem: the shopkeepers along the strip who need parking spaces so that traffic will be encouraged to stop and patronise their businesses; the local residents who shop there, often elderly people who enjoy the compactness of

the centre and can avoid having to walk long distances; the schools and churches nearby which in the past have resisted having the traffic diverted past them; and, of course, the motorists using the road, who want a free traffic flow.

A solution to the problem which satisfies all those groups has yet to be found. Over the years, the Main Roads Department has provided several plans which have proved inadequate, perhaps because of a lack of funds or an unwillingness to spend any large sum of money to alleviate the problem. It is, however, a large bottleneck. I will be approaching the Main Roads Department with two proposals for full costing and analysis. Either of those proposals, I believe, will satisfy all the interested persons or parties.

I offer this assurance, however, to my electorate: while I am the representative for Nundah, the Main Roads Department proposal which was promoted heavily a year ago involving routing outgoing traffic along Bage Street and thus carrying more than 20 000 vehicles a day immediately past local primary schools will not proceed.

However, the difficulty must be alleviated. After the other two proposals have been costed and the community consulted, I will be calling on the Main Roads Department to make sufficient funding available to finally end a 30-year-old traffic bottleneck.

I turn now briefly to the issue of sporting clubs. I advise members of the Government, of which I am so proud to be a part, and I advise you, Mr Speaker, that, despite the large numbers of proclaimed Souths supporters in our ranks, my electorate contains the Northern Suburbs Leagues Club. No matter what sorts of pressures are put on me by my fellow members, I am, and will remain, a Norths supporter.

I welcome the decision to introduce poker machines into the State's sporting clubs. I know that clubs such as the Northern Suburbs Leagues Club and Teachers Norths Rugby Club will welcome the injection of patrons and funds that the machines will generate. The funds will assist those clubs to become more community oriented, which is their wish, and to make facilities available for family sports and entertainment.

Since the election on 2 December, I have been told several times how lucky I am to be representing an electorate in which the issues of environmental policies do not have great impact. This opinion is, of course, a little misguided. In city electorates, there are environmental concerns which can affect every resident. We have noise pollution, air pollution and waste disposal problems, for example, and while these do not attract the high profile of rainforests, coral reefs or spaceports, any lack of concern or inattention to these suburban issues could soon render the suburbs of Brisbane untenable.

In Nundah there are noise problems associated with the huge traffic flow along Sandgate Road, which I have already mentioned, noise from commercial premises sited too near to residences, and seemingly huge numbers of loud dogs and loud parties. There is also the issue of aircraft noise, which comes under the control of the Federal Government, and in this area the residents of Nundah have been well cared for by my Federal colleague, the member for Lilley, Elaine Darling.

Currently the position is that complaints concerning domestic noise are dealt with by local government, in this case the Brisbane City Council, and complaints about commercial or industrial noise are within the province of the State Government. Suburban residents can become somewhat disillusioned with the services provided by their elected representatives when faced with such a possibly confusing division of responsibility.

There is a need to bring all such noise abatement legislation under one department, firstly for reasons of cost efficiency and to avoid duplication and, more importantly, because issues such as undue noise can interfere with the enjoyment of a quiet suburban life-style. Such interference must be addressed with the utmost speed and simplicity and with the residents' needs being of primary concern.

A portion of my electorate is affected by malodorous chemicals from a nearby foundry which, although perhaps infrequent, are certainly unpleasant. Following my inquiries, the Health Department has ascertained that the chemical composition of the gases poses no health risks to residents. Because it does seem to affect asthma sufferers,

the Environment Department is currently considering several options to ease the social problems that the odour is causing and will be advising me in the near future of its recommendations.

That is an example of the type of suburban environmental problem which, if not confronted immediately, can cause thousands of residents acute discomfort. It must be cleared up, hopefully at minimal expense to the foundry concerned which, by the way, is most cooperative and willing to do whatever is necessary to solve the problem. However, families in purely residential areas should not be expected to suffer because of the waste products of industries some kilometres away.

I welcome the Government's plan to plant millions of trees in Queensland, and I will be claiming a very reasonable share of those trees for Nundah. The parks and vacant areas of the electorate will support many, many thousands of trees, and the families of the area will benefit from the environmental and visual improvements gained through such a program. Perhaps in the future there will be a rainforest in Nundah, but I am as yet unsure how I can arrange a coral reef.

I will now address the issue of housing. In his address last week, His Excellency the Governor noted that Queensland has the lowest level of home-ownership and public housing of any State. This is a problem which has been identified by my constituents, in surveys that I have undertaken, as their greatest concern. The previous Government seemed content to leave Queenslanders in a situation in which rent was fast overtaking income and, incredibly, to stall on the signing of the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement and so delay the provision of more than \$800m in 1990-91 for Queensland housing.

It is pointedly significant that the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Bill was introduced into this Parliament on its first full sitting day. The Government's priorities align with the expectations of Queenslanders and are in line with the requirements of the residents of Nundah. This Bill and its funding provisions will not only deliver more assisted housing but also better quality accommodation for families and retirees.

If I may now speak in broader terms, I want to outline some of the changes that I would like to see in Queensland. There is a need to broaden our economic base to include a far greater array of industry and manufacturing and to balance and, of course, enhance the current primary, extractive and tourist industry based economy which we now have.

Full employment for Queenslanders should be our goal. A strong and active manufacturing sector can provide that employment and also provide vast capital resources for the State. Profitable industry provides the wealth with which a Government such as this, committed to fair social and economic systems, can use to benefit Queenslanders and to raise living standards right across the social spectrum, but especially in the poorer economic groups.

I am, however, not calling for unfettered growth of manufacturing and industry. It is perhaps sadly true that, on occasions, business—both industrial and commercial—has not shown itself to possess a strong enough ethic toward the environmental and social responsibilities which I believe all businesses have. Banks, for example, do not need to charge a fee on accounts that occasionally fall below \$250, when such institutions show a profit of almost a billion dollars in a year. Developers, for example, should be discouraged from publishing glowing results of their own environmental impact studies when their conclusions differ markedly from Government studies of the same project. Such attempts to seduce the community into accepting a proposal can verge upon the immoral and need to be balanced by the presentation of alternative opinions based on independent impact studies, perhaps in environmental cases performed by the universities, at the behest of either the developer or the Government.

I will be encouraging, within the Government, the establishment of guidelines], both social and environmental, within which business can prosper and profit to its utmost, but never at the expense of the life-styles] or quality of life of Queenslanders.

There is a need also to examine some of the professions, particularly the legal profession, to ensure that the public can enjoy the greatest access to them and the finest service from them at the lowest reasonable cost. It could be argued that, although the long-standing professional associations have represented their members well—which is their primary aim—they have perhaps lost some awareness of the public's needs and are less aware than they should be of the difficulties that people face in meeting the cost of the services of members of those associations. Although the traditions of service of those associations are admirable, there is a need to avoid becoming bogged down in tradition when society's demands require change.

At the moment, because the cost of legal representation in the courts is prohibitive, the public is not well served. For example, I know of persons who have sought to dispute through the courts a refusal by an insurance company to pay a claim. In effect, large companies can say, "Fine, take us to court." Unfortunately, middle income earners who are ineligible for legal aid cannot afford the services of a Queen's Counsel to combat the engagement by an insurance company of a high-powered counsel when money is no object. That situation requires review both by the Government and by organisations such as the Bar Association so that the public has the greatest possible access to the legal system at the lowest possible cost. After all, the legal system is supposed to ensure that every person has a right to legal representation. As the parliamentary representative for Nundah, it is my intention to bring to my constituents all of the great benefits that are being made available to ordinary Queenslanders, not just to the elite, the developers, big business or those with brown paper bags full of cash.

My commitment to social justice and the commitment of the Goss Government are embedded in the principles of fairness and in the belief that the social advantages to be gained from this State's wealth, its environmental richness and diversity, its economic growth and the broadening of the economic base, which this Government will undertake and encourage, must not be lost to overseas interests or stalled in a web that is spun from the red tape of self-interest. Those benefits must flow freely to all Queenslanders.

I thank Wayne Goss, the Labor Party and the Labor movement for the opportunity to participate in the making of the great changes that are in store for Queensland. I thank them also for their belief in me, for selecting me to contest the seat of Nundah and for accepting me as a member of this Government. I thank also the electors of Nundah for putting their faith in me. I assure them that I will represent them ably and fully with energy and with concern for their needs.

At the outset, I said that the electorate of Nundah is quiet, suburban and residential. I will bring to the area the social benefits that I outlined a moment ago. Those improvements to living standards will enhance and assist my long-term aim, which is in line with the wishes of Nundah residents, namely, that every advantage must be given to the people of the electorate but that the area must remain quiet, suburban and residential.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (9.12 p.m.): In rising to speak to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, I congratulate the Speaker on his elevation to that office. I congratulate you also, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your appointment as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees. I am sure that you will be fair and just to all members; that you will maintain the standards of the House and, hopefully, improve them. I pledge my loyalty and that of my constituents to the Crown, which is a very important part of society in Queensland.

I intend to speak about primary industries and some other important issues. After listening to the members who have participated in this debate, including some of the new members to this Parliament, one could be fooled into believing that there is no such thing as primary industries in this State and that, if they were wiped out, it would

be to the benefit of this State. All members should give some thought to primary industries.

Mr Smyth: Are you talking about coal-mining as a primary industry?

Mr BOOTH: I will make no apologies for what the former Government did for coal-mining. In three years' time, if this Government has achieved as many developments in coal-mining as the former Government did, the honourable member for Bowen will be a very proud man. However, I do not believe that this Government can do that. People will remember this Government for what it has destroyed. Government members such as the member for Bowen are opposed to any form of development or industry.

Mr Smyth interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! The honourable member will interject from his correct seat.

Mr BOOTH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I did not really need your protection. I thought I was doing fairly well.

I believe that many people in Queensland are staggered by what has happened in this State. People who were present this afternoon in this Chamber would have heard the neutrality and lack of initiative in many of the speeches that were made by some of the new members, many of whom were readers rather than speakers. They simply read prepared speeches.

Mr Beattie: It was pretty good, too.

Mr BOOTH: I am not going to knock them all.

Mr Beattie: You should have listened.

Mr BOOTH: I did listen. That is why I was disappointed.

Mr Beattie: You did not learn anything.

Mr BOOTH: I will see what the honourable member has learned. I am not worried about his interjecting; that is fine. He can do that if he wants to, but I think he will do himself a lot more harm than good.

If Australia's population increases to a large extent—and I believe it will—primary industries will be needed. Fifty years ago Australia's population was slightly more than 5 million. Today, it is very close to 17 million. That tells me one thing: If the population increases at the same rate, in 50 years' time, it will be more than 40 million. The people will not be fed without primary industries, which will have to be well organised, well adjusted and well supported. That is something that honourable members opposite do not seem to be interested in.

Mr Beattie: Come on!

Mr BOOTH: I ask the honourable member to name one speaker who this afternoon mentioned primary industry. I ask him to think quickly and to tell me that.

