TUESDAY, 16 JUNE 1992

Under the provisions of the motion for special adjournment agreed to by the House on 21 May, the House met at 10 a.m.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr Speaker—

Traffic Amendment Bill;

Criminal Justice Amendment Bill (No. 2);

Liquor Bill;

Nature Conservation Bill;

Electoral Bill;

Reprints Bill;

Legislative Standards Bill;

Criminal Law (Escaped Prisoners) Amendment Bill;

Disability Services Bill;

Statutory Instruments Bill;

Offence Notices Legislation Amendment Bill.

PRIVILEGE

Breach of Privilege by Member for Landsborough

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I again draw the attention of the House to the statements made by the member for Landsborough outside the House on Thursday, 21 May. The member for Landsborough said—

> "Question time today in this House and in fact this week have been a shambles. The Speaker has lost control of the House. It is Rafferty's Rules in there. That is the rule that actually does run the House . . ."

It is a clear breach of privilege—a contempt—to attack the office of Speaker in such a way. The Clerk of the Queensland Parliament wrote to Sir Clifford Boulton, the Clerk of the House of Commons, seeking advice on the comments by the member for Landsborough. Sir Clifford's advice was that there was no doubt about the power of the Commons to treat reflections on the competence and impartiality of the Speaker as contempt. Furthermore, Sir Clifford also stated—

> "A Speaker here would find it extremely difficult to ignore criticism of the kind you describe made by a member of the House."

Although I said in the House on Thursday, 21 May, that the statements by the member for Landsborough were a clear breach of privilege—a contempt—the member again reflected on the Speaker in a letter to the *Courier-Mail* published on Friday, 29 May, which states—

> "Attempts to debate issues lead to members being named by the Speaker and being thrown out."

I note that I did receive a request from the member for Landsborough to make a personal explanation immediately after prayers. I am now giving the member for Landsborough the opportunity to acknowledge both her breaches of privilege, withdraw her remarks and apologise to the House.

Mrs SHELDON: Mr Speaker, I seek your indulgence to make a personal explanation to the House.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The proper time to make a personal explanation is when I ask, "Is there any other business?" The honourable member is entitled to seek the leave of the House at that time, and that time only. Under the procedures of this House, I am now giving her the opportunity, as I said, to acknowledge both her breaches of privilege, withdraw her remarks and apologise to the House.

Mrs SHELDON: Mr Speaker, you must agree that if you did allow me to make my personal explanation at the ordinary time, it would then be too late. I need to make that personal explanation now.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If it is relevant to what I am saying, I will allow the member for Landsborough some latitude.

Mrs SHELDON: You will allow me to make my personal explanation, Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have ruled that it is not proper to make a personal explanation now. I am saying that if the honourable member wants to take the opportunity that I have now given her to acknowledge her breaches of privilege, withdraw her remarks and apologise to the House, then I will give her some leeway in that regard.

Mrs SHELDON (Landsborough—Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.06 a.m.): *Hansard* of 21 May 1992 records that at 11.30 p.m. Mr Speaker read to this House part of a transcript of comments made by me at a media conference at 11.30 that morning, wherein I commented on the conduct of this House during question time. At the media conference I did not seek to personally offend you, Mr Speaker, or to show disrespect for the office of Speaker. If that was the case, I believe that an appropriate response from me would be to withdraw such remarks. Mr Speaker reported to the House that my comments were "a clear breach of privilege—a contempt of the Parliament". Mr Speaker also foreshadowed that I would be named and suspended from the service of the House and that he had taken steps to have me located and informed——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I must clarify that point. I said that it is usual in those circumstances for members to be suspended. I did not foreshadow any such suspension then. In the interests of clarity, I suggest that I should make that comment now.

Mrs SHELDON: —to appear in the House to acknowledge my breach of privilege, withdraw my remarks and apologise to the House. I wish to respond appropriately to the serious allegations raised, namely, breach of privilege and contempt of Parliament. In order to do so, I seek rulings from you, Mr Speaker, on the application of Standing Orders and the provisions of the Constitution Act in regard to certain matters. Under which provisions of Standing Orders were these charges made? On my information, under Standing Orders 123A and 124, the power of the Speaker to name a member is relevant only to words spoken and offences occurring in the House and not otherwise. Under which provisions of Standing Orders or the Constitution Act of 1867 did Mr Speaker dispatch various people to have me appear in the House late on the evening of 21 May to answer charges as stated? Is, in fact, Mr Speaker empowered to issue such a summons for a member to attend the House by section 43 of the Constitution Act, or is only the Parliament so empowered by resolution of the House? In his remarks from the chair in the late hours of 21 May and early hours of 22 May, Mr Speaker made no reference to the role of the Privileges Committee of this House. Instead, the Chair passed judgment on my alleged breach of privilege in my absence at 11.30 p.m., despite my having been present in the House for most of the day and night. Is there any provision in Standing Orders or the Constitution Act which validates such actions by the Chair without recourse to the Privileges Committee?

Mr Speaker, I ask for your ruling on these matters for the benefit of me and every other member of this House. Such rulings will greatly assist me in framing an appropriate response to this House on the events of 21 May and avoid such incidents in the future. If, after so ruling on Standing Orders and sections of the Constitution Act pertaining to

events in this House on 21 and 22 May, you, Mr Speaker, are of the opinion that my words at the media conference are in fact a breach of privilege, I will withdraw such words.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Lingard interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Fassifern!

Mr Lingard interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The letter from the Clerk of the House of Commons stated—and I will quote that again—that there is no doubt about the power of the Commons to treat reflections on the competence and impartiality of the Speaker as contempt. I advise the member for Landsborough that Standing Orders state quite clearly that when matters are not clear under our Standing Orders, the practice in the House of Commons must be followed, and that is the practice that is being followed. I suggest that the member for Landsborough should understand that I am asking her to withdraw comments such as, "The Speaker has lost control of the House", which is obviously a reflection on my competence; and, secondly, "It is Rafferty's Rules in there. That is the rule that actually does run the House", which is certainly a reflection on the impartiality of the Speaker in this chair; and, thirdly, the letter she wrote to the *Courier-Mail* stating that, "Attempts to debate issues lead to members being named by the Speaker and being thrown out." I find that outrageous. In relation to all those matters, I ask her to withdraw. If she does not, I can warn her under Standing Order 124 for disregarding the authority of the Chair and, if she continues, I will name her under Standing Order 124. The procedure is very clear. It is up to the member for Landsborough now to consider her options.

Mrs SHELDON: I withdraw on your direction, Mr Speaker, and let the *Hansard* record be my judge.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have also asked the member to apologise to the House, otherwise I will name her.

Mrs SHELDON: Mr Speaker, I have withdrawn my comments that you found offensive. I do not see any reason for me to apologise.

NAMING OF MEMBER

Mr SPEAKER: Having warned the member for Landsborough under Standing Order 124 for disregarding the authority of the Chair, I have no option. I now name the member for Landsborough.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Hon. P. J. BRADDY (Rockhampton—Leader of the House) (10.10 a.m.): I move—

> "That the member for Landsborough be suspended from the service of the House for one day."

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 49		NOES, 35	
Ardill	McElligott	Beanland	Slack
Beattie	McGrady	Booth	Springborg
Bird	Milliner	Borbidge	Stephan
Braddy	Nunn	Connor	Stoneman
Bredhauer	Palaszczuk	Coomber	Turner
Briskey	Pearce	Cooper	Veivers
Burns	Power	Dunworth	Watson
Campbell	Robson	Elliott	
Casey	Schwarten	FitzGerald	
Clark	Smith	Gilmore	
Comben	Smyth	Goss J. N.	
Davies	Spence	Gunn	
De Lacy	Sullivan J. H.	Harper	
Dollin	Sullivan T. B.	Hobbs	
Eaton	Szczerbanik	Horan	
Edmond	Vaughan	Johnson	
Elder	Warburton	Katter	
Fenlon	Warner	Lester	
Foley	Welford	Lingard	
Gibbs	Wells	Littleproud	
Goss W. K.	Woodgate	McCauley	
Hamill		Perrett	
Hayward		Randell	
Hollis	*Tellers:*	Rowell	*Tellers:*
Livingstone	Prest	Santoro	Neal
Mackenroth	Pitt	Sheldon	Quinn

Resolved in the affirmative.

Whereupon the honourable member for Landsborough withdrew from the Chamber.

COMMITTEE OF SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

Resignation of Mr J. N. Goss

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, I have to report that a vacancy exists in the Committee of Subordinate Legislation consequent upon the resignation of Mr John Nelson Goss, MLA, from that committee.

Appointment of Mr R. T. Connor

Hon. P. J. BRADDY (Rockhampton—Leader of the House) (10.18 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

> "That Mr Raymond Thomas Connor, MLA, be appointed to the Committee of Subordinate Legislation to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr John Nelson Goss."

Motion agreed to.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, with the enactment of the recent Statutory Instruments Bill, the procedures for the tabling of subordinate legislation will be altered in accordance with the following arrangements—

(1) On each sitting day, a schedule of subordinate legislation to be presented will be circulated to all members in the Chamber.

(2) After petitions, the Clerk will table the documents as listed on the circulated schedule.

(3) Subordinate legislation presented will continue to be recorded in *Hansard* and the *Votes and Proceedings*.

(4) Copies of statutory instruments will be available from the Bills and Papers Office.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Abortion Law

From **Mr Gibbs** (1 401 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland remove from the Queensland Criminal Code certain sections which make abortion unlawful.

Abortion Law

From **Mr McLean** (99 signatories) praying that action be taken to ensure that the law prohibiting abortion on request be enforced.

A similar petition was received from **Mr Livingstone** (62 signatories).

Community Legal Centres

From **Mr Comben** (30 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will continue to fund community legal centres.

Similar petitions were received from **Mrs Woodgate** (9 signatories), **Mr Mackenroth** (12 signatories), **Mr Santoro** (14 signatories), **Mr Foley** (16 signatories) and **Mrs Edmond** (33 signatories)

Petitions received.

SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION, PAPERS AND REPORTS

In accordance with the schedule circulated by the Clerk to members in the Chamber, the following documents were tabled—

Auctioneers and Agents Act—

- Auctioneers and Agents Committee (Appointment of Members) Order 1992
- Auctioneers and Agents (Exemption of Northern Rentals Pty Ltd) Order 1992

City of Brisbane Market Act—

- Brisbane Market Trust Inscribed Stock Amendment Regulation (No.1) 1992, No. 105

Fisheries Act—

- Myora Fish Habitat Reserve (Extension) Order 1992

Fishing Industry Organization and Marketing Act—

- Fishing Industry (Closed Waters-Fish or Marine Products) Amendment Order (No.1) 1992, No.88
- Fishing Industry (Use of Nets) Amendment Order (No.1) 1992, No.90

Harbours Act—

- Harbour of Hay Point Amendment By-law (No.1) 1992, No.95

. Abbot Point Harbour Amendment By-law (No.2) 1992, No.96

. Harbours Corporation of Queensland (Divesting of Land) Order (No.2) 1992

Harbours Act and Port of Brisbane Authority Act—

. Port of Brisbane Sand and Gravel By-laws 1992

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act—

. Peanut Marketing Board (Transfer of Assets and Liabilities) Order 1992

. Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing (Constitution of Queensland Cane Growers' Council) Amendment (No.1) Order 1992, No.89

Queensland Marine Act—

. Marine (Crewing) Amendment Regulation (No.2) 1992, No.103

River Improvement Trust Act and Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act—

. Herbert River Improvement Trust (Loan Borrowing) Order (No.3) 1992

Sugar Industry Act—

. Sugar Industry (Assignment Grant) Amendment Guideline (No.1) 1992, No.112

. Sugar Industry (Authorised Transaction Orders) Amendment Guideline (No.1) 1992, No.123

. Sugar Industry Amendment Regulation (No.2) 1992, No.117

The Supreme Court Act—

. Supreme Court Arrangements (Amendment) Order (No.2) 1992

Transport Infrastructure (Roads) Act—

Notifications:-

. Access to proposed deviation of the Kennedy Highway (Cairns - Mareeba) be limited.

. Access to land Pacific Highway (Brisbane - Helensvale) be limited.

. Access to land Captain Cook Highway (Cairns - Mossman) be limited.

. Access to land Bruce Highway (Brisbane - Gympie) be limited.

Water Resources Act—

. North Burdekin Water Board (Assessment on Sugar Cane) Order [No.1] 1992

. North Burdekin Water Board (Assessment on Sugar Cane) Amendment Order 1992

. Outstanding Water Charges (Reduction of Interest Rate) Order 1992

. South Burdekin Water Board (Assessment on Sugar Cane) Order [No. 1] 1992

. Water Resources (Rates and Charges) Amendment Regulation (No.1) 1992, No.75

Workplace Health and Safety Act—

. Workplace Health and Safety Amendment Regulation (No.1) 1992, No.106.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Death of Mr F. E. Roberts

Hon. W. K. GOSS (Logan—Premier, Minister for Economic and Trade Development and Minister for the Arts) (10.21 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Frank Edward Roberts, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.

2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the widow and family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the members of the Parliament of Queensland in the loss they have sustained."

Frank Roberts was born in Melbourne on 28 February 1913. With his family, he moved to Queensland in 1932 and worked in such varied occupations as a sewerage miner, builder's labourer and public servant. In 1941, he graduated from the University of Queensland with a Bachelor of Arts, and in 1943 gained his law degree and was admitted as a barrister. In 1947, Mr Roberts won the State seat of Nundah. In 1949, he began practice as a solicitor. In the 1952 Brisbane City Council elections, Mr Roberts was elected as the Australian Labor Party's candidate to the office of Lord Mayor, defeating the Citizens Municipal Organisation's Sir John Chandler, who had held the position of Lord Mayor for a record term of 12 years.

Mr Roberts had made his first political venture in 1943, on that occasion also standing against the man he defeated for the position of Lord Mayor. At that attempt, Alderman Chandler defeated him in the State seat of Hamilton. Sixteen years prior to being elected Lord Mayor, Mr Roberts had been a relief worker with the Brisbane City Council. Relief work was intermittent work given to unemployed people during and after the Depression. It was while on relief work that Frank Roberts began a law course at the Queensland University, eventually taking his Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Law degrees. It is reported that he was once excluded from a university lecture because he was coatless. Inadequate dressing facilities on his relief work job had prevented him making a full change before rushing from the job to early evening lectures.

As Lord Mayor, Mr Roberts inherited an enormous debt in both the City Fund and the Loan Fund. In three short years, he transformed the City Fund into credit and drastically reduced the Loan Fund debt amount. Mr Roberts was Lord Mayor of Brisbane from 1952 to 1955. His membership of this House encompassed that period, extending from 1947 to 1956. In 1953, he resigned from the Labor Party in protest against a directive opposing salary increases for aldermen of the Brisbane City Council. For almost 20 months, Brisbane was led by an Independent Lord Mayor in a Labor-controlled council. In 1955, Mr Roberts was defeated as Lord Mayor, standing as an Independent candidate. The new Lord Mayor was the CMO's Reg Groom.

In 1956, Mr Roberts unsuccessfully contested South Brisbane as an Independent Labor candidate, standing against Vince Gair, who was Premier at the time. In 1958, Mr Roberts was re-admitted to the Labor Party. He was unsuccessful in a further bid to re-enter State politics when he stood for the State seat of Nundah in 1963. That was almost 30 years ago. I last spoke with Frank Roberts earlier this year at a function in the Nundah area. Long after his departure from public office, Mr Roberts was still actively involved in the community, demonstrating a genuine commitment to his community. On behalf of the Queensland Government, I extend sincere condolences to the family of the late Frank Roberts.

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (10.25 a.m.): It is with great pride that I second the motion. The Roberts family did me the honour of asking me to read the eulogy at Frank's funeral a few days ago. I would like to read what I said at that time. Frank was a mate of mine, and a very close mate. I admired him because of what he was. He was a battler who fought against all sorts of odds and never gave in. He was a good mixer and a real gentleman. He was a gentle man in himself. Even though he had that great strength of character, he never once became rough in the way he handled people. If someone was wrong, he called him in, sat him down and talked to him quietly. He was my lawyer in the days when I had to

face all of the writs issued against me. Many a time he called me in, sat me down and talked to me quietly.

At the Uniting Church, I said—

"Frank Edward Roberts was born in Melbourne, the eldest of six children.

His father was a farmer in Victoria while his mother was from Toowoomba.

As the Great Depression gripped Australia bringing with it the worst unemployment this nation had experienced the Roberts family moved to Brisbane settling in Ashgrove.

Like so many young Australians during those very cruel years Frank Roberts worked in any job that was available, most of them unskilled, short term and poorly paid.

One of his old election pamphlets to the voters of Nundah when he stood for Labor in the 1963 State election best summarises his job history.

1930-32 farm labourer

1932-34 relief worker

1934 sewerage miner

1935-43 public servant

1943-49 barrister-at-law

1949 solicitor

While working on relief, Frank Roberts began his studies at the University of Queensland wanting to become a doctor but turning to law since the university did not then have a medical school.

He graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in 1941 and Bachelor of Laws in 1943, being admitted the same year as a barrister in Queensland.

As first a barrister and then, from 1949 until virtually up to his passing, as a solicitor he was an outstanding practitioner within his profession.

His firm (Duell, Roberts and Kane) became an institution within Brisbane legal circles with one of the partners (the late Myles Kane), like Frank, also active in Labor politics.

Frank was a loving family man and a successful lawyer but it was his role in politics, during the stormy years of Labor before and after the 1957 split, that will be recorded by historians.

He was elected as ALP member for the State seat of Nundah in 1947 after an attempt four years earlier in the Hamilton by-election.

Frank represented the Nundah electorate for nine years."

He did that as a Labor man and as an Independent. I continued—

"It was in 1952 that he caused one of the greatest upsets in postwar Queensland politics by defeating Sir John Chandler for the Lord Mayoralty of Brisbane.

Chandler had held the Lord Mayoralty since 1940 and was considered unbeatable—so unbeatable, in fact, that the Labor Party was unable to secure a candidate against him until Frank accepted endorsement. Frank correctly tipped that Chandler was not invincible.

For Frank the victory must have been personally satisfying making him the elected leader of a city council that, 20 years before, employed him on relief during the Depression.

It must have been even more satisfying for him to defeat Chandler who had beaten him during his first run for office in Hamilton.

> Frank Roberts had become both member for Nundah in State Parliament and Lord Mayor of Australia's largest municipality—the City of Brisbane.
>
> He was a hero as well known in Brisbane"—

in those days—

> "as the State Premier. But trouble was on the horizon.
>
> In August 1953 he resigned from the ALP, which he had served for 21 years, over an order by the party's Queensland Central Executive to rescind a pay rise of 380 pounds ($760) for city council aldermen.
>
> At a more deep seated level, Frank's resignation was a symptom of the split that was to develop in the ALP.
>
> Describing the QCE's direction as 'interference with the elected council', Frank moved the motion to reduce aldermanic salaries by just under $15 a week and then resigned from the party."

The shame of it all was that, within a week, the QCE subsequently approved the aldermen's pay rise. I said further—

> "Frank continued to serve as independent member for Nundah and independent Lord Mayor—prompting the *Courier-Mail* newspaper to describe him as 'the leader without a team'.
>
> In 1955, as an independent, he lost the Lord Mayoralty although polling exceptionally well. In fact, he and the Labor candidate outpolled the CMO winner.
>
> In 1956, he vacated Nundah preferring instead to stand as an Independent against the Premier, Vince Gair."

The real mark of a man in this place is if he leaves his seat because of the principles he believes in and stands against someone who is entrenched very safely in another seat. As all honourable members are aware, that takes a lot of courage. A lot of honourable members talk about someone else's courage. However, they would need a good jab from a needle to make them take the same step. I went on to say—

> "Frank Roberts was readmitted to the ALP in 1958, after the split. He stood for his old seat of Nundah in 1963 and tried again for party selection in Lilley for the 1966 Federal election. Frank was, through some of Labor's hardest years, one of our great stalwarts: a man who defended his principles to the limit, even if it meant personal distress and disappointment.
>
> It is easy to be on the winning side. It is a lot harder to front up year after year and lose. During our worst times—those horrible periods of hate and discrimination when a lot of people did not want to know us—Frank was one of the true believers who was ever ready to step forward and be counted for the Labor Party.
>
> I will always remember Frank Roberts as one of those experienced elders in the movement who I could turn to for advice during my early years as party organiser and secretary.
>
> He was, until his death, my lawyer. Best of all, he was a mate.
>
> Together, Frank and Flo were regulars at parliamentary bowling carnivals."

All of my colleagues in this place would remember the great company that the pair of them were on those occasions. I continued—

> "Frank had a long and unusual association with the Brisbane City Council, starting as a relief worker, then three years as Lord Mayor and finally after that, on occasions, as its legal representative.
>
> Throughout his life he endured a disability suffered after birth to earn recognition within the law, politics and community organisations.

> His love of his family is reflected by what I call a lovely little story that, as Brisbane reeled in shock over his defeat of Chandler in 1953, Frank simply snuck away to take three of his children on a picnic at Redbank as he had promised."

He missed all the media hype and went off with the kids. I continued—

> "As Lord Mayor, one of his first duties was to refuse a trip to Britain for the Coronation, and his few relaxations included helping his son John, then an apprentice carpenter, build their holiday home at Broadbeach.
>
> It must have been a great sadness for him that what should have been his finest moment in public life turned so quickly to disappointment and a temporary rift with the Labor Party that he loved so deeply."

Today, we honour Frank Edward Roberts. We acknowledge his passing. He was a battler in the Depression, a lawyer, a politician and, most of all, a wonderful family man. I said also—

> "We mourn him as a friend, one of those great mates in the Labor Party who was always there with a word of advice when the going got tough."

I have said in this place on a number of occasions that no-one respects politicians very much. We all help to bring ourselves down because we attack each other. We score in the media one against the other, but our families suffer when we take the job. People will call you a bludger; they will call you lazy. Even your mates will campaign against you on those bases. However, if we do not recognise in our own way the sacrifice that is made in this place by people such as Frank Roberts, by people who will be making speeches about members on both sides of the House in future, we do ourselves a disservice. We do this place a great disservice when we allow members to carve each other up in the interests of a few headlines.

I offer my condolences to Flo, and to Frank Roberts' large and loving family. I will miss old Frank. He was a great mate.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (10.33 a.m.): On behalf of the parliamentary National Party, I offer condolences to the family of the late Frank Roberts. Frank Roberts served this House well as the member for the seat of Nundah between 1947 and 1956. He has been described as a man of independent mind, determination and spirit, and it is these qualities which, as all honourable members are aware, are needed in this place. It is these qualities which stood him in good stead throughout his career.