I want to continue speaking about the increase in population. That increase has been brought about by a favourable immigration policy that has been implemented perhaps by all Governments of all political persuasions that have governed this country since the Second World War and previously. All Governments have been fairly generous in their immigration policies. That is why this country has an increased population. If honourable members opposite look at what has been accomplished in this country—and a lot has—they will see that primary industries have accomplished more than any other industry.

Sure, this country has produced some brilliant scientists and technicians. The continent has been organised so that it is a nice place in which to live. Because our organisation of the country is basically good, many people throughout the world want to live in Australia. The greatest thing that Australia has ever done is produce huge

amounts of food and fibre, such as wool for clothing, and export them to the rest of the world at reasonable prices. Perhaps we cannot ask for exorbitant prices for our food. However, our primary products are produced and exported to the rest of the world. That is something of which Australia can be proud.

This country has the most efficient farmers in the world. That is why they have been able to achieve what they have. They work hard and long hours. Of course, daylight-saving meddles and tries to make their life a misery, but I will refer to that later.

When the member for Peak Downs was speaking about the functions that he hosted, most members opposite complained not about the functions but about the quality of the food at them. The member for Mount Isa said that he would have liked better quality food. It must be admitted that the member for Peak Downs, while he was in the Ministry, always gave his best and was always prepared to go out and have a go. The same is true now that he is a member of the shadow Ministry. Before honourable members opposite start knocking him, they ought to think about what he has done.

I want to return to my remarks about primary industries. I am happy to be one of the spokesmen for primary industries.

Mr Beattie: And we are happy for you to be, too.

Mr BOOTH: That is all right. I do not think that the present Minister for Primary Industries would echo completely what the honourable member for Brisbane Central has said. I notice that the Minister has just arrived in the Chamber.

Mr Casey interjected.

Mr BOOTH: The honourable member for Brisbane Central has been a bit nasty to me about primary industry. I told him that the Minister loves primary industry and that he would be quite happy to have me—

Mr Beattie: I said you are happy to have him shadow your portfolio.

Mr Casey: He has two offsidiers. They have three over there to look after me. Why do you need two offsidiers?

Mr BOOTH: In recent days I have been told by one of the Minister's secretaries that, because he has so many appointments, the earliest one of my constituents can get an appointment with the Minister is the end of April.

Mr Casey: That's because you fellows left the primary industries in such a mess.

Mr BOOTH: Do not come that one! The Minister has too much work to do with forestry and everything else. Anyway, if he thinks he can do it, that is his business.

People such as Senator Richardson and Mr Comben leave me cold. They do not want to do a thing for primary industry, they want to close as much of it down as they can. I do not think that this Government, the fair State of Queensland and the people of Australia can continue in that direction. Because he is battling, the Australian farmer has to be allowed to try to improve his lot. It has never been said—and I do not think that Mr Casey would ever say it—that farmers are not efficient people. The Australian farmer is efficient. He is too darned efficient. He has just about put himself in the position in which he cannot make a livelihood.

Tonight a person who was sympathetic to the ways of farmers said to me that nothing will ever be done to help the farmers because they just keep producing, they do not get paid for it and the smart alecs go on forever. If the population of this country explodes, which I think has occurred and will continue to occur, there will come a day when primary producers are needed and the Government will have to look after them. I hope that enough Government members support the present Minister for Primary Industries because I think he has a fair idea. There is one difference between him and me: he has been a spokesman for primary industries—

Mr Casey: Looks.

Mr BOOTH: Apart from looks. I will concede that the Minister is the best looking. We will not be nasty about little things like that. Let us not quibble about that.

The Minister will receive very little support in trying to bring primary industry up to what it should be.

Mr Casey: Are you admitting, therefore, that it is run down?

Mr BOOTH: It is not particularly run down. The honourable member knows as well as I do that there is no return from it. I did not intend referring to this, but some of the things that have happened to primary producers in the Federal sphere are crazy.

Mr Casey: Fair go! Any primary producer will tell you that primary producers have never had a better Federal Minister than Kerin.

Mr BOOTH: Has the Minister had a look at their accounts to see where they are? Was he the best thing that ever happened to primary industry? This country is supposed to have the world's best Treasurer and the world's best Prime Minister and yet, day after day, month after month, year after year, everything gets worse. We have the world's best of everything but they are not getting anywhere.

I believe in conservation. I do not want to cut down any trees that do not have to be cut down. But if more people are permitted to migrate to this country, more trees will have to be cut down in order to build houses.

Mr Beattie: No.

Mr BOOTH: The member for Brisbane Central says, "No." He should travel the highway to Ipswich and look on the right-hand side of the road where housing used to be provided for immigrants.

An Opposition member: Wacol.

Mr BOOTH: Yes, at Wacol. The Federal Government has cleared for as far as one can see—but no one else can do it. It is the same with timber. Government members say that no timber can be cut down in Queensland or in Australia, but that it can be cut down anywhere else in the world. It does not matter where trees are cut down in the world, it will have the same effect on the ozone layer.

Mr Beattie: You are a greenie. I am impressed.

Mr BOOTH: We are living at a time when many new things might happen to primary industry. If Mr Comben has his way, because he would be lost once he was past Moorooka, after a while he will close down every town except Brisbane. That is the extent of his knowledge.

Mr Littleproud: What about those Democrats who do not want to have any meat industry? They want to close down the meat industry.

Mr BOOTH: That is right. My electorate has two of the biggest meatworks in Queensland. If they were closed down, many people would be thrown out of work. Not much food would be produced. Yet some people want to do that.

It has become a craze—close everything down. If that occurred, this State would have the greatest upsurge in unemployment in its history. People with initiative should not be stopped from trying to achieve something. They should be allowed to go out and do their best. That is the way in which this State was developed. It was not developed by people who sat down here on the coast and dipped their feet in the seawater. It was developed by people who went out and worked.

At one time there was a work ethic. People felt that if they were workers, they were doing something worthwhile. Anybody who works now is a complete mug. One should be on the dole. In the last few days Mr Peacock has said that it is the only country in which one can leave school and stay on social security until one is ready for the pension. That is pretty right. It is the only country in the world in which one can do that.

I do not want unemployed people to be distressed. I am the first to battle for anyone who comes to my office, who has been deprived of his social security benefits and is starving.

Mr Smyth: What happens if they have not got social security? Peacock has said they will not have it.

Mr BOOTH: Mr Peacock has said that special benefits will be paid to anyone who cannot get off the dole. That is fine. There is nothing wrong with that. In fact, the Federal Government has nearly echoed what Mr Peacock has said. Do not tell us that that is wrong.

I believe in conservation up to a point. Farmers have to have the right to do something.

Mr Beattie: What are you going to do about Mick Veivers and daylight-saving?

Mr BOOTH: I have my own views on daylight-saving and they are entire different from those of Mick Vievers. I would like to have a referendum on daylight-saving right now with the Federal election. How many will be for it? About 25 per cent. Daylight-saving would be wiped out if the Government was game to hold a referendum. Government members are pretty silent now. The honourable member for Brisbane Central is the only one who wants daylight-saving.

Up to the present time, only two notable people have gone on record as wanting daylight-saving. One was the Premier, Wayne Goss, and the other was Sallyanne Atkinson. The other Government members wish that daylight-saving would go to hell, just as I do.

Mr Casey: Are you saying that all those who were for it in your party, except Mick, lost their seats?

Mr BOOTH: No. That was caused by another matter altogether. The previous Government had a thing called the Fitzgerald inquiry.

Mr Beattie: And a damn good inquiry, too.

Mr BOOTH: It may have been, although I am not prepared to hand over Queensland to Mr Fitzgerald as a dictator on everything. On every issue that is raised in this Chamber, including Fraser Island, the Government will say, "Get Mr Fitzgerald to do it." I do not think that is right.

It was a National Party Government which had the courage and the intestinal fortitude to commence the Fitzgerald inquiry. A Labor Party Government will never be game to have another inquiry such as the Fitzgerald inquiry. I bet guineas to gooseberries that it will not do that.

Mr Beattie: Where was Bjelke-Petersen when it was on? If he had been here, you would not have had it, would you?

Mr BOOTH: Some people think he was talking with wisdom when he said that.

Mr Beattie: Who? Joh or Gunn?

Mr BOOTH: The honourable member asked, "Where was Bjelke-Petersen?" I said that he seemed to be a bit lukewarm about the inquiry.

Mr Beattie: He was more than lukewarm.

Mr BOOTH: I have not got time to talk about that. I wanted to make some points concerning primary industry, especially as Mr Casey has been good enough to come into the Chamber. I am sure he will agree with me on some of these matters.

I want to talk about the debt about the debt of Bulk Grains. Bulk Grains has a fairly substantial debt in Queensland, which is causing major problems for the company. When

that debt was incurred, it looked as though there would be sufficient throughput of grain to service that debt. That is not the case for the reasons that I have mentioned—the disincentive given to farming and the lack of viability.

The debt of Bulk Grains is in the vicinity of \$90m. That debt adds approximately \$8 a tonne to some of the grain that is handled in Queensland.

The New South Wales Government has seen fit to take over the debt of the Grain Handling Authority.

Mr Casey: That is not exactly correct. They sold off their assets and got the money from it.

Mr BOOTH: There is no debt for the people. It is not a cost against the grain handling. The way it was done probably does not suit us entirely, although the Minister is suggesting to the grain handling people that they should engage a lot of people with special expertise. That could take away from the producers the right to handle their own grain. I hope that does not happen. I do not want to be destructive.

Mr Casey interjected.

Mr BOOTH: I do not want to be destructive—

Mr Casey: Not to the private traders.

Mr BOOTH: The Government has put the private traders back in and they have accepted it, but I do not know that they will do much.

Mr Casey: There is more peace in the industry.

Mr BOOTH: There is more peace in the industry? We do not want to go back to the war, but do we want peace at any price?

Mr Casey interjected.

Mr BOOTH: I agree with that. The Government should take into consideration the possibility of taking over some of the debt, if not all of the debt. If that is not done there will be a large number of problems in the grain-handling industry and the cost of handling grain will go so high that there will be more problems. The Minister knows that the grain industry is battling. The economists in the Department of Primary Industries can tell the Minister the situation.

The Minister can claim that I am wrong, but I say that, for grain to be a paying proposition, the price has to be increased by \$50 a tonne. I know that what the Government will take from the debt will represent only about a quarter of that amount, but it would help a little. If the price of grain were increased by \$50 a tonne, the average size grain-producer would gain only \$25,000 a year. I know how they are battling.

Mr Casey: That is an airline pilot's increase.

Mr BOOTH: Yes, but these people are having to leave their properties. They are working in the meatworks we were talking about a short time ago and in other places just so that they and their families can survive. Some of them might have made mistakes. I have spoken to some of the better grain-producers, the ones I believe are the excellent producers, and very few of them are in a good position. An odd one is doing well. Some of them have managed to diversify into vegetables, for instance, but they have to have a water supply to do that. If they can do that, it does help.

I now want to say something about feedlotting. The Minister has made a number of statements on this matter. I am not quite sure what he has decided to do. I consider that the matter is so serious that the people who produce feed for feedlotters should be registered.

Mr Casey: That means you want every grain-grower registered.

Mr BOOTH: Provided there are no additives in it, there is no need to, but where additives are being put into the grain there should be registration. Chicken litter should not be added to grain and I do not think that the ordinary people——

A Government member interjected.

Mr BOOTH: Yes, they were mixing chicken litter with the grain. I have not heard of anyone doing it any other way. They will argue that that is all right, but I do not think it is.

I now want to say something about soil conservation. Although I might not be a greenie, I believe in soil conservation.

Mr Casey: It is the most important environmental problem we have.

Mr BOOTH: Soil is a renewable resource. It will keep producing if we look after it. To indicate the importance that the Federal Government places on soil conservation, I point out that, in 1987-88, Labor allocated \$6m to national soil conservation and spent \$5m on landscaping at the new Parliament House in Canberra. That is the sort of priority Labor gives to soil conservation. Soil conservation should be given a higher priority. More help should be given to people to carry out soil conservation measures. If a person owns land, even if it is freehold he has to look 200 years ahead. Nobody in Australia used to look that far ahead but we must start to do so now. I have seen soil in some parts of the world that has been farmed for 1 000 years. Admittedly, it is not on the sort of slopes that some of our soil is and the soil structure is different. Also, some other areas do not have the huge rainfall we have. I remember travelling through the Darling Downs one time with a Dr McCarthy from Victoria who was studying soil conservation. He said that the people here knew nothing about soil conservation because the banks were three times higher than they should be. I asked him how much rain fell in the areas of Victoria, where low banks are used. He said that sometimes two inches of rain fell in an hour. I told him that some areas of the Darling Downs got five or six inches and that is why the banks had to be higher. It is important that we retain our soil, but it is very difficult to do so.

I now want to deal with the fire brigade boards.

Mr Beattie: What about cattle?

Mr BOOTH: I talked about feedlots. Of course, the honourable member did not know that I was referring to cattle. I did my best. On the next occasion I speak about feedlots he will know I am referring to cattle. He might have had a lot of experience but he is now playing in a higher division and should be a little careful. I know a good deal about cattle. The Minister for Primary Industries has been spokesman on primary industry matters for a long time but he has never made his livelihood in that industry. I did until I was 57 years of age. I did not become a millionaire, but I managed. I suppose most people are happy if they can manage.

I still want to say something about fire brigade boards. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Mr Mackenroth, is going to get rid of all the fire brigade boards because he claims they were all made up of National Party stooges. He is dead wrong. They are all community people. The only people appointed to fire brigades were those who were prepared to give something to the community. I can tell the new Government members that, if they sack everybody on the boards and replace them with public servants from George Street, they will not be members of Parliament after the next election because the people in the country want to have some input. They want things tailored to suit themselves.

As to fire brigade boards—if a regional board is to be established and most of the equipment is located there, people will find that when a fire breaks out the gear will be available but it will be too far away to be used to put out the fire. An important feature about a fire brigade is that it puts water on a fire as soon as possible.

An inquiry is to be conducted into ambulance services. Although I am not completely opposed to that, I am completely opposed to having only regional boards with most of the equipment located at the headquarters for a particular region. The member for Carnarvon is not in the Chamber at present. However, honourable members would know that he lives a fair distance from Toowoomba. If a person is injured in a car accident—Tom knows the geography up there—he requires the services of an ambulance to be provided very quickly. If I am lying at the side of the road, or if a neighbour or one of my friends finds himself in that position and it is necessary for the ambulance to travel from Toowoomba, honourable members know what will happen. Someone at the scene with a car will say, "This man is going to bleed to death if he is left here; put him in the back of the car." If the injured person is fortunate, it might be possible to place him in the back of a station wagon. However, there are not very many station wagons on the road. The injured person would probably be placed in the back of a car. It is possible that the person could be injured further by being placed in the back of that car. I am not prepared to agree to their being only a few ambulance stations throughout Queensland. Ambulance stations should be placed strategically so that ambulance officers can reach accident scenes very quickly and render assistance to people who are in such a bad state that they need to be transported by ambulance.

I have referred to fire brigades and ambulance boards. I turn now to hospital boards. Although Mr McElligott is not in the Chamber at present, he was here a short time ago.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr BOOTH: We talked about cattle, but the honourable member did not know. That is okay. He will learn quickly. One thing he will learn is that he should not interject while I am speaking, because I love it.

Mr Casey: How is your Warwick dairy going; all right?

Mr BOOTH: It is going pretty well. The marriage of South Coast and Warwick has been a success.

Mr Casey interjected.

Mr BOOTH: Despite all that trouble, I survived an election since then. At that time I suppose I should have taken the opportunity to thank my campaign director and the people who rallied round me. It was a little bit cold that night that the Minister was in Warwick. The atmosphere was a bit cold. When the time came and we wanted friends, it was amazing how many dairy farmers came out and supported us and made a donation to the fund. So it was not all that bad.

I turn now to road-funding. To a person who lives in the country, a good road is a most important thing. I know that at the moment the roads are not too bad, but they are deteriorating, particularly in northern New South Wales, where the bitumen is being ploughed up and the roads are being converted back to a gravel surface. The same thing will happen in my electorate, unless we can get back more—

Mr Casey: Under a Liberal Government

Mr BOOTH: Not under a Liberal Government. It is the Federal Government that is taking the money. It is imposing the taxes and excise.

Mr Randell: Thirty cents.

Mr BOOTH: The honourable member is correct. Out of every 30c the Government is receiving from every litre of fuel sold, it is ploughing only 5c back into roads.

Mr Randell: \$5 billion they are taking.

Mr BOOTH: I have a note that states—

"Labor increased and indexed fuel excise to the CPI from August 23, 1983 meaning fuel excise increased automatically twice a year in line with inflation. Petrol

and diesel excise when Labor came to office in March 1983 was 6.155 cents per litre. By September 1989, the excise had risen to 23.152 cents per litre, significantly increasing the cost of running a motor vehicle. Commonwealth revenue from fuel excise"—

honourable members should listen to this—

"rose from \$970 million in 1982/83 to \$5.16 Billion in 1988/89 and an estimated \$5.64 Billion for 1989/90."

As to road funding—I have been provided with the following information—

"Roads funding has been cut by 27% in real terms since 1984/85. Funding for 1985/86 was frozen at 1984/85 levels; cut by \$24 million in 1986/87; further cut by \$180 million in 1987/88 and \$50 million in 1988/89. It increased by \$116 million in 1989/90 to a total \$1333 million. By contrast, revenue from Commonwealth fuel excise in 1989/90 will reap \$5645 million. According to the NRMA's Open Road magazine for October 1989, the lack of roads funds has forced several council in country NSW to tear up bitumen roads and turn them back to gravel to reduce maintenance costs."

If one travels across the border into New South Wales, one will see that in the last few months a few roads have been brought back to bitumen. However, prior to that a number of them were signposted "Dry weather road only". It is fair to say that the Federal Government has not played the game with road taxes.

I turn briefly to the principle of one vote, one value. I think that it is a crazy idea and that the Labor Party will live to regret it. I do not think that the people in the metropolitan area will think that it is such a great idea. When they see a huge part of Queensland with only one or two members, I do not think that they will like it. They will say, "Surely this is not fair play."

Tonight, one member said that certain problems could be eliminated by improving the facilities provided in members' offices. If extra secretaries are put in an office, and if the members of the Government believe that that is the way to go, they might as well pay public servants to be members of Parliament. The only people who can represent constituents adequately are those who talk to them and are responsible to them. No-one can tell me that any public servant put into a member's office would be anything more than a stooge. Even if he is not a stooge, he will not be able to provide the necessary service. If a member of Parliament does not get civility from a particular office, he can use an opportunity in the Parliament to say that he is not receiving a service.

I wish to comment on high interest rates because much of the discussion that I have heard on that matter has focused on the cost of buying a house. Interest on housing loans is charged from the rate of 17.5 per cent down to the pegged rate. I point out, however, that if a person were to buy a farm or rural property he would have to pay a rate ranging from 19.5 per cent to approximately 24 per cent. If the people who are trying to pay off a house were to try to pay off a farm, they would know what high interest rates are all about. I am sure that the Minister for Housing knows that interest rates are too high. If he does not know that now, he will know about it before long because many people will be forced into liquidation and others will quit their houses. The maintenance of high interest rates is a crazy system. Its purpose is to attract foreign revenue to Australia's economy in order to make Australia's balance of payments look reasonable. Australia's deficit is a tragedy, anyway, and the Australian Labor Party might just as well face up to that fact.

The record of the Federal Government in financial management is about as bad as a Government could get. Over the last seven years, the Hawke/Keating combination has given Australia record high interest rates, record high taxation, record high foreign debt, record high current account deficits, record high Government spending and waste, and an unacceptably high level of inflation.

Mr Beattie: Inflation is actually down. It is down significantly, and so are interest rates.

Mr FitzGerald: Oh, come on!

Mr Beattie: It was 22 per cent. In fact, it was 24 per cent.

Mr BOOTH: That is ridiculous. Perhaps the honourable member can tell me where funds can be obtained to buy a farm at a low interest rate? Because the transaction involves a commercial proposition, the current rate offered by QIDC on a successful application for a loan is 19.5 per cent.

Mr Casey: Are you a lender?

Mr BOOTH: No, I am not.

Mr Casey: Have you ever been a lender?

Mr BOOTH: In a small way, yes.

Mr Casey: Would you accept a lower rate when you lend money?

Mr BOOTH: I have accepted whatever rate was applicable, and so would the Minister for Primary Industries and other Ministers of this Labor Government.

Mr Casey: You would accept those rates when you are lending.

Mr BOOTH: The Minister is trying to justify the action taken by the Federal Government. If he continues to try to justify high interest rates, he will be in for a shock on 24 March.

Before I conclude my speech, I wish to comment on the recent events that have occurred in Europe. If ever an event should serve as a warning to members of the Australian Labor Party, it is the recent events that have occurred in Europe. When Governments take away incentives and rewards from people who have worked hard, eventually the people will rebel. In Europe and in parts of the Soviet Union, it has taken 40 or 50 years for changes to come about; the people of Europe have found out that socialism is a failure. In those countries, there is insufficient production of goods and the people are starving.

Mr Beattie: The National Party had been in Government in Queensland for 32 years.

Mr BOOTH: I am glad that the honourable member mentioned that. I say that during the last 32 years the State of Queensland has progressed magnificently. I am much older than the honourable member who interjects and I can inform him that for 20 years I lived in this State under a Labor Government. When the Labor Party was previously in Government, it was proud that this State's development was stagnating. Earlier an honourable member mentioned coal. I inform the House that the previous Labor Government in Queensland would not do anything to develop the coal-mining industry; nor did it take steps to introduce new crops. Each year its policies were simply more of the same. The Hawke/Keating Government is acting in a similar fashion. In its election campaign, the Federal Labor Government is promising more of the same, and that is exactly what the people of Australia will get.