As the Premier has mentioned, Frank Roberts had a colourful past. He was born in Victoria, the son of a farmer, but came to Queensland to realise the potential and opportunities that this State offered even at that time. I note that he went to Queensland University and that he worked as a farmer, builder's labourer, public servant and barrister before becoming a member of the Legislative Assembly. Such a distinctive and varied past could only serve to give him a broad understanding of many walks of life and help him in his duties to represent the people whom he served.

Frank Roberts took on even more responsibility in 1952 by becoming Mayor of Brisbane, winning the election by carrying 17 of the 24 wards. He was up front in deciding to continue on in his role as a member of Parliament while carrying out his duties as Lord Mayor. He claimed that he was not denying anyone a job as the only reason he became Labor's candidate for City Hall was because no-one else wanted it. He confronted those challenges head on. He had to deal with a range of problems regarding services which are taken for granted now that this city is established and flourishing. Those problems related to water supply, the provision of sewers throughout the city and the increased demand for electricity. It was during Frank Roberts' term that we saw the construction of the Tennyson Power Station as Brisbane continued to grow. He had to deal with the diverse responsibilities which weighed heavily on the resources of the council. However, he took pride in his claim that it was his administration at City Hall which brought the council's finances out of the mire.

A man of principle, Frank Roberts was at times controversial, but he never wavered from his responsibility to his constituents. Although he resigned from his party in 1953 after a bitter struggle with the party's central executive, Frank Roberts put that behind him and continued to serve on the council as an Independent until 1955. The following year he became the member for Nundah.

Frank Roberts was not known to me personally, but he will obviously be remembered by those who served alongside him and by those whom he served. He gave of himself to his party and the general community in many capacities. Members on this side of the House extend their condolences to his immediate family and friends.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.34 a.m.): I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier and to offer the Liberal Party's condolences to the family of a former Lord Mayor of Brisbane, the late Mr Frank Roberts. Mr Roberts was not somebody whom I had met personally. However, it appears that he had a notable political career, serving as both the Lord Mayor of Brisbane and as the member for Nundah. Mr Roberts also appears to have had a fiercely independent streak. He had a running feud with the ALP organisation—something that is perhaps not altogether new in the political life of members of Parliament.

In 1947, Frank Roberts defeated in a plebiscite the sitting Labor member for Nundah. He held that seat until 1956. Frank Roberts was the Lord Mayor of Brisbane from 1952 to 1955. Fifteen months after he was elected Lord Mayor, he resigned from the Australian Labor Party and served as an Independent. As has been previously indicated, after the split in 1957, Mr Roberts was re-admitted to the ALP in 1958.

Clearly, Mr Roberts played an important role in State politics and an important role in municipal politics during the late 1940s and the mid-1950s. He was known for his hard work and his achievements, as the Deputy Premier said, as a battler. Before he became a member of Parliament and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, he was a sewerage miner, a builder's labourer, a Government clerk and a barrister. On behalf of the members of the Liberal Party, I extend to his family our sincerest condolences.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN (Nundah) (10.38 a.m.): On Sunday, 7 June, the people of the Nundah electorate and the citizens of the inner northern suburbs of Brisbane lost a great friend. Honourable members have heard from the Premier and the Deputy Premier about the work and achievements of Frank Roberts on the broad field of political and civic life. I wish to reflect on some of the local achievements of this great man as the member for Nundah. I have spoken with people from a number of organisations. I have attended branch meetings with Frank Roberts. People, whether they be from the Rotary Club, the bowls club, the Bribie Island Surf Life Saving Club, the Aged Advocacy Centre or Nundah Pensioners' League—all paint the same picture of the man. He was witty, intelligent, and capable. He was a man who was very, very generous. From all of those groups to whom I have spoken, not one word of malice or anger was spoken about Frank Roberts. For someone who achieved such a high public profile, that speaks very well of the man.

He was at his Rotary Club meeting just a week before he died, and his fellow members enjoyed his company. He was very honest and direct. The story is told of a guest speaker at the club who was a political lobbyist. Frank did not think much of political lobbyists and he spoke up at the meeting. It made for one of the livelier Rotary Club evenings. As well, late last year, he was at the opening of the Aged Advocacy Centre in the centre of Nundah. He had, of course, done the legal work on behalf of the group and he offered his services—free, of course—to anyone who came to the Aged Advocacy Centre and who needed some legal help. That was not new. Frank had been doing that for decades. In fact, if he had to charge a fee because of the particular funding arrangements of an organisation, within a few days a donation equivalent to the fee found its way back to the organisation.

One of the local residents involved with the pensioners' group explained to me that one Sunday during the 1960s she went to him with a problem about dividing fences. Frank sorted out the problem for her. A couple of weeks later she went to him again and he said, "What is the problem now?" She said, "You have not sent me the

bill." He said, "I will do it free, just for you, as a special favour." Of course, during the following decades she found out that Frank had done that for many hundreds of people throughout the Nundah electorate and all throughout Brisbane.

Frank Roberts was a member of the Bribie Island Surf Living Saving Club during the 1930s and its honorary solicitor during the 1960s and the 1970s. As one of the club's long-time members said, "Whatever we asked of him, he generously did for us." One of Frank's legal colleagues said that Frank's life was the sort of life in respect of which one would like to be able to say, "That is the way I wish I could have lived my life." He seemed to have a very balanced life—that balance between duty and his home life; the job and his family. Through his various clubs, he found his comradeship and his relaxation, but he also gave to those clubs his considerable talent. He came from humble beginnings and people in the Nundah electorate respected him because he never forgot those humble beginnings. He used both his physical and his mental talents also, and not only for his own benefit, but more importantly, for the benefit of others.

On behalf of the people of Nundah, I give thanks for the life of Frank Roberts. I express our sympathy to his family. I support the motion.

Hon. E. D. CASEY (Mackay—Minister for Primary Industries) (10.42 a.m.): I wish to join in this condolence motion. Initially, Frank Roberts was a contemporary of my late father. As a young lad, I first met him during a visit that he made to north Queensland. However, a few years later when I was in my mid-twenties and became more associated with the ALP on a Statewide basis, Frank Roberts was one of the first people to claim me as a friend. I had a lot of regard for him over a long, long period. When I first entered Parliament, Frank Roberts was one of the first people to come and see me and talk to me about a parliamentary career. Shortly afterwards, in my early years in the parliamentary sphere, I suffered an experience in my political career fairly similar to that suffered by Frank. Again, Frank Roberts was one person to whom I could always talk, and he became a close friend. He became a closer friend when I was reunited with the party and, within a short period, became the leader of the party. Unquestionably, the example of people such as Frank Roberts helped me to maintain an unstinting loyalty to the Labor movement in this State during a period when, personally, it was very, very difficult to do so. I always admired Frank Roberts. In later years, my association with him, although less frequent, was one of great personal satisfaction. I support the motion.

Motion agreed to, honourable members standing in silence.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Absence of Minister for Administrative Services during Question Time

Hon. P. J. BRADDY (Rockhampton—Leader of the House) (10.45 a.m.): I have to inform the House that the Minister for Administrative Services, Mr McLean, will be absent from the House during question time today on ministerial business.

PRIVILEGE

Misleading of House by Member for Landsborough

Mr ELDER (Manly) (10.45 a.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege. On 6 May this year, during the Matter of Special Public Importance debate, the member for Landsborough misled the House when referring to matters raised in a survey published by the Women's Electoral Lobby. The member for Landsborough stated categorically that although there was no sales tax on bread, the cost of bread was increased by hidden charges and taxes. She said that there was sales tax on wheat harvesters. Wrong! There is no sales tax on agricultural machinery. The member said also that there was a 20 per cent tax on the wrapping around a loaf of bread. Wrong! There is no sales tax on containers for exempt goods. Bread is an exempt good. The member said also that the price of bread

is increased by excise paid on the fuel used to harvest wheat. Wrong! As anyone with the slightest interest in rural affairs would know, diesel fuel——

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member is rising to suggest that a member has misled the House. I am unable to hear what the member is saying.

Mr ELDER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I said, diesel fuel used in agricultural production is eligible for a rebate of 26c per litre.

Mr KATTER: I rise to a point of order. I seek some clarification from the Chair. There is no personal explanation involved in the member's statement. He is debating an issue.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member has risen on a matter of privilege that another member has misled the House.

Mr ELDER: As I said, I rise on a matter of privilege about another member misleading the House. In relation to this matter, I table a list of the relevant schedules within taxation legislation and the Customs Act which apply to that misleading of the House, and ask that the matter be referred to the Privileges Committee.

PRIVILEGE

Misleading of House by Minister for Primary Industries

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (10.47 a.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege relating to a Minister misleading this House. Mr Speaker, I refer to your acceptance of the statement just made by the member for Manly, and seek your indulgence. On 20 May, the Minister for Primary Industries clearly and unashamedly misled this House. He did so in a manner that I believe brings dishonour not only to this House but also to the Minister himself. He suggested that, because of the imposition of the GST, farm costs would increase by 20 per cent. That is clearly and positively incorrect. The Minister should be ashamed of himself. Ministers right across-the-board in the Goss Government have been allowed to constantly mislead the House, aided and abetted by people who sought to support the WEL fringe group of the ALP. I join with all members on this side of the House in condemning the actions of people such as the Minister for Primary Industries, who is well known for misleading primary producers and other people of this State.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That is tit for tat, as they say. That is the end of it. Before we go on, I must admit that after I asked, "Is there any other ministerial business?" I asked rather prematurely, "Is there any other business?" I note that two Ministers wish to make ministerial statements. I apologise to the House, and I now call the Minister for Primary Industries.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Visit to Iran, Oman and United Arab Emirates by Minister for Primary Industries

Hon. E. D. CASEY (Mackay—Minister for Primary Industries) (10.48 a.m.), by leave: It is with pleasure that I report to honourable members on my recent visit to Iran, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. The trip arose in response to invitations issued by the Omani Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and the Iranian Minister for Agriculture, both of whom visited Queensland last year. I was joined on the trip by a party of up to eight Queensland businessmen who were interested in exploring trading opportunities in the Middle East and specifically in the opportunities presented by the massive expansion of the Iranian sugar industry in the province of Khuzestan.

The trip was successful in that it further developed the already strong Government-to-Government links which exist between Queensland on the one hand and Oman and Iran on the other. Useful links were also forged with the United Arab Emirates.

On many occasions, Government Ministers in the Middle East stressed the importance of Government-to-Government relationships as the necessary umbrella beneath which private sector trading operations may flourish. It was apparent that those countries place a high level of importance on their relationships with trading partners at a Government level. Iran in particular is emerging from a period of major turmoil and change, and it is distrustful of many western countries. However, I am pleased to report that my delegation was very warmly received in Iran, and on a number of occasions the Ministers stressed their desire to strengthen the trading relationship with Australia.

Members would recall that the principal purpose of my visit was to evaluate and support the opportunities for Queensland business in relation to the Iranian sugar project. I was able to discuss this project with the Iranian Minister for Agriculture, Dr Kalantari, and, together with Queensland industry representatives, inspect the site for its development. I am able to report that this is a very ambitious project which is not without its technical problems in terms of implementation. However, the Iranians are preparing to invest quite substantial oil-generated revenues in its development and there is no doubt that this will present major opportunities for Queensland firms.

While they were in Iran, Queensland industry representatives were able to inspect tender documents for contracts worth perhaps $2 billion. A highlight of the visit was the signing of a multimillion-dollar contract for a cane transport system design by one of our party, Dr Warren Gellie, who is a director of Sugar Research Institute Ltd. Further contracts associated with training packages are at an advanced stage of negotiation. Iranian officials left me in no doubt that they are anxious to obtain Queensland sugar technology via the tender process which they have initiated. The climate is therefore right for Queensland industries to participate in this and subsequent sugar projects which are being planned in Iran. I stress that Iran does not compete with Australia on the world sugar market, nor is it an importer of Australian sugar, unfortunately. Iran is seeking to improve its level of self-sufficiency in sugar production and rehabilitate an area severely damaged in the recent war with Iraq.