The point I make is that in Europe and parts of the Soviet Union, socialism has failed miserably. Socialism will fail in Queensland, too. The only reason that the Hawke/Keating Government wants to bring people down to one level is to get everyone onto social security. I do not think that there would be many people in this State who would wish to have very much to do with such a policy.

I turn now to the lack of housing, which is a problem in my electorate. Judging by what was said by other honourable members earlier today, I am of the opinion that a lack of sufficient housing is a problem in every electorate. Moreover, I believe that the

housing problem is deeper than many people think and that the problems have been caused by the failure of Governments, generally, to make adequate provision for housing for immigrants. I have nothing against immigration and I do not wish to stop people from coming to Australia if they want to do that. However, I believe that Governments should be doing more to provide adequate housing.

Earlier today the young member for Carnarvon mentioned that even small towns such as Goondiwindi suffer from a lack of housing. The town of Warwick in my electorate is also short of housing. Inquiries at the offices of real estate agents reveal that no rental accommodation whatsoever is available. Governments will have to increase their efforts to provide adequate housing and should be looking for ways and means to achieve that end.

I believe that Queensland is a great State in which to live. A great deal of development has taken place here. Even persistent knockers, such as the honourable member for Brisbane Central, cannot deny that. Queensland is a great State and it will get better. Being as lenient as I can possibly be, I would have to say that even members of the Labor Government cannot stop Queensland's development, although they may try. I am mighty proud of this State and I do not think that this Labor Government will stop Queenslanders.

After the newly elected back-bench members of the Labor Party have settled into their role as parliamentarians, they will begin to ask the Premier and members of the Cabinet, "What are you going to do for this State?" They will not be content to hear the Government knock Queensland's development and they will not be happy with a lack of initiative from Ministers. They will not be happy with the Mr Combens who travel to western areas and say that the farmers appear to be jittery. I think that I would be jittery if he came near me, too. I would be willing to bet that the people in western districts certainly were jittery. I would not be surprised if Mr Deputy Speaker, the member for Bundaberg, also became jittery at times. Ministers of this Labor Government have indulged in a great deal of knocking and the back-bench members will not put up with it.

Time expired.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Campbell): Order! Before I call the honourable member for Redcliffe, I remind honourable members that he is about to make his maiden speech and that he should be heard in silence.

Mr HOLLIS (Redcliffe) (9.52 p.m.): In rising to speak to the amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, I congratulate you, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your election as Chairman of Committees. I look forward to spending the next three years as one of your temporary chairmen. I ask you to extend to Mr Speaker my congratulations on his election as Speaker and thank him for the friendship and warmth—indeed, the invaluable advice—that he displayed to me in the early days following the 2 December election. His advice has made my entry into this place so much easier. For that I offer him my sincere thanks.

I welcome this opportunity to speak on behalf of the electors of Redcliffe and to raise in this Chamber matters that affect my electorate and other matters. As a member of this Parliament, my first and foremost responsibility is to serve the people of the Redcliffe electorate. I shall endeavour to do that to the best of my ability.

To the rank-and-file members of the Australian Labor Party in the Redcliffe electorate who selected me to contest the seat, I owe a great debt. I have a responsibility to maintain my commitment to fight for social reform and equal opportunity for all electors of Queensland.

I thank all those people who worked so hard for the Australian Labor Party and me in the Redcliffe campaign, in particular my campaign manager, Julianna West, my campaign secretary, Val Robers, and my campaign committee. It is my intention to

represent the people of Redcliffe with strong, forthright action and to bring with that representation compassion and caring for those less fortunate in our society.

The electorate of Redcliffe was established by the 1959 redistribution which based the seat on the bayside city of Redcliffe. In that year, the electorate was excised from the former seat of Murrumba, which is located in the northern outer metropolitan area. The electorate's principal areas include the suburbs of Scarborough, Redcliffe, Margate, Woody Point, part of the suburb of Clontarf and the whole of Moreton Island.

In past years the electorate of Redcliffe has had two representatives. The first representative was James Houghton, who gained a deal of respect in the community, serving as Mayor and member of the Legislative Assembly for a total of 24 years—a truly great contribution to his community. Many of his family still reside in Redcliffe. I know that they have a great sense of pride in the Houghton name.

My predecessor, Terry White, who succeeded Jim Houghton in 1979, has also contributed to his community in a caring and devoted manner. I pay tribute to his efforts. I know that in the coming years the eyes of Redcliffe will be on me as I seek to emulate the efforts and successes of those gentlemen.

In this, my first speech in this place, I will be passing general comment on matters of great concern to me and to my constituents. For many years, schools in the Redcliffe electorate have been deprived of the basic needs in both maintenance and equipment. The electorate has a hospital that is grossly understaffed and overcrowded. It has a transport system that does not provide an adequate service. Redcliffe has an unacceptably high rate of unemployment. There are problems with the environment in the city of Redcliffe, in Moreton Bay and on Moreton Island. The thin blue line of police is unable to cope with the demands placed upon it. In the welfare area in Redcliffe, there are problems besetting both the disadvantaged and the aged.

For many years, Redcliffe has been seen as a retirement village. However, not many people, including Redcliffe residents, are aware that people above the age of 60 constitute only 26 per cent of our population. I wonder whether that has contributed to the lack of facilities, the lack of maintenance and the almost total lack of new school buildings in the public system.

Tonight, I was interested to hear the member for Peak Downs speak of the improvements to schools in Emerald, the improvements to the Tieri State School, the new tuckshop, libraries at high schools and the upgrading of the Clermont secondary school. If that was not pork-barrelling, I do not know what was. Schools in the electorate of Redcliffe have received no such improvements. Nothing has happened there for the last 10 years. It is time that concern was shown for our young people.

I will be urging the Minister to provide decent accommodation for the pupils of Redcliffe. I will be pressing for decent standards of accommodation and facilities for the teachers of Redcliffe. Without those basic needs, the standard of education received in Redcliffe cannot compete with that in other parts of the State.

Already in Redcliffe I see signs of change in the education area. I see the activity by our Government in the painting of school blocks. Plans are well advanced for the redevelopment of Humpybong State School. I know that those initiatives are the first of many that are to be taken to upgrade the facilities in Redcliffe's schools. But we must not stop there. There is a need to provide all schools with materials and equipment that will allow students to approach this new decade with the confidence that they will be able to enter any field of employment or further tertiary studies that they wish.

For many years educationalists, parents and other interested persons in the Redcliffe electorate have advocated the need for the establishment of a TAFE college or CAE on the Redcliffe peninsula, or in close proximity, to serve the areas north of Brisbane. In the *Redcliffe Herald* of 28 February 1990, I was pleased to read of a proposed TAFE college for Redcliffe. The article stated—

"Redcliffe could have a T.A.F.E. college in a few years.

Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations Neville Warburton has written to Redcliffe City Council about establishing a T.A.F.E. college in the city.

This was part of a long-term planning programme for a T.A.F.E. capital works, and the timing was yet to be established, he said.

Present funding levels indicated detailed planning of the college would not start before 1992-93.

Mr Warburton assured council that a full assessment of the community's requirements would be conducted during planning with an opportunity for local input in determining the resources to be provided."

You will agree, Mr Deputy Speaker, that that is a refreshing change in approach to tertiary education.

Recently, I was approached by a concerned mother whose son had given up on a course at the TAFE college at Eagle Farm. The reason was simple. When he found that it took him one and three-quarter hours to get to Eagle Farm by public transport and one and a half hours to return, he did not have the will to continue with the course. When young people have to spend up to 12 hours a day to gain the same benefits as those enjoyed by young people in the metropolitan area, is it little wonder that they are discouraged?

Redcliffe and surrounding areas need that tertiary facility to enable the young people to attain the same standards of education and competence that the young people of Brisbane achieve. Students and teachers of the Redcliffe electorate can be assured that I will continue to fight not only for decent conditions in our schools but also for the opportunity for students in the area to further their studies at a local tertiary institution.

I turn now to the transport situation in the Redcliffe area. "Rail to Redcliffe" was an election promise of the Government and is of importance to the electorate, as is the need for better transport to increase the number of job opportunities. Redcliffe and, indeed, the whole area north of Brisbane suffer from a lack of coordinated public transport. In fact, "rail to Redcliffe" was mentioned in my predecessor's maiden speech in this House in 1979. Unfortunately, for many years it has been a running sore in Redcliffe.

Some years ago the previous Government with its ambitious plans, which were only made to suit the flavour of the month, closed down and pulled up the Gold Coast rail line. And what was it doing last year? It was again building a rail line to the Gold Coast. While all that went on, the "rail to Redcliffe" proposal lay in some bureaucrat's bottom drawer gathering dust. Unfortunately for Redcliffe in those years, we had no white-shoe brigade prompting the Government to do its bidding. We had no developers who could persuade the Government that building a railway line to their developments would increase the price of the building blocks.

Redcliffe had only the poor, the disadvantaged, the students and the workers who needed this cheaper form of transportation, and they did not matter to National/Liberal Governments. But now they do. It is a commitment of this Government to provide that rail line to Redcliffe and it is my commitment to seek an upgrading of transport services to ensure that the people of Redcliffe do have the opportunity to travel on and off the peninsula in the cheapest and most efficient manner possible.

I see a much larger role for public transport and especially the services delivered to people living in the rapidly expanding suburbs and cities on the fringes of Brisbane. If pollution-saving public transport is not improved, in years to come the Brisbane pollution problem will surpass the pollution problems of great cities such as Tokyo and Los Angeles.

Lack of transport has contributed to the youth unemployment and the general unemployment that is being suffered in Redcliffe today. Redcliffe is almost totally reliant on small business to provide jobs for its residents. Our largest employer would be the

fishing industry, with some 1 120 people employed either directly or indirectly. I will return to that industry later. Schools employ some 600 people and our own local council approximately 500. So it is evident that many people have to seek work away from Redcliffe and this means, of course, that they need an efficient means of transport.

Redcliffe has had a very good Commonwealth scheme in Skillshare. Congratulations must go to the manageress, Sandra Skuse, and her dedicated committee, headed by Dr Peter Houston, for the tremendous effort that they have put in over the last three years in assisting our unemployed youth.

Only recently the Federal Labor Government selected Redcliffe as a pilot area for the older adult Skillshare program for those aged 55 years and over. I am informed that this is a great success. So, with the assistance of the Federal Labor Government and the commitment of our Government to improved transport facilities, I am sure that Redcliffe can look forward to an improvement in the area of employment in the future.

It would be remiss of me not to detail further information on the commercial fishing industry in Redcliffe. As I said previously, it is the largest employer in the area, and it is disturbing to hear of the decline in the catches in recent years. The reasons for this are many, but one of the principal causes of the problem is the previous Government's lack of concern for mangroves and other fish breeding habitats. The Queensland Government publication *State of the Environment in Queensland 1990* states—

"Development of the Queensland coast has proceeded at an exceptional rate over the past decade.

While much of the development has been justifiable economically, there has been an associated cost to the environment.

As a result of the rate and extent of development, concern has been expressed over the loss of the coastal zones finite biological resources, such as mangrove forests and seagrass meadows, and the effect of such losses on fisheries production and the ecology of near-shore waters.

Tourist development is continuing, with 'several hundred' projects planned or under way along the entire Queensland coast."

I was pleased to hear that the Honourable Minister for Primary Industries is no longer issuing permits for the destruction of mangroves. I am sure that my friends in the fishing industry will applaud this move. People in the fishing industry know that where there are humans on this earth, the fragile infrastructure of nature will be damaged in some way. However, we should all be aware of this and ensure that we treat our environment with care.

The contribution to the State and the nation of the commercial fishing industry in Queensland must be duly recognised. It is an industry which has been developed entirely by private capital and has evolved from humble beginnings into a major employer, food-producer and generator of income, both local and export. Properly promoted, it would be a tourist attraction of immense potential. I envisage a huge tourist market in trawlers being able to carry passengers and evolving into observation of fish-processing and eventually to licensed seafood restaurants, complementing the other aspects of tourism development.

The fishing industry is now the third largest primary industry in Queensland after the mining and rural industries. As I mentioned previously, on a broader scale it should be promoted in a near-city, seaside environment such as Redcliffe as a tourist attraction. There are business people in Redcliffe who, with a little encouragement from this Government, would join with us to promote the fishing industry not just as a place of work but also as a tourist industry and allow people from cities, interstate and overseas to be able to participate as tourists.

I realise that a tourist industry of this magnitude will involve a great deal of work and input from the fishing industry of Redcliffe. However, I believe that it can be done, and I pledge my support for the development of projects such as that.

Over the Christmas break I spent time with my wife and family friends camping at North Stradbroke Island. Early each morning we were woken by the noise of heavy vehicles and machines. Although I agree that progress is necessary to alleviate the unemployment problems that beset Queensland for many years, I must say that the desecration of North Stradbroke through sand-mining activities gave me neither joy nor pride in the policies of the previous Government.

My electorate encompasses the beautiful Moreton Island. I refer to it in this manner because beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and it does not necessarily mean that all islands and natural phenomena should only be observed in a conservationist manner. I am not an expert conservationist. I leave that category to my colleague the honourable member for Windsor, Pat Comben, who identifies mangroves by their botanical name and loves tramping around in drains identifying the different types of effluent in the water. I repeat that I am no expert in these matters, but I can observe items of natural beauty such as Moreton Island and realise that we must have a far-sighted policy on those areas so that such places are preserved for our children and the generations that follow them. Solutions must be found to the problems facing the island, the problems of illegal camping on departmental official reserves and Commonwealth reserves, the improper disposal of rubbish by so many campers, the destruction of trees and the ongoing problem of vehicles on beaches.

For years the Lord Mayor of Brisbane has encouraged people to go to Moreton Island, but what has she done about the problems? Absolutely nothing! I know that we as a Government are committed to this end and that Moreton Island will not follow the path that North Stradbroke has taken. Our Government will be vastly different from the previous Government. It will not allow cronies such as Skase, Williams, Kennedy and Gore to desecrate these areas of natural beauty in the name of the almighty dollar and then sell them off to foreign interests. Prior to the election, referring to foreign investors, the Honourable Wayne Goss asked, "What's in it for Queenslanders?" Honourable members opposite had a different approach. They asked, "What's in it for our cronies?" Then they asked, "What's in it for us?"

I look across the Chamber at those members who were once part of the Government, including those who were also Ministers. The stench of corruption that hangs over their heads will not disappear during the term of this Parliament or future Parliaments. Every day of this Parliament and future Parliaments will be dominated by the fact that the ills and problems of Queensland and Queenslanders Cabinet be laid fairly at the doorstep of those members. Although they understood the doctrine of power, each and every one of them abused it.

That is an example of the policies of the previous National/Liberal Governments, which benefited entrepreneurs and foreign investors and left nothing for the average Queenslanders. This Government has a tremendous task ahead of it. Not only must it conserve land for future generations but it must also restore those areas that have been desecrated. As the member for Redcliffe, I assure the House that I will be taking a very keen interest in the future of Moreton Island.

This week in Redcliffe I was pleased to visit a very exciting environmental project known as the wallum project, which is being developed on Education Department land in the heart of Redcliffe city. The word "wallum" is the Aboriginal name for a species of banksia that grows on Stradbroke Island and the surrounding coastal areas and now identifies similar vegetation.

In 1976, a small reserve was established in the grounds of the project centre by the centre management and the plant club. That area of half a hectare will be expanded to cover 3.5 hectares of school reserve land adjoining the centre. The project has converted an almost treeless cow paddock into an area containing simulated rainforest, wallum and sclerophyll vegetation, a windmill, a water bore, a large pond for water-bird nesting, a native plant propagation centre, a butterfly house, sensory trails that are suitable for wheelchairs and other features. That 4-hectare rainforest/savanna reserve in the middle of the city will be a unique asset for future generations. The project will assist educators

in schools and community groups and will be of immense value to the successful implementation of a balanced environmental education policy. The community spirit that that project encourages is evidenced by the number of local supporters who are coordinated by Mr Don Perrin.

I draw attention also to an environmental problem that is besetting all Queensland cities and towns, namely, garbage disposal. Redcliffe has a serious problem with the disposal of garbage. Over the years, in common with many other councils in Queensland, the Redcliffe City Council has consistently refused to look to the future in the disposal of household rubbish. It is no longer enough to look for holes in the ground. At present the Redcliffe City Council is eyeing off land in neighbouring shires on which to dump its rubbish. I agree with the residents of those shires that they should not have to put up with a dump on their doorsteps and the associated problems of traffic, etc. Last week it was reported that the Redcliffe City Council will be spending \$1m on finding another refuse disposal site. Surely if a sum of that magnitude had been spent on recycling in the past, today's problems would have been alleviated.

The manufacture of plastics, aluminium, glass and paper consumes large amounts of energy, and the production of those items creates gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect.

The *State of the Environment in Queensland 1990* states—

"Before 1989, efforts towards recycling in Queensland were mostly commercially driven. While the environmental benefits of resource conservation through refuse, recycling and waste minimisation have long been recognised, until early 1989 little, if any, effort had been made at the State Government level to promote and encourage these practices.

Such practices are in the interest of reducing the environmental impact of our use of natural resources locally and abroad.

Estimated levels of recycling for some materials in Queensland are: glass 23%—paper (excluding cardboard) 15%—aluminium 56%—and plastic bottles (polyethylene terephthalate or PET) less than 2%.

For some recycled materials, the recent upsurge in community interest in recycling has tended to destabilise what was previously a relatively stable though small market.

The result is that levels of recycling for most of the above materials are likely to be in a state of flux for the foreseeable future.

Programs initiated by the Division of Environment in mid 1989 are aimed at facilitating local authority implementation of community recycling schemes, minimisation of waste generation by industry and the community generally, and the promotion of waste exchange programs."

Labor's policy of assistance to local councils in that regard will be of great value to the future environment of Queensland.

I believe that Redcliffe city is perfectly situated to launch a pilot scheme for the recycling of domestic and industrial waste. I will be giving every support to all recycling initiatives that are proposed by the Redcliffe City Council.

I am proud to be a member of this House. When they were children, not many of my contemporaries would have had the opportunity that I had to become an Australian citizen. I was born in London in 1940 and lived in circumstances that I would not wish any child of this generation or those to come to endure. I remember well my early years as an inmate of a Dr Barnardo's orphanage at Windsor in England. From that institution one could almost see the great castle of the British Royal Family.

Those were the days of conservative Government in Britain when Winston Churchill and his fellow parliamentarians strutted the world stage while millions of Englishmen lived in poverty. In July 1945 Clement Attlee came to power. He did what Mr Hawke

has to do today and what Wayne Goss has to do for the next three years, namely, to correct the ills of conservative Government.

I remember many cold November months after leaving Dr Barnardo's when I sat on street corners in London with a stuffed Guy Fawkes doll begging for a penny for the Guy. That money went to provide the necessities of life. Many English expatriates of my age will remember those days. Begging activities of that type will never occur in Australia. However, they instil in me a concern for the welfare of my fellow human beings—whether they be aged, sick or at odds with today's society. That is an area in which a caring Government would have provided for the less fortunate in our society. It spells out my concern for the disadvantaged in my community.

I now turn my attention to welfare, which affects the poor, the sick, the young and the aged, and is the total care that the Government provides for the betterment of the community.

With its high ratio of aged people and pensioners, Redcliffe requires a great deal more nursing home beds and associated facilities. The number of beds presently available do little more than scratch the surface of the real needs of our community.

Shortly before the election in December, I became aware of a disastrous case in a caravan park in Redcliffe. An aged couple, with the husband unable to walk as a result of a debilitating illness, lived in substandard caravan accommodation. His poor wife had to use a bucket to care for his daily needs and take it to the toilet. It was the type of situation that should not be seen in this country or this State—but it happens. As a Government, we must work towards seeing that these conditions do not exist in the future.

I am concerned about the lack of public housing that the previous National Party Government neglected for many years. I am concerned especially in Redcliffe for senior citizens in caravan parks and the senior citizens who end up in pokey rooms that take the majority of their pensions. I am concerned also for young families who, because of the high cost of renting, find it hard to educate their children. I am particularly concerned that the quality of housing for which these people pay such a high price is not of a decent standard.

It gives me great pleasure to stand here today as a member of this Government and say to my constituents of Redcliffe that things are about to change. The policies of this Government are compassionate. They see the need for decent housing for all Queenslanders. It is the underprivileged who will reap the rewards of these policies.

Only today I received information from the Deputy Premier and Minister for Housing, the Honourable Tom Burns, of a considerable quantity of new Queensland Housing Commission accommodation to be built within the Redcliffe electorate and the adjacent electorate of Murrumba, which services the public housing needs of many of my constituents.

At present, 88 units of accommodation are under construction on the Redcliffe Peninsula and, dependent on ministerial approval, a further 68 units of accommodation will be built in 1990-91. Moreover, further projects in the Redcliffe area could come under consideration later in the financial year. That is most certainly a great leap forward in public housing.

I am concerned also for the welfare of single parents in our community. Too often we hear the cry, "It's their fault. They didn't have to get pregnant. They should have stayed with their husbands. Take their pensions and concessions away." Taking away their pensions achieves nothing. What is always forgotten is that it is the children who suffer if there is any loss of income. We have to care for those people and assist them in gaining a position that will enable them to care and provide for themselves. A dollar spent in the early days of their deprivation could mean thousands of dollars saved later in life.

Most single parents have a problem with child-care. This is especially so in Redcliffe, which has a high ratio of single parent families. Child-care traditionally has been the

province of community groups which have recognised needs and fought for Government grants. But those groups need Government support and the entire child-care system needs effective planning and administration to minimise waste and duplication and to direct resources where they are most needed. Good quality care also must be ensured.

Many women who can lift their family's income and ease the cost squeeze of a single income by going back to work have had to struggle with inadequate child-care arrangements. Child-care is thus also a strategy against poverty.