While Oman does not offer the same trading opportunities as Iran, a very strong relationship has developed between this country and Australia. A Queensland firm, GRM International Pty Ltd, has been operating successfully in the veterinary health field in Oman for many years, and the visit afforded this firm the opportunity to greatly strengthen its position. Oman is seeking, and is willing to pay for, a wide range of training opportunities in Australia. Extensive discussions were held with Omani officials on this subject, and the matter will now be followed up with Queensland and interstate institutions and agencies. The brief visit to the United Arab Emirates did not enjoy the same official status as that to the other countries. However, my delegation was warmly welcomed, and a number of useful trading opportunities were identified. In particular, the planned construction of two sugar refineries will create opportunities for Queensland raw sugar exports.

I am pleased to report that my visit to Iran, Oman and the United Arab Emirates was successfully concluded, with a number of significant opportunities for Queensland companies emerging from it. Appropriately, however, Governments can only create the climate for successful international trade. It is up to the private sector to operate within that climate. I believe that the climate is now right for substantial Queensland trade with Iran, particularly in the area of sugar technology and development. A final itinerary and further details of my visit to Iran, Oman and the United Arab Emirates are hereby tabled in the House today.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

T. M. Burke; Development Leases

Hon. A. G. EATON (Mourilyan—Minister for Land Management) (10.52 a.m.), by leave: I wish to address issues relating to the administration of a series of leases held by the developer T. M. Burke on the Sunshine Coast which have been raised in recent

media reports. Honourable members should be aware that, in reviewing the files relating to T. M. Burke, it has been necessary to go back over the past 30 years, and we are limited to the present documentation which does not always give reasons for decisions which, in hindsight, may be difficult to understand. Honourable members should be aware that the development leases were first issued in 1959 under the then Liberal/Country Party Government and all subsequent administration of the leases and the lease conditions took place under Liberal/National Party Governments. Those leases were granted as part of an overall strategy to open up the Sunshine Coast region, and a review of the files indicates that all the development leases in the region have involved adjustments to lease boundaries. Some adjustments related to land exchanges such as the exchange of freehold land for leasehold land to create the Noosa Headland National Park; exchange of areas of leasehold to protect 120 hectares of frontal dunes at Kawana; and exchange of areas of leasehold to protect a stand of scribbly gums and rare sedge.

In the case of T. M. Burke, the lease boundaries were not surveyed but determined from aerial photographs and small scale parish maps. Correspondence between the then Land Administration Commission and the lessee's surveyors indicates that the lease boundary was regarded as flexible. Lands within the lease boundary found to be unsuitable for development have been excluded from the lease as vacant Crown land. However, land suitable for development outside the lease boundaries was included in design plans on several occasions. The Land Administration Commission accepted that development should follow the natural contours of the land and, although the LAC rebuked the company for developing outside the lease boundary, no record can be found of a design plan being rejected because it did not comply with the lease boundary.

Through land exchanges and inclusions of areas outside the lease boundary, the area of T. M. Burke was increased by 140 hectares over the original size. That is the kind of situation that the Government inherited from the Nationals and which it has been seeking to rectify since it took office. That type of administration is no longer acceptable, and active steps are being taken to put in place more effective lease management at both the operational and policy levels. Under the Lands Department's regionalisation initiative, senior officers are now located close to areas of land-use activity and are able to bring local understanding to bear on the management of such important parcels of land. Additionally, changes at the policy level now see much more active consultation taking place with local authorities and community interests. That is consistent with the recommendations of the Wolfe report. My departmental officers have met with T. M. Burke and the local authority to review and develop overall planning mechanisms for its lease. Unfortunately, over the past 32 years, Crown land was abused and conditions ignored. It is important for all lessees to realise that lease conditions will be enforced.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. Tertiary Places

Mr QUINN asked the Minister for Education—

"With reference to the reduction from 48 per cent to 38 per cent (the lowest percentage ever) in the number of first year university places going to Year 12 students during the past two years whilst he has been the Minister and as just over 9000 school leavers gained a tertiary place compared to over 11000 when he became Minister, despite an extra 2000 places being available and given that the Viviani Report warned him that this would occur—

What excuse can he offer for the reduction in the number of Year 12 students attending university each year?"

Mr BRADDY: I seek leave to table my answer to the question and have it incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Once again, the Liberal Party has shown a total lack of understanding of tertiary education. The honourable member has used selective and misleading information to portray an incorrect picture of the true situation.

In particular, Mr Quinn fails to understand the changing nature of education in recent years and the effect these changes have had on statistical comparisons. Today we have rapidly increasing retention rates and greater numbers of students completing Year 12 through external senior studies. The simple use of the term "school leaver" by Mr Quinn does not reflect the true position of young Queenslanders seeking tertiary entrance.

In fact, 46 per cent of first year university places were allocated to applicants who had completed Year 12 studies in Queensland in 1991. This includes Year 12 students in Queensland secondary schools and those completing senior through other means such as external studies.

In addition, the honourable member's comparison with 1990 is misleading. He does not understand the term tertiary education—it embraces both higher education and full-time associate diploma courses and is not meant to refer only to university education.

In 1990, full-time associate diploma courses were offered by universities. These courses are now offered through TAFE colleges. The honourable member is therefore wrong on the number of school leavers gaining a tertiary place in 1992. The correct figure is 11,500, not 9,000.

The honourable member also fails to take into account the fact that in 1990 1,500 places were funded by the Goss Government and directed specifically to immediate school leavers or those who had left school not more than one year previously. As a consequence there were 1,200 more school leavers enrolled in 1990 than in 1989 or in any previous year.

I can reassure honourable members that the Goss Government's positive efforts on behalf of young Queenslanders are continuing.

As recently as last week, I met with the Vice-Chancellors of all Queensland universities to discuss the relative proportion of school leavers gaining entry to university.

The Vice Chancellors agreed to my request to consider the situation and have undertaken to come back with some proposals for addressing the community's concerns so that we can ensure a fair outcome for school leavers.

I must stress to the House that this issue requires a more sophisticated appreciation than that provided by the member for South Coast.

Of the total number of offers made by QTAC in 1992, 15,110 were made to school leavers. This represents 74 per cent of the qualified school leaver applicants. That is, those students with a TE score above 635. 95% of school leaver applicants with a TE score of 800 or more received an offer of a place.

However, given the significant changes that have occurred in tertiary education in recent years, we need to ensure that school leavers receive a fair share of available places. That is why I am involved in sensible and productive discussions with the universities and I am confident that they will work in good faith with the Government on this issue.

Mr Speaker, this Government has a proven track record in tertiary education and honourable members may rest assured that we will continue to do all we can to improve educational opportunities for young Queenslanders.

2. Tertiary Places

Mr QUINN asked the Minister for Education—

"With reference to the 1989 election campaign, during which the Premier promised that, as a Queensland Labor Government would have a special relationship with the Federal Government, it would be able to secure more tertiary places for this State—

(1) Is it a fact that the only additional tertiary places which Queensland has received since 1989 from the Federal Government were those already contained in the Commonwealth's triennial forward planning for higher education?

(2) Where does this leave the thousands of qualified students who cannot attend university because of the failure by the Premier to honour his election promise?"

Mr BRADDY: (1 and 2) I similarly seek leave to table my answer to the question and have it incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The honourable member's question is based on a false premise. The Commonwealth had already announced its decisions on higher education funding and places for the 1990-1992 triennium by the time the Goss Government was elected in December 1989.

Upon coming to power this Government immediately agreed to provide funding for an additional 1,500 commencing places in 1990 at a cost to the State of nearly $30 million over four years.

This was followed in 1991 with a further 800 State-funded places costing some $15 million, while the Commonwealth-funded growth was phased-in.

During 1991 agreement was reached with the Commonwealth funding authorities for the formal transfer of courses in art, craft and design offered through the Queensland College of Art (a college of TAFE) and the Townsville College of TAFE to the Griffith University and James Cook University of North Queensland respectively. These transfers increased the pool of higher education places by more than 840 and relieved the State of a significant contribution to the funding of the courses in a TAFE setting.

The Commonwealth also agreed to provide a further 600 full time places for 1992 to help meet the needs of Queensland's aspiring higher education students. Contrary to the claims of the honourable member, this increase was negotiated outside of the normal Commonwealth triennial funding arrangements. It was a specific increase arising from the relentless lobbying of the Commonwealth by the Queensland Government.

The Goss Government has also been successful in obtaining a significant share of the additional places to be funded by the Commonwealth in 1993 and 1994. For 1993 and 1994 Queensland will obtain more than 23% of the growth compared with our population share of 17%.

For the first time ever, Queensland's higher education participation rate is expected to reach the national average in 1994.

In only two and a half years this Government has achieved more in terms of additional tertiary places for young Queenslanders than the Liberals and Nationals did in 32 years, and we will continue to seek positive outcomes for Queensland in our ongoing discussions with the Commonwealth.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Youth Unemployment

Mr BORBIDGE: In directing a question to the Premier, I refer to Queensland's chronic youth unemployment rate and his call at the weekend for greater flexibility in respect of youth wages. I ask: why did the Premier not make a stand on this issue when his party re-endorsed its policy against such action at its State conference last year? Will he now give a commitment to introduce the necessary legislation before the end of this session of Parliament?

Mr W. K. GOSS: Queensland is in the fortunate position of having the best record on youth unemployment.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Let me put that comment in context. On the most recent figures, our youth unemployment rate was in the range of 25 per cent to 26 per cent, which is too high. It is unacceptably high, but it is well below the national average and well below the level of 45 per cent to 46 per cent that obtains in States such as Victoria and South Australia. What I was responding to on Sunday and Monday when I made a number of comments was the Carmichael report, which is one of the reports that is

going to be considered at the forthcoming youth unemployment conference in Canberra convened by the Prime Minister.

As to the Carmichael report—it contains a suggested measure for a youth training wage whereby young people would receive employment and training, and wages would be linked to productivity and the acquisition of competency or skills rather than simply to age. It has been urged upon all the States as a measure which is worthy of consideration. Queensland and, I think, at least one other State have agreed to trial the youth training scheme recommended in the Carmichael report. The first such pilot scheme has commenced in the Queensland Electricity Commission and, in the near future, it is proposed to extend the pilot scheme to other Government agencies. The Government is appealing to private sector employers to give consideration to it as well. Recently, I discussed the matter with the Prime Minister. He has received positive indications from major companies such as BHP and retail companies such as Coles Myer that they would be prepared to undertake substantial youth employment under such a scheme. As I understand it, that matter will be addressed further at the conference in Canberra.

GENERAL BUSINESS—NOTICE OF MOTION No. 1

Hon. P. J. BRADDY (Rockhampton—Leader of the House) (10.59 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

> "That so much of the Standing Orders and Sessional Orders be suspended to enable a debate to take place on this day's sitting on General Business—Notice of Motion No. 1 in the name of Mr Borbidge censuring Ministers in the Goss Government and that the Matters of Public Interest debate be held at the conclusion of such debate."

Motion agreed to.

CENSURE OF MINISTERS

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (10.59 a.m.): I move—

> "That this House censures Ministers in the Goss Government for deliberately misrepresenting the '*Fight Back*' package while refusing to debate the Prime Minister's '*One Nation*' statement."