Many parents in the community—again, mostly women—have responsibilities beyond the care of children. These include caring for elderly relatives and children with disabilities. Parents themselves may be chronically ill or disabled. Only recently I was approached by a group of parents of disabled children seeking funds for a respite centre in Redcliffe. They called themselves the Breakaway Child Care Group. As part of the pork-barrelling and election approach of the previous Government, that group was told that it would receive a seeding grant. I will include the Liberal Party in that because on the eve of the election the member for Redcliffe, Mr White, told them that they would receive a seeding grant. What a cruel hoax that was. There was no seeding grant. It is an area of desperate need and I will again be pressing their case to the relevant Minister.

The health of Redcliffe residents, particularly the aged, is of great concern to me. I have moved around this community for many years and have evidenced its lack of facilities to care for our aged, who are unable to care for themselves, and the acute lack of staff and beds at the Redcliffe Hospital.

There is need for more acute in-patient accommodation, more accommodation for geriatric patients, expanded outpatient services and more therapy services. All this needs to be accompanied by increases in the medical, paramedical and ancillary services. Some seven years ago provisions were made to upgrade Redcliffe Hospital. It is now vital to the interests of the sick and the aged in this community that this project gets under way.

The acute adult wards of the hospital have been constantly full with occupancy rates between 90 per cent and 100 per cent. For more than two years, not one month has passed in which patients have not had to be referred on to Brisbane because of a lack of beds to accommodate them. The hospital is desperately in need of more beds and expanded services. As the member for Redcliffe, I will be seeking budgetary consideration for these expansions over the coming years.

I offer my support and commendations to the Blue Nursing Service and the St Vincent de Paul home nursing service for their sterling efforts in care for the aged and disabled in their homes. Without those services the health costs of any Government in providing hospital care would be prohibitive.

In December, I had the opportunity as a new member to accompany the Minister for Justice on a tour of Brisbane Women's Prison, the new institution at Borallon and Wacol Prison. I am concerned for my fellow human beings in Brisbane Women's Prison. It is the sort of place that makes one wonder where we have advanced in this area in the last 200 years. Whilst inspecting the newest prison, it confirmed my worst fears. We look as though we are going nowhere. I would hope that this compassionate, forward-thinking Government of ours will find more solutions to corrective services rather than just locking people behind bars. Community service orders need to be increased and more enlightened consideration needs to be given to prisons.

Redcliffe also has a law and order problem, the blame for which can be laid directly at the feet of the former National Party Government and the preceding Liberal/National Governments. The thin blue line of the police force is probably more evident in Redcliffe than in any other part of the State. It even sparked the Acting Inspector of Police in Redcliffe, Pat Doonan, to make a statement to the local press. He was quoted in the *Redcliffe Herald* as having said —

"The Australian average at the time of the Fitzgerald report was 424 residents to one police officer with the Queensland average 532 to one."

Redcliffe was noted as having a ratio of 1 201 residents to one police officer. Since then calculations have shown this ratio to have risen to 1 218 to 1.

While the previous National Party Government easily found \$20 million a year for political advertising campaigns, it maintained a deliberate policy of under-funding the State's police force. I regard that as a shocking indictment of the policies of members of the previous Government. It shows their total lack of regard for the safety of their fellow Queenslanders. It also indicates how they were quite happy to let corruption and all its vice-ridden acts to multiply in this great State of ours. It will never happen again.

This Government should make every effort to provide more resources and increase the police to population ratio to a satisfactory level to ensure that the public have adequate police protection. The promise of 1 200 extra police in our first term will at last make Redcliffe a safer place in which to live. People will again be able to walk the streets without fear for their personal safety.

I have appreciated the opportunity of informing this House of the nature of the Redcliffe electorate and some of its problems. I know that as a result of having a Goss Labor Government many of these problems will be solved in our first term of office.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the honourable member for South Coast, I remind members that this is the honourable member's maiden speech. I ask that he be given the courtesy of the House.

Mr QUINN (South Coast) (10.26 p.m.): With respect for the traditions of this democratic institution, I pledge, on behalf of the great majority of the people in the South Coast electorate, loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and her representatives at both the State and Federal levels.

At the outset, I wish to express my appreciation to the electors of South Coast for the confidence they placed in me on 2 December and assure them that I will work to the best of my ability to represent their views and aspirations for themselves and their families.

I extend special thanks to my family and friends, particularly my parents, who gave me unqualified support.

At no time will my allegiance to the Liberal Party prevent me from acting in the best interests of the people of South Coast and Queensland. Indeed, I chose to travel under the Liberal's banner because it recognises that the freedom of the individual to act as he believes best is a greater asset to a member of Parliament than fanatical party loyalty.

People are becoming cynical and disillusioned with politicians and with the major political parties, and with good cause. How many times have we seen promises made in the heat of an election campaign only to be rejected in the hard reality of Government as unsustainable or unworkable? How many times have Governments acted to appease narrow sectional interests of society at the expense of the vast majority of people? How many times have the interests of a political party taken precedence over the interests of Queensland as a whole?

The clever use of words, the convenient short-term answers to difficult questions, and the basic assumption that whatever the opposing side of politics said or did must be wrong, have compounded the original problems and fuelled public distrust and cynicism in our political system—so much so that an increasing number of people are disenchanted with politicians and the political process. They see the process as an irrelevant farce and, on the evidence, who can blame them?

The facts are clear. In the scramble for political points, the real issues have been forgotten or submerged under a mass of irrelevancies. Good ideas are not the unique property of any one political party and no one political philosophy can hope to provide all the solutions to the issues facing our society.

I come to this Chamber to represent one of the fastest growing electorates in Queensland, an area of such dynamic growth and potential that it is impossible for anyone living outside the area to fully comprehend the magnitude of that change or the forces that fuel it. Although the raw statistical data is impressive in itself, such data cannot adequately convey the level of activity on the ground or the problems caused by such dynamic growth.

In common with the worldwide phenomenon of people drifting towards areas that experience a narrow range in weather extremes, the so-called sunbelt regions, the Gold Coast has over the past 25 years experienced an average annual increase in population of 7 per cent. More than 90 per cent of new arrivals originate from other States in Australia. In practical terms, it is equivalent to approximately 19 000 people moving into the area each year—about the population of Maryborough. Should this expansion rate continue, the population will double within 10 years, giving the Gold Coast region a population of over 500 000 by the turn of the century. The south-east corner of Queensland from Brisbane south will be supporting in excess of 2 million people.

A suburban sprawl from the ocean to the ranges and from the border to Brisbane is not an attractive scenario to people who care about their life-style. Therefore sensitive forward planning at both the State and local levels will be necessary to ensure the provision of essential services and an optimum environment in which to work and reside.

Existing national parks such as Lamington and Natural Bridge must be maintained, protected and, if possible, expanded, and green belt areas and wildlife corridors should be established as breathing spaces between densely populated areas. With dynamic growth comes the inevitable problems of developing the necessary infrastructure to accommodate such a massive and increasing population base.

There are already enormous pressures on our inadequate major road system. Specifically, the upgrading of the Pacific Highway to a separated dual carriageway from Nerang to Bilinga is an urgent priority in this electorate as this road allows local and interstate passenger vehicles and transports to bypass the congested Gold Coast city road system. Upgrading Reedy Creek Road to similar status and the early completion of the Bermuda Street extension through to the Pacific Highway are necessary to ease traffic congestion in the mid-Gold Coast suburbs.

South Coast suffers acutely from the Federal Labor Government's poor record on road-funding. Last financial year the Commonwealth, according to its own Budget papers, collected in excess of \$6.3 billion in fuel taxes but returned only \$1.3 billion to the States. Of this, Queensland's share was a measly \$250m—the major reason for our chaotic and dangerous roads. This problem has been exacerbated by the spending priorities of the previous State Government, which, according to the last Main Roads annual report in 1988, severely underfunded major road construction and maintenance on the Gold Coast.

By way of comparison, the north coast received approximately \$33m for 395 kilometres of roads whilst the Gold Coast, with almost three times the population, was allocated approximately \$26m for 414 kilometres of roads.

A major concern of Gold Coast residents is the provision of adequate police coverage for the area. The Gold Coast—I beg to differ with the honourable member for Redcliffe—has the worst police manpower levels in this State. Nowhere is that more evident than in the Burleigh Heads area, where the current staffing level is no more than half the normal strength. It is hoped that, when the construction of the new police station at Burleigh is completed, it will be staffed on a 24-hour basis, as was promised by the previous Government.

The proposed Beenleigh to Robina railway will provide a necessary rapid transit system between Brisbane and the Gold Coast, and it is hoped that the passenger study for south-east Queensland presently being undertaken by the Queensland Department of Transport will recommend early commencement of the construction of that railway.

As the area round Robina and Mudgeeraba continues to expand, due consideration needs to be given to the early construction of the proposed Robina hospital and high school on land already earmarked for those purposes.

In May last year, Australia's first private university opened its doors to students, much to the chagrin of the many sceptics and critics who questioned its philosophy and need. Bond University is a welcome addition to our educational facilities. It has more than 600 students enrolled in five faculties and offers courses to doctorate level. Its adjacent research park will be a catalyst for other high technology industries to establish themselves on the Gold Coast—a much needed addition to a State economy heavily reliant for its prosperity on tourism and mining. The unfortunate publicity surrounding its co-founder will in no way affect the present or future operation of this institution, as the university and the trust that owns the buildings are separate entities. These issues are of concern at a local level. However, there are other Statewide matters to which I now direct my attention.

For Queensland to remain the Sunshine State will not depend so much on the stability of our current climate but on the quality of life and the standard of living that its residents enjoy. One of our major challenges as we progress into the next century must be the thoughtful and reasonable resolution of the conflict between the need to protect the environment and the desire for increased economic activity. In the past, economic activity has taken precedence over general consideration for the future of what has now become a degraded and permanently damaged environment. This fact is widely recognised. However, in an effort to compensate for past mistakes, the pendulum must not be allowed to swing too far in the opposite direction. Sustainable development within our environment must be our aim, but it must also be recognised that this will not be cost-free in terms of the environment and the economic benefits to this State.

In the future, some of the most challenging and vexing issues in Queensland will occur in education for, as society changes, those changes, no matter how small, will be reflected in our schools. The increasing demands on schools to include broad social issues in the school curriculum are often seen as being at the expense of traditional academic subjects. Nevertheless, most parents and teachers agree on the need for a sensible balance in the school curriculum, and I am heartened that the Department of Education is addressing this problem with its program to define the new basics. In an era in which a quality education is perceived as the cornerstone of financial success for the individual and economic success for the State and country, quality education in Queensland State schools is a declining prospect.

The slogan that no school can be better than its teachers is as apt today as it was 30 years ago. Yet, over the past 10 years, our State school system has experienced a steady drain of highly qualified and experienced teachers from the teaching profession. This has been compounded by the failure to attract equally talented students into the teaching service. The tertiary education score requirements for some teacher qualifying courses in tertiary institutions this year has dropped to the low 700s, a worrying prospect when these students are studying to teach in the highly demanding subjects of mathematics and science.

Salaries and career prospects in the service have simply failed to keep abreast of similarly qualified professionals in private industry. The "New and Improved Salary and Career Restructuring in Queensland State Schools" proposed by the previous Government last year addresses this problem, albeit somewhat late, but its implementation over an extended period in accordance with the Federal Labor Government's Accord will have a further debilitating effect upon the Queensland education system before any real sign of a reversal of the current situation appears.

Another issue of interest to Queensland parents is the recent decision by this incoming State Government to review the tertiary entrance score for Year 12 students, an undertaking given to the people of Queensland without any research to ascertain the validity of public criticism. For several years, Queensland has had the highest retention rate of Year 12 students of any Australian State but, as a result of Commonwealth

funding, has been offering the fewest number of tertiary places per head of population. In the subsequent squeeze and scramble for tertiary places, many students and parents expressed their frustration by criticising the TE scoring system. This is supported by the fact that, in 1987, 2 200 requests were made for TE score reassessments but, after the number of tertiary places increased substantially in the last two years, only 580 similar requests were received last year, a decrease of 75 per cent over a two-year period.

In 1987, recommendations to improve the TE system were made to the National Party Government but, unfortunately, it did not respond. The seeds of disenchantment with the TE score were sown by the Federal Labor Government, nurtured by the incompetent National Party State Government and harvested by a Labor Government embracing populist issues in its quest for power in Queensland.

Nevertheless, it must be recognised that the TE scoring system, although difficult to understand and based on narrow criteria, gives a fair and objective assessment for tertiary entrance, which is its stated purpose. It was never meant to be used as a guide to prospective employers but, had the 1987 recommendations been adopted, the student profile would have been broadened and as such been of more value. The current system recognises that students have a wide range of abilities and affords due recognition to those abilities by scaling students across the State. It is to be hoped that, when the revised system is implemented, it does not forsake the need for quality in the assessment of students in order to produce a system that is simple and acceptable.

South Coast is one of the most dynamic regions in Queensland, yet it is an electorate of families, having one of the highest home construction rates in the State. The issues that I have just mentioned are issues that concern families—quality education, safe and reliable transport systems, protection from crime, and the environment.

Finally, I recognise that, after today, I am fair game in this combative arena, although I believe that I have already had my baptism, thanks to the Honourable the Minister for Health and his misguided proposal to establish an STD, methadone and needle exchange clinic at Burleigh Heads. It is with those thoughts in mind that I take my place in this Parliament and look forward to making a contribution to the future of Queensland and, in particular, to the people of South Coast.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mackenroth, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—Leader of the House) (10.40 p.m.): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

Australian Economy

Mr HARPER (Auburn) (10.40 p.m.): At present, election euphoria in Australia is clouding recognition of the serious plight into which the Australian economy has deteriorated under seven years of Labor administration.

Mr De Lacy: I wouldn't want to let the other fellows have a go at it.

Mr HARPER: At least when the Minister took office, he had a sound economy and a balanced Budget. He has everything going for him. In the three months that the honourable member has been in office, all that he has done is work on the constructive basis that was laid down by his predecessors. However, that is not what is going to happen in the Federal sphere. There will be a change of Government at the end of this month.

The coalition Treasurer will be faced with an overseas deficit—a record never before achieved by any Treasurer. I suppose that Keating has the distinction of achieving the greatest overseas deficit of any Treasurer in Australia. That is the very difference that

will be faced by the coalition Government taking over from the Hawke Labor Government after the forthcoming election.

Proof of the deterioration in our economy was reflected in the ANZ's employment advertisement series, which showed that employment vacancies in the month of February experienced the ninth fall in 10 months. In February, employment vacancies fell by 9.3 per cent. Rightly, the bank says that the real question is, "How much worse will conditions get?" I suggest that the record of Hawke and Keating clearly indicates how much worse the conditions will become. A deterioration has occurred over a period of seven years from an overseas debt of a few million dollars to a multibillion-dollar overseas deficit.

Interest rates have escalated. We have seen the inflationary trends and everything else that Keating and Hawke have done. After seven years in office, there is no doubt that Labor will leave a legacy of record levels of overseas debt, high inflation and incredibly high interest rates—a total economy on the verge of a record recession. The problem is that election euphoria is clouding the issue. The people of Australia are not recognising that what the coalition Opposition is saying is factual—that Australia is on the brink of perhaps the greatest recession ever.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr HARPER: I can well remember, and the Honourable the Treasurer should remember, what happened in the past. He is interjecting; and he can interject from anywhere he likes to sit. I can remember good men walking the streets, carting clothes props over their shoulders, trying to make a bob so that they could get a bite to eat. That is the sort of thing that Australia is heading for again. The indicators show clearly a loss of both business and consumer confidence in the Labor Party's economic ability. The record is clear—it does not have the ability.

We are fortunate in Queensland that Labor in this State inherited sound job training and employment policies, which have cushioned our State from the disastrous effects of the Federal Government's policies, but only in the short term. Even here already Labor has set out to wreck those sound, stable policies that have given business and consumer confidence to the Queensland economy. Loss of that confidence became evident as the Goss Labor Government continued to bow to the whims of its trade union puppeteers. I ask: how much worse will conditions become?

The economists from the ANZ Bank ask: how much worse will conditions become? Proof of continued deterioration surely lies in the Hawke/Keating record. Only a change in Canberra can give us a glimmer of hope. When one looks at the policy speech of the National Party Leader in the Federal sphere, one will see that he says—

"We'll get areas like coastal shipping, transport, handling, storage and the waterfront on a far more cost-efficient basis. We'll have a glimmer of hope."

Time expired.

Blind Workers' Employment Program

Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (10.45 p.m.): I rise in this Chamber to advance a case in support of blind workers who, during the previous period of National Party Government in this State, have been pushed from pillar to post. Many honourable members would know that blind workers in this State have established a proud record. In 1883, the Blind Institute was formed as a charitable institution. From that period until recently, Queensland probably had the proudest record of any State or of any part of the world for catering in an advanced manner for blind workers.

In 1921, a very progressive Labor Government took over the institution at Dutton Park. From that time on, a succession of honourable deeds were undertaken so that blind workers in this State were given dignity and a part to play in society. Unfortunately,

in more recent times, those ideals have gone by the board. I wish to give honourable members an idea of what happened from 1921 onwards. In the 1930s, 93 blind workers were engaged at the workshops. During World War II, many of those workers went to work in factories. In the 1950s, the workshops were making articles such as millet brooms, mattresses, pillows, etc. Blind workers were undertaking work that even gaol inmates would not do. During the 1950s, blind workers called for better conditions, but they were repeatedly refused union representation.

The Labor Government that was in power in the mid-1950s upgraded standards and conditions for male and female workers to provide a salary that was within \$1.90 of the State basic wage and recognised all blind workers under the jurisdiction of the Industrial Commission. New trades were introduced into the workshops and the workshops were successful.

In 1957, there was a change of Government. Blind workers who did not live within a 25-mile radius of a railway line lost their entitlements. Consequently, many of these workers were unable to carry on their occupations. Throughout the period of office of the previous National Party Government, responsibility for blind workers was transferred from portfolio to portfolio. The National Party Government continued to downgrade blind workers. A Minister of that Government, Keith Hooper, tried to do away totally with the workshop concept. He tried to bring in a training and placement centre to curtail the National Party Government's commitment.

The worst aspect of the plight of blind workers occurred when the institute was taken over by TAFE. Honourable members who know the background of this matter would know that the Blind Institute no longer exists and that it is now part of the Yeronga TAFE College. Since that take-over occurred, the State Stores Board has curtailed much of the purchasing of products from the Blind Institute that occurred previously. Articles such as waste-paper baskets that were used in schools were no longer purchased. Surplus stock was sold at bargain-basement prices and appeared at flea markets, etc., at a low cost. Millet brooms that cost approximately \$6 to produce in the workshop were immediately sold off at \$4 each and appeared a week later in shops such as Woolworths at a price of \$18.

The fact of life is that these actions were an attempt to downgrade the working conditions of the blind. The previous National Party Government virtually said to blind people, "You may as well go home and twiddle your thumbs because we don't want you. We do not want you to work." The denial of occupations to blind workers who had led a productive life is an indictment of Queensland's system.

I call on the present Labor Government to redress this matter because I believe that the actions I have outlined are an indictment of the system introduced by the former National Party Government. The present position of blind workers fits neither within Labor Party policy nor Labor Party philosophy. An urgent review must be undertaken of the system that has forced blind workers to become unproductive and has virtually reduced new workers to the status of students who will not be paid at the appropriate rate for the productive work they perform.

The National Party Government engaged in a clandestine attempt to downgrade blind workers. Such action does not fit within the framework of Labor Party philosophy. I have the greatest faith in the current Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, Nev Warburton, who I believe will right some of the wrongs that have been perpetrated by the TAFE College at Yeronga. I know that currently blind workers are very unhappy with the principal of the college, Mr Brian Hutchins.

Willows Paceway Trust

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (10.50 p.m.): During the last week, this House has had revealed to it one of the most vindictive acts seen in Queensland sporting circles for many years. Although one would expect a new Government to seek to put its stamp on many areas of administration, most people would similarly expect that changes would

be made in an orderly and consultative manner to achieve the Government's objectives with minimal disruption to the confidence and support of organisations concerned. That has not been the case with the manner in which people at the head of harness racing in Queensland have been treated, in particular, the members of the Willows Paceway Trust and the Willows Harness Racing Club. I must make the point that I have never been to a Willows meeting and I have no interest in trotting; but throughout this State many thousands of people enjoy the sport and are supported by the tremendous voluntary input of people who are prominent in community life, through their involvement in committees, as trustees, as sponsors and as community-minded people.

It is under those headings that the former trustees of the Willows Paceway Trust are known to me. I am appalled by the manner of their demise. I am sickened by the manner in which the Minister, under privilege, publicly denigrated them. I am alarmed at the very negative signal this display of arrogance is sending to the racing industry throughout this State—an industry that plays a major part in the enjoyment of so many people, one that contributes significantly to the economic well-being of Queensland.

The extreme accusations relating to the operation of harness racing in north Queensland that were made under privilege by the Racing Minister in the House last Thursday must be cause for considerable concern to the Premier, given his pledge to the people of this State to maintain open, honest and accountable government. It is therefore pertinent to ask the Premier the following questions: does he accept that the Minister acted properly in announcing publicly, by way of media release, the dismissal of the members of the Willows Paceway Trust when in fact the Racing Venues Development Act is clear in intent in declaring that the power to dismiss is vested in the Governor in Council? I table a letter from the solicitor for the trustees to Mr Gibbs and his reply, wherein the Minister states—

"I am well aware of the fact that the power to dismiss the Trustees is vested in the Governor in Council."

Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.