I rise today to participate in this debate and to tear apart the facade of this State Labor Government and its blind commitment to Labor's Keating. This is a State Labor Government which is strong on public relations, a Government which is long on rhetoric, a Government devoid of answers and a Keating-style Government making policies on the run. Honourable members just saw an example of that from the Premier. To look good in the Monday press, he made a statement about youth unemployment that was contrary to Labor Party policy. Yet, today in the Parliament—when given the opportunity to do so—he proposed no legislation, put forward no plans, just made an admission that what he is proposing is contrary to Labor Party policy in this State, a policy that has been reaffirmed each time the issue has been discussed at a conference. This is a Government that is lost in the economic wilderness and which blindly follows its Federal and State colleagues in its criticism of the Federal coalition's Fightback package—criticism which is distorted, has no basis in fact and which shows absolutely no concern for the future of the people of this State.

The bottom line is that the Federal coalition has a plan and a direction; Keating and Goss do not. If this House needs any indication about who has the plan for economic recovery in Australia, this document that I have in my hand—these hundreds of pages—is the Fightback package and this pathetic paper-thin One Nation statement that I have in my other hand, that these Ministers are so pleased, so happy to represent, is so light that when I drop it, it floats to the floor. This is a Government without policies and without direction.

Mr Johnson: They haven't read it.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Gregory stated, they have not read it. From Labor's Goss all we get is more of the same—more unemployment, more Government spending, more public servants and further disincentive to investment in Queensland's future. Labor is not working and will never work in Queensland. This was clearly evidenced last week when the latest unemployment statistics for this State were released. What a glorious triumph for One Nation, what a glorious triumph for the Labor Party and its alleged commitment to the workers and the battlers of Queensland! Those figures confirmed a 0.7 per cent increase in Queensland's unemployment rate, taking it to 10.4 per cent. This is Labor's unemployment, and it will continue to get worse. It will continue to consume our children. It will continue until a coalition Government is restored in Canberra and a State coalition Government is returned in Queensland. It is important in the context of this debate to consider the evidence in respect of unemployment. This is the people's story that Labor members in marginal seats do not want to hear.

When the National Party left office in December 1989, the unemployment rate was 6.7 per cent. Labor's contribution in two and a half years of Government in this State, cooperating with its Federal colleagues, has been to increase unemployment by 3.7 per cent. The number of unemployed people in Queensland in May was 153 300—an increase of 9 500, or 6.6 per cent over April, and an increase of 1 600 in the number of unemployed in May 1991. The ultimate indictment of Labor's Goss is that the number of people unemployed in Queensland has increased by more than 58 000 since December 1989. More than 500 a week are placed on the end of Labor's dole queue. This is Labor's contribution to Queensland; this is Labor's legacy and it tells the people of this State that we do not need a plan for the future, we do not need to fight back. What a joke! Those 153 300 Queenslanders do not agree that we do not need to fight back. The people of Queensland are waking up to the joke and they will continue to wake up to the joke as the election draws closer. Tell the unemployed people of Springwood that we do not need to fight back. Tell the unemployed people in Mansfield, Mount Gravatt, Redlands, Cleveland, Albert, Maryborough, Hervey Bay and Rockhampton and on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts that we do not have to fight back. I challenge the Premier to take his Keating brand of economic recovery to these centres. I predict that if he did so, he would be comprehensively bundled up and laughed out of town. The Premier does not have a plan. He is devoid of ideas and policies. He does not have a plan for Queensland's future. The Labor Government lacks direction; all that will be promised by Labor's Goss is more of the same.

Honourable members opposite should not use question time as a platform from which to seek to distort the basis of the coalition's Fightback package. My colleague the member for Burdekin will comprehensively destroy the allegations raised by Ministers during question time over the most recent sitting of Parliament—the Dorothy Dix tirade from a line-up of incompetent Ministers who have not begun to understand the problems of this country. The National Party continues to support the Fightback package and it will continue to put forward constructive suggestions which will be aimed at improving the coalition package. The National Party recognises the need for change and it stands ready to contribute to the process of change. The Fightback document must be open to constructive suggestion and criticism, and this is accepted by our Federal colleagues. We support the need for taxation and expenditure reform; we support the need for reform of the bureaucracy; we support the need to build incentive into the system. We support, as obviously the Premier paid lip-service to, those aspects of Fightback that are designed to tackle this nation's chronic youth unemployment problem. What the Premier washed into print with is straight out of Fightback! The Goss Government cannot have it both ways. As I said, we will continue to contribute to the debate just as members of the National Party stood up for the sugar industry in the wake of the Federal Government's decision to reduce the tariff on sugar—a reduction undertaken by the Labor Party as part of the One Nation statement.

The tariff cuts are clearly spelt out in Keating's flimsy, paper-thin, floating document. I take this opportunity to call for a moratorium on further cuts to the sugar

industry tariff by the Keating Government under its One Nation statement. In the light of the massive increase in Queensland's unemployment rate, this 1 July cut cannot be sustained. It should not go ahead, and the Federal Government should move immediately to delay the cut. Where has the Premier been during the debate on sugar tariffs? He was down on the Gold Coast embracing his new Labor mate, Prime Minister Keating. He was in Canberra for the best part of two days at the Premiers Conference. Not once did the Premier of Queensland raise with the Prime Minister of Australia in those discussions the damage that will be caused by the 1 July sugar tariff reduction that is part of Labor's One Nation statement, which is the fundamental difference between Labor's package and Fightback. Under One Nation, there is no associated micro-economic reform. There are no trade-offs to help our Australian industries become more competitive. That is a major difference between the two documents. It is a difference that this Premier, the Minister for Primary Industries and the Labor oncers who represent sugar industry electorates—

Mr Johnson: Which they don't do.

Mr BORBIDGE: Yes, they do not do it. They simply do not want to know about them. Queensland's unemployment situation can only worsen as a result of the 1 July cut, which will depress the industry's returns by about $14.3m and reduce them from $42.4m to $28.1m. It will also have the effect of reducing the value-added component of industry returns by $13m. Moreover, $5m will be stripped from wages, salaries and supplements, while more than 350 jobs in Queensland will be lost. Labor may think that 350 people can be disposed of easily and will not impact on this State's disastrous unemployment situation, but they are 350 jobs that should not be lost. I again call on the Premier to raise with the Prime Minister the effect of the One Nation 1 July sugar tariff cuts and the fact that they should not proceed, particularly in the current economic climate.

The Keating One Nation package is just another con from the man and the party that gave us the recession that we had to have—the recession which, despite the protestations of Treasurer De Lacy, shows absolutely no sign of abating. The Treasurer has been running around Queensland saying, "The recession is over." However, there are 153 300 unemployed Queenslanders who think that Wayne Goss' Treasurer is a national joke. The failure of Labor's Keating and the party which presented us with the One Nation package is all around us. The One Nation strategy is an abject apology to the Australian people for the past 10 years of Labor mismanagement in every area of Government in this country. In terms of micro-economic management, Labor has failed. In terms of workplace reform, Labor has failed. In terms of fiscal and monetary policy setting, Labor has failed. It is a litany of failure from an unelected Prime Minister, a person who has absolutely no reason and no mandate for holding such high office.

Now, in 1992, we have a shonky document put forward as an attempt to legitimise years of Labor mismanagement. It is a document based on growth, inflation and employment premises that are false. It is a patched-together document that just does not stack up. I advise honourable members to compare it with Fightback, which recognises the flaws that have developed in this country over decades. It recognises change in the taxation system and it recognises individual effort. It provides a better deal for the average Australian family. It is about more than GST, on which the Labor Party has focused in a deliberate scare campaign designed to cover up its own massive incompetence. The National Party in Queensland is sick and tired of the treatment dished out to Queenslanders by the Federal Government over the past 10 years. Queenslanders have been made to pay for the litany of failures of interstate Labor Premiers—the Alan Bonds of Australian politics. These are Premiers who really deserve the ownership of the prison cell doors more than do the gaoled former Queensland Ministers. I say that Peter Dowding, Neville Wran, Carmen Lawrence, John Cain and Joan Kirner are the Alan Bonds of Australian politics. They are people who put their State and their citizens in hock and have mortgaged the future of their States for generations to come. It is about time we had a healthy public debate in this country about what constitutes public corruption, because the Labor mismanagement right around Australia is blatant corruption.

The National Party in Queensland will continue to put the interests of Queenslanders first and foremost. That is why we continue to support Fightback and why we will continue to put forward constructive suggestions for change. On the last day that Parliament was sitting, a succession of Ministers misrepresented the Fightback package. The Treasurer said that if the Fightback package is ever introduced, $1.6 billion will be lost to local authorities throughout Australia. That is wrong, dead wrong. The Treasurer obviously based his information on an inaccurate newspaper article without even bothering to check his facts. The Australian Local Government Association actually made a submission to the GST planning and coordination committee pointing out certain facts, namely, that if all purchases by local government were subject to GST, the effect might be to that amount. However, the association acknowledged that this is not the effect of GST and of the Fightback policy.

The Minister for Primary Industries then jumped up and said, "15 per cent on everything." Wrong, wrong, wrong! The Minister for Tourism jumped up and said that Fightback will have a detrimental effect on the tourism industry. Under Fightback, excises will be abolished. Contractors and councils will find that they no longer pay sales tax on their equipment and material. They will no longer pay 26c a litre on all their fuel. They will no longer pay payroll tax or the training guarantee levy. The Treasurer also made the unsubstantiated comment that a proposed cut in the financial assistance grant of 5 per cent will make Queensland $140m worse off. That, too, is absolute rubbish. The impact of the abolition of payroll tax will be compensated dollar for dollar by the Federal Government. With all respect, the Treasurer again made no attempt to estimate the direct and indirect costs of sales tax and fuel excise on the Queensland Government's expenditure. Had he done that, he may well have found that the figures did not read in his favour. The member for Burdekin will refer to the massive representations made by the Minister for Primary Industries.

At the next Federal election, the people of Queensland and the people of Australia will have before them the most substantial documentation ever prepared for an election campaign. They will have a document of several hundred pages prepared by the coalition in Opposition, and they will have from an illegitimate and unelected Prime Minister a pathetic promise of more of the same. Time and time again, we see in this place deliberate and massive efforts by the Government to abuse the practices of question time and to distort reality in order to hide its own economic mismanagement. In this debate today, I notice the absence of the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Primary Industries and the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier. The outgoing member for Mulgrave, the outgoing member for Springwood and the maybe outgoing member for Mount Isa will speak in this debate from the Government side. What a line-up! All the heavyweights are out! It is quite okay in question time for those Ministers to stand up in this Chamber, to abuse question time and to give their interpretation of Fightback, but they fail to defend One Nation.

Mr Elliott: To tell lies.

Mr BORBIDGE: To tell lies, as the member for Cunningham said.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member for Surfers Paradise to withdraw that word.

Mr BORBIDGE: I withdraw the word "lies" and substitute the word "untruths". When those Ministers have the opportunity to come into this Chamber to defend their mates' shonky One Nation document—to put their money where their mouth is—they are nowhere to be found.

Mr Johnson: They can't cop the truth.