Mr STONEMAN: If the Premier unreservedly supports the Racing Minister's actions in sacking the trustees without consultation, either before or since the event, and his use of the privilege of Parliament to undermine the good names of these people—people who are all well-known and respected in northern Queensland—without having answered any requests for clarification at any stage, one would have to assume that open government, honesty, etc., have flown the coop.

Surely the Premier must also be asked: does he not agree that the only decent action to now take is, firstly, to sack Mr Gibbs in the same manner in which he dealt with people with a track record far in excess of anything he has exhibited; or, secondly, to stand Mr Gibbs aside while the now common process of undertaking a full, open and honest inquiry is put in place so that confidence can be restored to the racing industry in this State and the good names of those people in Townsville acknowledged?

While the Premier considers the position, the Minister should clarify the following matters so that the racing industry as a whole is able to interpret the bona fides of the Government's intentions. Firstly, since commencement, the trading losses—not book losses—of the Willows Paceway have in fact been \$109,518, a figure Mr Gibbs would have had explained had he undertaken even token consultation. How does he arrive at losses in excess of \$2m?

I table a draft of the actual figures in unaudited and basic form. At the same time, I table a summary of club income and expenditure for Queensland for the 12 months to 30 June 1989.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Mr STONEMAN: Secondly, the Minister claimed that the Auditor-General's report left no doubt in his mind that illicit dealings had been taking place between the trustees and the harness racing club. Will he detail where that appears in the Auditor-General's

report? At the same time, I challenge the Minister to detail the outstanding discrepancy revealed in the operation of the canteen and restaurant.

Thirdly, further to his claim of race-fixing and in the light of the fact that race programs are submitted two months in advance to Brisbane and approved by the chief steward, will he please explain to the House how that fixing could possibly have been done?

If he is referring to the running of a two-year-old event on 12 August 1989, I table a letter to Mr K. Seymour of Brisbane, plus program and receipts, relating to the particular race.

Whereupon the honourable member laid the documents on the table.

Mr STONEMAN: At the same time, is Mr Gibbs prepared to detail and restate his claim that fields have improved by in excess of 50 per cent over the past two Saturdays? It is worthy of comment that the field for this Saturday's racing is 31 horses. So the claim of 50 per cent is looking very sick.

Upgrading of Road to Lake Julius

Mr McGRADY (Mount Isa) (10.55 p.m.): Earlier this evening, I had the opportunity to listen to one of the better speeches that I have heard from the Opposition benches since I have been in this place. It was from the member for Warwick. In his speech, he stated that nobody from the Government benches had mentioned the cattle industry. I refer the honourable member to my maiden speech in which I outlined the great importance of the cattle industry to my electorate and to the State of Queensland.

In my maiden speech, I referred to the many disadvantages which the people who live in the remote parts of this State suffer. In a later speech, the member for Cook, Mr Bredhauer, supported those comments.

In 1973, the Mount Isa City Council joined with the State and Federal Governments and Mount Isa Mines Limited to construct a dam to supply water to the city of Mount Isa. That dam was named Lake Julius. At that time, I had the pleasure of being one of the members of the board concerned with its construction. When the dam was completed, my colleagues and I were successful in having the administration buildings retained to be used as a recreation centre. The centre was taken over by the Queensland Recreation Council and provided an excellent recreation area for the people not only of Mount Isa but also of north-west Queensland. Despite the repeated appeals of my council, the Cloncurry Shire Council and many other organisations, the previous Government refused to spend any money on improving or maintaining the road to that lake and recreation area.

In recent times, many schoolchildren and tourists have been using the facility. However, recently the local coach company in Mount Isa has refused to take schoolchildren or other people to the recreation centre.

Sitting in this Chamber, one sees the hundreds of students from schools around the Brisbane area coming to Parliament House on excursions. There are many other facilities in this capital city which young children can attend and observe with interest. Those facilities are not made available to the people who live in the remote parts of the State.

Recently, the Mount Isa City Council, the Cloncurry Shire Council and the Department of Main Roads agreed to spend approximately \$70,000 a year to attempt to upgrade that road. I might add that the road is within the Cloncurry Shire Council boundary. However, my appeal tonight is that the new Government give serious consideration to spending money to provide access to that excellent facility in north-west Queensland. At present, the only people who can use the road are those who have four-wheel drives. Even those vehicles become bogged on numerous occasions.

In conclusion, I reiterate my appeal to the Minister for Transport and also the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing to investigate the possibility of attempting to

provide additional funds to upgrade that road so that the people of north-west Queensland can use that facility, which was totally and utterly neglected by the previous administration.

Stubbins Report on Townsville Psychiatric Unit

Mrs McCAULEY (Callide) (11 p.m.): The Stubbins report, which was tabled in Parliament last Thursday, is comprehensive and has obviously been the best possible way to handle a difficult and sensitive issue. It is interesting to note that, when he was the head of the Ward 10B action group, Mr McElligott's attitude was to call constantly for a public inquiry. Now, as Minister, he has changed his tune. The view is obviously different from the driver's seat. He obviously agrees that the National Party was correct in its handling of the matter. However, the report raises some interesting points.

Given that Mr Stubbins says that at least by the year 1982 grave problems were arising, it is worth tracing the involvement of the Health Department in the whole matter. On page 4 of his report Mr Stubbins says—

"Dr Urquhart, Director of Psychiatric Services, was aware of the model being used."

That was in 1975, and the model refers to the method of treatment on which the unit was based. On page 11, Mr Stubbins mentions that Dr Tucker, upon his appointment as Director of Psychiatric Services in 1985, spoke to some members of the board and informed them of problems associated with the unit. Mr Stubbins makes the following comment—

"I am not aware of any actions which followed."

It is interesting to note that the board itself denies any communication from Dr Tucker on this matter at all. In fact, the only communication that the board had from Dr Tucker was through the medical superintendent of the hospital when Dr Tucker recommended that Dr Lindsay, the doctor in charge of Ward 10B, continue to be employed on a consultancy basis after he turned 65. Of course, the board agreed to that.

Mr Stubbins sheets home to Dr Lindsay most of the blame for the problems in Ward 10B.

On page 13 Mr Stubbins mentions that Dr Breinl, one of the official visitors to Ward 10B, furnished to the Director of Psychiatric Services a report dated 12 November 1986. Mr Stubbins says—

"This report appears reasonably comprehensive and in the last paragraph of that report, Dr Breinl has requested advice from the Director as to what matters should be reported to him, and whether the visit, inspection and report should concern itself solely with findings on the administrative procedures, or whether it should embody such comments as he had made relating to the patients and the interviews he had with them."

Mr Stubbins then says—

"I have not been able to determine the response, if any, of the Director of Psychiatric Services."

It was not until November 1987 that the Health Department offered assistance to examine and resolve the problems. And that was five months after Dr Schioldann-Nielsen had been appointed and matters rapidly came to a head.

Now, in 1990, the Townsville Hospitals Board has been dismissed and the chairman of the board, Mr Marshall Davies, has resigned.

Given that the problems of Ward 10B have been attributed by Mr Stubbins solely to the use of the therapeutic community method of treatment of mental disorders, and given that a hospitals board has no jurisdiction over medical matters as such, why did not the Health Department personnel, who were trained in such matters, take action? It has been stated that they were aware of the role model being used. I cannot believe

that they were not also aware of the problems which arose between 1975 and 1987, when they belatedly took action.

One cannot help but wonder whether the Townsville Hospitals Board has been made a scapegoat for a bureaucracy firmly entrenched and seeking to protect its own interests. In fact, Mr McElligott conceded on ABC radio that the hospitals board was exonerated by the Stubbins report, but the members of that board were still sacked. Such an action was simply a cosmetic sop to a vocal group protesting, quite rightly, about Ward 10B.

Mr McElligott is the new broom. He has an opportunity to sweep clean. The challenge rests with him.

Federal Liberal Party Policies

Mr ARDILL (Salisbury) (11.04 p.m.): No-one who knows me would accuse me of being an uncritical follower of decisions made at a higher level. I have my criticisms of the Federal Government, and I have not hesitated to make them where they would do the most good. However, I am terrified of the alternative. What could happen to Australia, to Queensland and to Brisbane under a Peacock Government must bring on a case of terminal trepidation.

Under Howard, the Liberals provided a visible and definite alternative that those with the political views and philosophies on this side of the Chamber could argue against and hate. What Peacock puts forward is a dangerous conglomeration of lies, half-truths, incorrect popular fallacies, bad jokes and altogether a recipe for personal and national disaster.

Nothing has been suggested that will reduce the tendency of Australians to spend more than they earn, which is the aim of the advertising industry and the finance industry, which support Peacock. Our opponents make much of Australia's mounting overseas debt. They totally ignore the fact that it is not Hawke's debt, nor Keating's debt; it is not even the Federal Government's debt. It is basically the private-enterprise debt of the financiers and financial institutions.

In truth, 34 per cent of our foreign debt has been incurred by Bond, Elliott, Skase and others of their ilk who have seen fit to invest overseas. Over one-third of the debt is incurred in that way; another third is other private debt; and 36 per cent is the responsibility of State Governments and public utilities such as the airlines and Telecom. Peacock would flog these off as a once-only windfall.

The only way that Peacock would reduce public spending would be by the tried and failed Liberal method of putting people out of work—creating unemployment—as it has done at the beginning of each of the last three decades. Labor has been the party with the guts to try restructuring and to increase productivity.

Peacock talks about reducing our wages structure down to the level of our trading partners. Labor, on the other hand, acts to increase productivity. I hear members of the Opposition bleating in this House about the Peacock message that housing finance is too expensive and is beyond the means of the people. There is one way to put it even further out of the reach of citizens and that is to put them out of work, as the Liberals have done before. It was left to Labor Governments to get the population working again. Sooner or later the Liberals must realise that when there is a pool of disadvantaged people, the more enterprising will turn to crime to improve their lot. Is that what the people want?

We now see the Peacock band wagon offering bribes to the greenie while ignoring the needy. There is no group more in need of help than the mature, long-term unemployed. Peacock would eliminate the safety net that he calls the dole. The Liberal Party is happy to bribe the ordinary members of the public by suggesting additional Government spending while talking about reducing Government spending.

The Liberal Party is suggesting that non-critical spending on roads will reduce road accidents, which is far from the truth. Labor's Transport Minister, Bob Brown, is on the right track by providing funds to reduce those black spots that cause road accidents. During the late 1970s the Labor Brisbane City Council did that and reduced serious accidents by 50 per cent.

There is no doubt that more funds should be spent on local and secondary roads. However, nothing will totally eliminate those traffic accidents that are caused by drivers. More lanes attract more traffic and more traffic creates more unavoidable accidents. If more funds are spent on driver education and there is a reduction in drivers' hours on the roads, the number of accidents will be reduced. Lives will be saved if more funds that are spent on upgrading public transport.

If Labor is replaced by Peacock after the Federal election, Australia has a lot to lose, particularly in relation to the elimination of the environmental initiatives of Hawke and Richardson. The seven years of hard Labor that the Liberal Party talks about have saved Australia from the inertia of the Liberal Party. Those seven years will be seen as the fat years.

Time expired.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.10 p.m.