Mr BORBIDGE: They cannot cop the truth. Instead, the member for Mulgrave will lead the debate for the Premier of Queensland. The member for Springwood will come into the debate instead of the Treasurer. Those members can come into every debate that they wish, because nothing will save them. This may well be their swan song, as they hop up in the Parliament today to defend the corrupt maladministration of public finances by every Labor Government that has been elected in Australia in the past

decade, to defend a policy that has allowed this nation to be put in hock at record levels—a policy which, even in Queensland, today results in 153 300 Queenslanders being out of work——

Mr Nunn interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: —including a record number in the electorate of the honourable member who is interjecting and will not even participate in the debate. The two respective packages speak for themselves.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin) (11.20 a.m.): I have much pleasure in seconding the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. In doing so, I must say that, if one good thing has come out of the whole debate, it is that at long last the Government has been forced into accepting the fact that it cannot maintain any sort of a public face unless it takes on a debate. It will be interesting to see the way in which the debate is presented. As the Leader of the Opposition said, with the exception of the member for Springwood, all of those members who made the most outrageous statements have disappeared from the Chamber. At the outset, it is necessary to give a brief overview of the role that the National Party has played in the development of the Fightback package. It is reasonable for people to understand that not everyone sees everything as being perfect. The National Party has been a vital and vibrant part of the development of that package. We still believe that, as in any legislative process, improvements can and will continue to be made. That is why the coalition in Opposition has set up the Cole committee in Sydney, which is moving forward with those types of transitional arrangements.

The Fightback package removes seven taxes: wholesale tax, which will save $9.4 billion; petroleum taxes, which impact upon every person in this nation, which will save $6.6 billion; payroll tax, which will save $5.9 billion; lump sum superannuation tax, the abolition of which will give meaning back to superannuation; the training guarantee levy; customs duty; and the coal export duty, which is a $49m tax on one of our major export industries. It will be interesting to see how the Minister for Resource Industries rebuts that incredibly serious proposal by the Government that none of those things are worth while. Eighteen months ago, the National Party undertook a series of investigations and critical analysis of proposals to have a consumer tax as part of an overall series of reforms. That has been done in a remarkable manner. As the Leader of the Opposition said, the Fightback package in itself is an incredible document. When it is compared with the One Nation statement, the One Nation statement not only becomes laughable but is also shown up for its shallowness.

In seconding the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, I want to dwell to some degree on the use in this House of misstatements and Dorothy Dixers as part of a continuing and unprecedented attack on the Fightback package. Those misstatements could be paraphrased by saying “lies, lies and damned lies”. However, the debate on the future of this nation and, more particularly, the development of jobs and economic growth in Queensland must surely exercise the mind of every thinking person. It is therefore reasonable to ask: what are we as members of Parliament doing about addressing the problems confronting society? More particularly: how are we expressing those concerns in both the public and parliamentary forums?

At the Federal level, the two major political streams—the coalition and the ALP—have developed platforms which each claims has the capacity to correct those wrongs to which I alluded. They are, as has been noted, the coalition’s Fightback package and the Labor Party’s deficient One Nation statement. Both of those proposals or packages deserve the closest of scrutiny because the welfare of current and future generations could well depend upon the perception and the capacity of each of us to understand and play our part in the implementation process. This applies most particularly at the parliamentary level, where we have a public responsibility to be responsible communicators and, in the best interests of future generations, to be relatively forthright and, above all, scrupulously honest. I do not know how it is possible for Ministers and other members of the Government to have the unmitigated gall to stand up and make some of the statements that they do without even making passing

reference to the truth. In fact, members and Ministers have a sworn duty to apply those principles. It is to this matter that I wish to direct the body of my comments.

During the last several weeks—more particularly and more precisely the last few sitting days, of which there are precious few in this House—members of the Government used their positions to maliciously deceive the people of this State by way of misinformation and innuendo at a level that I have not seen in my almost nine years as an elected representative. In saying so, I state that they have been led by the Premier of this State and that he has been aided and abetted by a number of Ministers, in particular the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Primary Industries, the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Family Services and the Treasurer, and the members for Springwood and Pine Rivers. By way of mischievous and misleading information, those Ministers and members have abrogated their sworn responsibilities as Ministers and members of this Parliament. Because of their public position, they have been accorded exposure throughout the media and as such have brought into disrespect this Parliament as an institution.

It is the right of every person to disagree with the political philosophy of another, and the right of every person to agree or disagree with policies espoused by those of a different political persuasion. I do not back away from that at all. That is the reason we are here. However, it is also the right of the average member of the community to expect a degree of veracity in the statements made by members of the Executive Government and elected members of Parliament. These rights have been abused in a most flagrant and dishonest manner by the persons I have mentioned. I do not propose to undertake a political analysis of the statements made by the various Labor members in respect of their quite misleading commentary on the Fightback package. However, I do propose to expose the malicious intent of those persons to mislead the public by way of abuse of their public office. I believe that that is despicable.

I will allude to case No. 1, which involves the Premier. In February this year, he commenced the process of deceit by making a deliberately false and misleading statement in a paid Labor Party advertisement on TV. That set the scene for this debate. This unprecedented and most public of lies from the leading elected representative in Queensland has done nothing——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The word "lies" should be withdrawn.

Mr STONEMAN: This unprecedented and most public of untruths from the leading elected representative in Queensland has done nothing for the reputation of members on either side of the House and has obviously spurred on the Premier's soul mates to not only emulate him but, in the case of the Minister for Primary Industries, surpass him with vigour, as I said earlier. The Premier said that Mr Tony Fitzgerald, QC, had said in his report that "Queensland had a corrupt electoral system". That was a deliberate and unmitigated falsehood.

I refer now to case No. 2. On 6 May this year, the member for Springwood followed her leader down the path of falsehood by attacking the GST component of the coalition Fightback package. Ms Robson sought to deliberately add to the mischief commenced by a group of Labor Party members disguised as the WEL, who published a blatant misrepresentation of the impact of the coalition package. It is one thing to attack a proposition fairly on a sound basis, but quite another to make what are clearly false and erroneous statements. Naturally, that bastion of unbiased reporting, the *Courier-Mail*, was to the fore in reporting the WEL propositions. I will leave aside the Robson rhetoric and examine some of the statements. The first of Ms Robson's statements was—

> "The reality is that the GST would add 15 per cent to the cost of everything bought by consumers."

For the benefit of members, at the end of my speech I will table part of a document produced by the Commonwealth Treasury under a memo to the Treasurer and Minister for Finance dated 27 November 1991 from the Deputy Secretary (Structural and Taxation), one A. J. Preston, which modelled indirect taxation changes as enunciated in

the Fightback package. The paper clearly indicates that "the cost of everything", as suggested by Ms Robson, will not increase by 15 per cent—far from it—and will not even reach the 4.8 per cent used as the benchmark in Fightback but, instead, according to Federal Treasury computations, will be only 4.09 per cent. That is contained in the confidential Treasury minute paper signed by the Deputy Secretary and sent on to the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance.

The member for Springwood claimed that the case history she used as an illustration was "carefully put together". I suggest that the auditor must have been that great example of Labor management, Senator Stephen Loosely—"loosely" by name and "loosely" by nature. Even Wayne Swan could not be as wrong as Ms Robson's script was on that occasion. Further on, the member for Springwood said that the package would "do absolutely nothing to create jobs". I ask the member for Springwood: what impact does she think the removal of payroll tax will have on the future employment picture? In Queensland alone, this will mean the saving of an $800m impost on employers—and they are her own Treasurer's figures. The same Treasurer is no longer present in this Chamber to participate in this most important debate. In fact, not one of the senior members of the Labor Party is prepared to stand in this House and debate the One Nation statement versus the Fightback package. Not one Minister——

Mr McGrady interjected.

Mr STONEMAN: I apologise. There is one Minister. I point out that the Minister has obviously drawn the short straw, because he sits at the end of the ministerial benches. One can imagine the way the job would have been handed around the Cabinet table. It would have been passed, passed, passed, and finally poor old Tony drops it, and so he now has to sit there and listen to the debate. I acknowledge that and say, "Good on you, mate."

Ms Robson spoke about the "impact on incidental but inevitable items, such as pharmaceuticals, doctors' bills, children's toys and clothes, utilities, veterinarian bills and the occasional meal at McDonalds". I believe that those were her exact words. Let us examine some of these items in general terms. In respect of pharmaceuticals—the Coalition package substantially increases the support for the payment of chemist items right across-the-board. Depending on one's situation, of course, that impact is greater than otherwise might be the case. However, particularly for pensioners and families, when it is added up that is a very substantial increase. In respect of doctors' bills—Ms Robson had the hide to suggest that doctors' bills would be impacted upon by Fightback. The Labor Party controlled Secretary to the Treasury in Canberra says that the cost of health services will decrease by 0.1 of 1 per cent. In fact, all health services are zero rated under the GST. No GST will apply to any health service. The same applies to education. As I said a moment ago, I will be tabling this document, because it has a series of damning corrections of the untruths that have been perpetrated by members of the Government.

Let me cite some other Federal Treasury figures that are contained in this document. I am not quoting Fightback figures; I am quoting Treasury figures. Clothing will increase by 11.19 per cent; recreation and education by 5.15 per cent; fuel and light by 9.18 per cent; eating out at McDonalds by 9.59 per cent—not 15 per cent. All will be accommodated within the overall increase in take-home pay, pensions and other compensatory measures, which Ms Robson conveniently failed to quantify. The member for Springwood also said in respect of motoring charges, "This will be dissipated through increased maintenance costs." Treasury estimates—again, these are Labor Party Treasury estimates—show a decrease in overall transportation costs of 5.74 per cent. The total fuel cost across Australia is estimated by Treasury to be reduced by 24.10 per cent. However, included in this computation is a private motoring cost decrease of 6.48 per cent. So much for the claim of the Stephen Loosely script given to Ms Robson——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order!

Mr STONEMAN: —to the member for Springwood.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is much better.

Mr STONEMAN: The member for Springwood must live in a strange world and an even stranger household if, as she states—

> "For many women, the reality of the Coalition package will be that their partners will get the benefit of the tax cuts and it will not be passed on to them in the household budget."

What codswallop! Does she suggest that that does not happen now? Blame John Hewson, apparently, for the weird logic of the member for Springwood and the even weirder scenarios she paints. An amount of tax currently applies if there is only one breadwinner in a family. There will be a lesser amount of tax being paid ultimately under the Fightback package, and that goes into the family pot. It is up to each individual family unit to organise its dispersal of funding. Ms Robson suggests that somehow or other all these cruel men that she seems to hate are not going to give their poor wives, the housekeepers, any benefit from the Fightback package. Blame John Hewson. What a load of codswallop!

The member for Springwood talked about the increased cost of borrowing for home purchase, and cited an increase of $22,500 on the purchase of a $60,000 home. The Treasury estimates were—again, as they appear in this document—that home ownership costs would rise by 2.35 per cent.

I wish to address a number of other issues—and I would need several hours to go through all of the untruths that have been told in this House. The Minister for Primary Industries talked about tax credits. He said, "Okay, we are going to get tax credits for the GST." He further stated—

> "But the punch line is that tax credits are payable after income is earned. So the farmer makes his purchases at the beginning of the year, but it is not until he sells his crop—his cattle or whatever—that he actually qualifies for a tax credit under the system that Professor Hewson talks about."

The Minister then talked about the costs that have been estimated by the State Treasury as increasing farm costs by 20 per cent. That would be one of the most incredible statements I—or any other member in this House—have ever heard. I challenge the Treasurer and the Minister for Primary Industries to table and expose publicly, as a matter of their public responsibility, those documents that they claim show that farm costs will be a part and parcel of an increase of 20 per cent. I make that challenge, because the Minister has got it wrong, wrong, wrong—like Ms Robson, like Mr De Lacy——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr STONEMAN: Like the member for Springwood, like the Treasurer, like the other Ministers whom I mentioned earlier, and, as we showed last week, like the member for Pine Rivers and the Minister for Family Services. I have already canvassed the misrepresentation of the member for Pine Rivers regarding "poor old mum and the second-hand car". That is more codswallop. The member for Pine Rivers sought to deceive this House. In respect of Mr Casey's claim No. 1—that one does not receive the credits until one has received income—I know of no place in the world where that applies. It certainly does not apply in New Zealand, and it certainly does not apply under the proposals contained in the Fightback package. Let me say that according to the framework of the legislation, when a person registers a business, under the GST and the Fightback package, that person will be able to claim on a six monthly, two monthly, or one monthly basis. Regardless of cash flow, if a business incurs a charge and it submits returns on credits and debits, even if there are no sales that business can still claim a credit against the amount of GST paid on those purchases. As the responsible Minister, the Minister for Primary Industries has sent out a message loud and clear to every primary producer in this State that is blatantly untrue. It is totally and absolutely incorrect. I plan to write to every organisation and expose Mr Casey's untruths and the tricks that have been perpetrated, not in the name of decent and equitable debate, but in the name of a terrifying attack on a package that the Government knows is a winner and will win at every stage.

In fairness to members on the Government side of the House and because it is only a minimal paper, I seek leave not only to table it but also to have it incorporated in *Hansard*. Mr Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge that you may not have viewed it, but I believe that it is necessary that the people of this State have access to a document that has been prepared not by Queensland Treasury, the Fightback policy makers or the Opposition in Queensland. It is a confidential Treasury paper, a minute paper, signed by Mr A. J. Preston, Deputy Secretary (Structural and Taxation), given to the Federal Treasurer and the Federal Minister for Finance. It shows clearly that the estimates—the untruths perpetrated by Government members—are way out. It clearly shows also that the package espoused by John Hewson is conservative in every form.

Time expired.

Mr PITT (Mulgrave) (11.40 a.m.): I formally move an amendment to the motion in the following terms—

"Delete all words after 'That' and insert—

"the Queensland Parliament is totally opposed to the measures contained in the Liberal-National Party Fightback package, in particular:

(1) the impact of the 15 per cent consumption tax on ordinary Queenslanders, especially the price increase for 454 out of 499 average household items found in a shopping survey by the Women's Electoral Lobby;

(2) the plan to remove all tariffs, including that on sugar, by the end of the decade;

(3) the impact on Queensland tobacco growers of a 50 per cent increase in tobacco taxes;

(4) the employment effects from the impact on tourism, the cost of which would increase by more than 8 per cent according to the latest industry figures; and

(5) the blow to Queensland farmers, the indebtedness of whom would increase by 20 per cent because they would have to carry the cost of a GST right up until they were able to sell their product."

I am amazed that the Opposition has rushed so enthusiastically to embrace Dr Hewson's GST. I am also shocked that the National Party, the once proud champions of the bush, has now finally deserted country Queensland. I live in the far north of this State. I have travelled throughout rural and regional Queensland with the Premier's northern and rural task force. I have talked to the very people whom the National Party claims to represent. I have listened to the concerns that people have about food and transport costs. What have the members of the Opposition done? They have rushed to support the very thing that, for ordinary people, will push up the prices of ordinary foodstuffs by 20 per cent. As I have said, the National Party has deserted the working men and women of this State and, in particular, the people who live outside the south-east corner of Queensland.

According to the survey that was conducted by the Government Statistician's Office, the difference in prices between regional centres and Brisbane means that goods can cost up to 43 per cent more on Thursday Island, 33 per cent in Weipa, 22 per cent in Cooktown, 14 per cent in Barcaldine, 15 per cent in Blackall, 11 per cent in Charters Towers, 18 per cent in Cloncurry, 16 per cent in Cunnamulla, and 18 per cent in Winton. Recently, on a talkback show in Cairns, I had an opportunity to comment on this information that has been released by the Government Statistician. Understandably, the radio station received many phone calls in respect of that information. It is important to remember that if those figures are actually the real figures, people in regional and country Queensland are already experiencing increased prices as it is. It is in those areas where life is tough. It is not easy to live in those places. There are many areas where remoteness and isolation has its own cost. I am not talking about caviar and champagne; I am not talking about luxury goods; and I am not talking about Dr Hewson's Ferrari. The issue that the people of Queensland face today is a dramatic increase in prices in ordinary foods. The Opposition has not told the families in regional,

rural and northern Queensland that the goods and services tax will push the cost of foodstuffs up by an average of 10 per cent, but in some cases it will rise as high as 26 per cent. What is the Opposition planning to say to those families in Barcaldine, who face a price rise of 14 per cent, or to those people in Julia Creek, who face a price rise of up to 26 per cent? What will the Opposition say to those people? The food and grocery bills for people in rural provincial Queensland already reflect the tyranny of distance. If the Liberal Party and the National Party have their way, the weekly grocery bill for people who live in those areas will be affected by not only the tyranny of distance but also the tyranny of the GST.

Last year, the National Party rushed out to embrace the Fightback package with, I might add, indecent haste. One of the big selling points of that embrace was that it loudly supported the cut in excise on petrol. Since then, the truth has been flushed out. The fact is that, under Dr Hewson's scheme, there will be a national system of road user charges which will virtually wipe out any benefit to be gained from lower petrol excise. We have had the farce of members on the Opposition side of the House railing against the Federal Department of Transport increase in road user charges. They railed against it and they were pleased to see this Government stand up to its Federal counterpart. Here, though, they are falling back into line with Dr Hewson. Once again, they are wimping out, falling back into line with Dr Hewson and accepting a GST that will actually raise those prices.

Since the release of the Fightback package, the truth really has been flushed out. Without the benefit of lower petrol prices—previously claimed by Dr Hewson—the reality is that a 15 per cent tax on everything will further exacerbate the already high cost of living experienced by ordinary families outside the bigger cities. What will happen to prices in places such as Thursday Island, Cooktown and Weipa? The Commonwealth Treasury has exposed the so-called compensation package as a total fraud.

We know the facts are that 70 per cent of households of full-time wage and salary earners will be worse off. On 3 March 1992, an article in the *Australian* headed "GST lifts tax for 78% of workers" stated—

> "Seventy-eight per cent of workers will pay more tax under the Opposition's Fightback package, an analysis to be released by the Government today says.
>
> . . .
>
> It shows a couple with one income and two children earning $30,000 a year or less would be more than $10 a week worse off under the GST.
>
> The analysis concludes most people earning less than $40,000 a year would also be worse off . . . and that high income earners could be better off by up to $40 or $50 a week."

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. The Opposition has just been circulated with an amendment moved by the honourable member for Mulgrave. I submit that the amendment is out of order. The notice of motion contains a censure motion relating to Ministers in this Government. The content of the amendment is such that it effectively totally negates that, and I submit that it is out of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! I will seek advice. I rule that there is no point of order. The member for Mulgrave will continue his speech.

Mr PITT: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Members know the fact is that 60 per cent of self-employed and farmer households will be worse off under the GST. Those are the very people whom members of the Opposition have claimed to represent. But what are they doing now? They are dancing to Professor Hewson's tune, no matter what the cost to regional Queensland. In the past couple of months, members have seen the ludicrous situation of several National Party senators crusading against Dr Hewson's zero tariffs for the cane industry. But what did they achieve? They achieved nothing. The moment that they got to Canberra, they were forced back into line by their Liberal colleagues—their Liberal bedmates—and they danced to Dr Hewson's tune. They are now actively supporting GST.

What will the Nationals and Liberals say to those families in isolated areas about food prices? But this issue is not only about food prices. The GST will also affect other factors. An Australian Local Government Association report identifies rural and isolated shires as being the hardest hit by the GST. According to that report, those shires will have to pay an extra $400m to the Federal Government, but, I might add, with no compensation package. This means that local authority services will be hardest hit. It means also that people in rural and regional Queensland will be forced to pay higher rates to take up the shortfall. Services as basic as the supply of water, gas and electricity, play groups and child care, rubbish collection and disposal, and the construction of roads and bridges will all be hit by the GST.

What about farmers? What can they look forward to with the GST? At a time of rural recession, Dr Hewson plans to hit our farmers with a 15 per cent tax on everything. This is at the very time when farmers are getting some benefit from lower interest rates and—at long last—some better seasonal conditions. As providers for their families, farmers will have to pay an extra 15 per cent on everything that they buy, even though they have little or no taxable income. What can they get out of Dr Hewson's compensation proposal? Dr Hewson has offered lower income tax. But that applies only if farmers have a taxable income. What a farce! What a sham! As businesses, rural producers will be hard hit by an additional impost that will force them into greater debt. Many of them are already in debt. Dr Hewson keeps telling us that businesses such as farms will be able to claim a tax credit for GST on business inputs. But what he does not tell us—and what he has failed to tell farmers and their families—is that they will have to pay 15 per cent more on all their purchases. When can they claim their GST credit? When they sell their crops!

Mr STONEMAN: I rise to a point of order. A moment ago during my contribution to this debate, I raised the point that was previously raised by the Minister for Primary Industries. Obviously, the very same script is being used by this member. Mr Deputy Speaker, I ask you to direct the member to speak to the matter under debate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Burdekin will resume his seat.

Mr PITT: The honourable member is suggesting that I have accepted the information that he tabled. As I said, Dr Hewson keeps telling us that businesses such as farms will be able to claim a tax credit for GST on business inputs. But as I said also, they can claim that only when they sell their crops. That must be a large consolation for an industry that is in recession and which is suffering the aftermath of one of our most severe droughts. Perhaps Dr Hewson does not know it, but some farmers have not had their regular crops for several years. It would not be unusual for someone who is cloistered away in Sydney or Canberra not to realise what is going on in the rural areas of this State. All up, the impact of Dr Hewson's proposed changes has been estimated by Queensland Treasury to add to the average farmer's indebtedness the equivalent of about 20 per cent of that farm's annual outgoings. For the benefit of members opposite, I point out that that is more than enough to wipe out the benefit of the lowest interest rates in 20 years.

Claims of misinformation have been made about the GST. But that misinformation has not come from the Government, it has come from the other side of the House—from the Opposition in this State and from the National and Liberal Parties at a Federal level. They have not told us the truth. They have not told rural, regional and northern Queensland how much people will suffer under the GST. They have kept that a nicely hidden secret. They have not told rural, regional and northern Queenslanders about how a computer-driven policy engendered somewhere in the bowels of Canberra will drive up their food prices or the cost of their basic local government services. They have not told farmers how they intend to wipe out any benefits that they have received from low interest rates. This is the misinformation that I speak about. As I said, it has not come from the Government. Members opposite are simply embarrassed to explain to the people whom they claim to represent why they will be disadvantaged for the benefit of their leader's friends on the Gold Coast.

If one does the simple sums, one finds that the only people who will benefit from the GST are those on high incomes. Under this system, families with lower taxable incomes would be worse off. Taxpayers on $30,000 would receive a tax cut from Dr Hewson of only about three-quarters of that necessary to compensate for the GST. So who will benefit? Those people on $100,000 a year who get a tax cut that is almost double that needed to compensate for the goods and services tax will benefit. They will pay 5 per cent less for their champagne. They will pay 15 per cent less for their jewellery, pearls and furs. Of course, Dr Hewson will pay 15 per cent less for his renowned Ferrari.

Those living in rural and regional Queensland should also be aware that they face a massive hike in registration fees. They face an average increase in registration fees of more than 160 per cent for light vehicles and more than 200 per cent for heavy vehicles. For the benefit of anyone who doubts the further impact on the ordinary family budget, I point out that basic components to the family budget such as clothing would rise by 11.2 per cent; electricity by 10.7 per cent; postal and telephone services by 8.1 per cent; and health services by 22.6 per cent. I will mention some items that one would notice sitting on the family table. Milk would increase from 99c a litre to $1.14. A pack of nappies would increase from $20.98 to $24.13. That humble Australian product, Vegemite, would increase from $3.49 for a 455 gram bottle to $4.01. Containers of baby food would increase from 72c to 83c. Dr Hewson also wants to raise the price of sugar from $1.69 to $1.94. As well, bread would increase from $1.08 to $1.24. Even margarine would increase from $1.25 to $1.44. These are huge hikes for families who would receive little or no benefit from the proposed income tax cuts.

It should also be realised that the GST will impact on commercial services provided by departments. That means that those living in isolated areas will be facing the prospect of a further 15 per cent increase in those costs. It seems unfortunate that the Opposition never read the fine detail before it rushed to embrace the document, before some of its members ran around parts of this State describing it as exciting. Exciting, indeed! There is no doubt that the package is regressive, unfair and damaging to all Queenslanders, but particularly damaging to those people who live in rural and isolated areas. The package is skewed in favour of high income earners at the direct expense of middle and low income earners. The losers are the workers—the nurses, the teachers—and anyone who resides in rural Queensland. The Commonwealth Treasury estimates that Dr Hewson's package is underfunded by about $3.9 billion. That means that, no matter what the Opposition may say in this House, the compensation arrangements claimed by Dr Hewson simply cannot be met. I urge the House to reject the motion and to support the amendment.

Ms ROBSON (Springwood) (11.56 a.m.): It is my pleasure to second the amendment moved by the member for Mulgrave. Is it not typical that the members for Burdekin and Surfers Paradise, who bellyached and whinged for the opportunity to debate the GST and the Fightback package, only did what they always do, that is, bag the Government? They were blustering and filibustering. Let us have some substance in the debate. Why do they not discuss the issue? If the GST is so wonderful, why do they not attempt to sell it to the people of Queensland? Blind indeed is the man or woman who will not see. We have been through all this before in this Parliament, but members opposite persist, so we have to reiterate. A lot of theory, a lot of complicated facts and figures and economists' talk has been thrown at the public with this Fightback idea, but real people have seen through it. That is what we have been trying to teach members opposite—about the error of their ways. By "real people" I mean people dealing with serious responsibilities such as those faced by women in the home with their families to protect. Only a month ago, I had to deal with that subject in this place. If they had the interests of real Australians at heart, the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Landsborough and those with them might have taken notice then. We looked at the facts regarding how the grand plan would affect us as consumers.

The professor came up with his famous shopping trolley to show us ordinary folks, he said, how the 15 per cent goods and services tax would really mean an increase of only 4.8 per cent. Honourable members will remember that the trolley was well stocked

with seven kilograms of dog food, disinfectant, stain remover and detergent, but was light on food that real families need to buy. The trick was that he put in more of the things now subject to tax that he would remove and fewer of the items that would acquire his new tax. Perhaps he thought we would not notice the distortion, but we did. Consumers know a tricky salesman when they see one, and they know how to be careful. In any case, admitting openly to an outright jump of 4.8 per cent is outrageous and shows that the Liberals are out of touch.

Realistic facts came to light when women acted. Members on this side, at least, will remember the WEL survey conducted in Brisbane. That survey checked the prices and the present tax status of 499 regular household items, including food and appliances. It was discovered that 454 items would go up in price under the GST, a fact Opposition members cannot dispute. The survey revealed that only 45 items would stay at the same price or become cheaper.

Mr Stoneman interjected.

Ms ROBSON: The honourable member did not learn the lesson last time, so it is being given again. When balanced out, one could confidently expect that the goods would go up by more than 10 per cent overall. I said "go up", not "come down". The survey revealed that the GST would raise the cost of living.

Since we last met, a survey conducted by the Government Statistician's Office has filled out the picture and, to my mind, foreshadowed the worst. The survey checked 180 items—the member for Mulgrave spoke on this matter—including groceries and other foodstuffs, household goods, clothing and footwear, recreational activities and, certainly, the bleaches, starches, soaps and detergents that the professor put in his trolley, although not in the same great volume. The survey has a warning for the great majority of people outside the metropolitan area of the State. It showed that consumers in Cairns and Townsville already pay 4 per cent or 5 per cent more than those in Brisbane. The member for Mulgrave spoke about that matter in detail. As he said, it is indeed a demonstration of the tyranny of distance. With the GST, if it came about, the Opposition promises that fuel tax would go down and road tax would go up. Anyone who manages a household budget in a small town or provincial city of Queensland understands perfectly well how it would balance out and how the tyranny of distance would apply more than ever. Goods are not freighted around this State free of charge. The extra amount loaded onto the household bill in Brisbane would be even higher in other parts of our State.

Members of the public have been much bothered lately by members opposite trotting around the State asking them to do a bit of study and to "sit down with this document or that professor and study Fightback. You add on here and you take away there". Members opposite suggest that on paper one might, with a bit of luck, come out in front. On that risky, hypothetical assumption people are asked to vote for them. We are being offered a punt. I suggest that if we want to have a bet we can go to the same trouble over the lotto or the form guide and not in the process put the financial welfare of our families at stake. For real people, paying their way in this world is too serious to gamble over. The idea of giving carte blanche approval to some radical experimenter to tinker with the tax system is an invitation to financial distress for far too many people.

Some members opposite will find a minority of their constituents rejoicing at the idea of a GST. Take, for example, the professional gent, particularly the bachelor who drives an imported sports car. GST will cut his expenses dramatically and there will be more money for Moet and smoked salmon in generous quantities, because under the GST those items would actually cost less. On the other hand, those of us who will be buying school uniforms and school shoes this time next year, know that we would be a lot less able to afford it if the GST came to pass. It does not stop there. Paying the doctor's bill and buying medicines are in the line of fire. Medicine will be subject to GST, which it currently is not and, as part of the package, doctors will lose the option to bulk bill. That is a very important issue for a large number of households, especially those households with children, and the aged. As the children get older the costs go up, further down the track we will find the Fightback squad still there, lying in ambush. There

is, for instance, what it has in mind for the Job Search allowance. It would remain, but a much stiffer test would be imposed on the family income and assets. There would be more money, the Opposition says, for family allowances, but the threshold would be lowered, putting them out of the reach of many more people. They are the tricks. The more one studies the package, the more tricks one finds. That is why it is proving so hard for the Opposition to sell it. Real people bring it all down to simple logic. We know there is no magic wand that will give us all something and cost virtually no-one hardly anything at all. We know that if Opposition members are offering the horn of plenty we have to check out the hidden costs.

Nobody was surprised to see the Treasury estimates showing that as many as 80 per cent of Australians are likely to be worse off under the Fightback regime. That is called rewarding the rich.As the member for Mulgrave has said, the proposed tax changes provide inadequate compensation for 80 per cent of taxpayers. The average family, with the wife staying at home—and this is what the Opposition is supposed to be promoting—and looking after the children, with an income of up to $57,000 would be worse off by between $2 and $8 a week. Contrast that with the wages or salary of the self-employed and farm households on incomes of $90,000 plus who are better off by $15 to $105 a week. That is an interesting contrast. So much for looking after the rich minority at the expense of the not so rich majority! When one moves on from the myriad hidden costs to the really big single items, the increases are alarming. Even the estimates put out by the Federal Opposition admit that, on balance, there would be a price rise in the cost of new homes. One figure that it gave was nearly $3,000 for a house costing $120,000. Five minutes with one's local real estate agent will teach one what that means out in the market. It means a great ripple, as it is called, affecting all houses. The ripple spreads. A home becomes much harder to buy. Add on the deliberately planned effects of Fightback on public housing and one has the ingredients of an immediate and very deep crisis. Queensland's share of the cut in capital works on housing is targeted at some $66m, and that represents a large number of homes. According to our Housing Department, there would have to be a 26.7 per cent reduction in the State housing program. Talk of measures to compensate for families for that sort of a reduction is cant!

In addition, the question of jobs must be dealt with. People I know do not believe in magic wands creating jobs. They see that Fightback would mean a cut of $500m in Federal money for the Queensland Budget. They know that that means the loss of 6 000 jobs for our breadwinners—men and women—and our young people. They know that the Goss Labor Government has been creating more jobs in Queensland than have been created in all of the other States put together. Queensland is leading Australia out of the recession. It is implementing the best available plan for doing that. Queenslanders have no interest in upsetting that steady, dependable progress for the sake of some magic wand idea about economics. A decade ago we had the magic wand brigade coming out of the woodwork, borrowing money, cooking up theories and trying to tell us everybody could get rich quick. That was then. Members opposite should tell their man in Canberra to go back to the early 1980s where he belongs. People in Queensland are down to earth, real people. They see through this so-called Fightback and the GST and that will be the end of it.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (12.07 p.m.): It is a pleasure to join this debate. Before getting into it in detail, I think that I should put this debate into perspective. The debate is about Fightback versus One Nation, which is what the Government said it wanted to do. We have heard nothing from the Government side about its Prime Minister's, its Labor leader's package. All that honourable members have heard is a concentration on what the coalition is doing. It is the coalition that is driving the debate and it is the coalition that is putting alternatives to the Australian people—not some tired, worn-out Labor leader. In Australia, Fightback has become synonymous with hope and vision. It is surely recognised by people as being complex but, after all, Australia's problems cannot be dealt with by other than a complex package. It is recognised as Hewson's vision and a vision than Hewson will make sure Australia realises by the year 2000. It is a vision that will give some hope to Australians, their

children and their grandchildren. No doubt, there are some issues about tax, the tax reform package and the GST. Members of the Liberal Party accept that and do not resile from it because we recognise that if something is to be done about Australia's problems and to reform Australia, thereby giving hope to Australians for the future, the central question of taxation reform has to be tackled. It is not possible to simply fiddle with the edges of the problem, as the Prime Minister and other members of the Labor Party want to do, and expect Australia's problems to be solved. What is the One Nation package?

Mr Dunworth: A shambles.

Dr WATSON: My colleague the member for Sherwood says it is a shambles, and it is certainly that; but when one speaks to people and studies surveys of opinion, one finds it interesting that when people are asked what it is about, they say that it has something to do with getting rid of the Australian flag and with manhandling the Queen. This is Australians' perception of a package that was presented by somebody who had been Australia's Treasurer for eight years, and who, with his mates in the New South Wales Right, was responsible for dumping the leader of the Federal Labor Party because they said that Keating would provide a real economic alternative to Fightback. Keating and his supporters undermined Hawke until they got rid of him. Keating is the man who supported GST in 1985 and who was supported by the present Premier of this State when he was a member of the Labor Party Opposition. There can be no question about the fact that the Labor Party thought that that was the way to go, and One Nation was the package that was supposed to save the Labor Party. What it comes down to is that it is something that people say has something to do with getting rid of the Australian flag, with this country becoming a republic, and with manhandling the Queen.

In the middle of the worst recession and the highest unemployment levels that Australia has experienced since the 1930s, at a time when 34 per cent of Australian youth is unemployed and when southern electorates such as Wollongong are registering unemployment rates of up to 60 per cent, and at a time when members of the Labor Party are destroying the vision of the youth of this country, the best that they can come up with is One Nation. The best that the man who was Treasurer for approximately eight years and who has been Prime Minister for approximately eight months can produce is a package that people perceive as having something to do with replacing the Australian flag and manhandling the Queen. In contrast to that, Fightback is all about addressing Australia's problems. It is about addressing a situation brought about by the Federal Labor Party, which has resulted in Australia slipping from tenth place to sixteenth place in the list of OECD countries. It will deal with a problem that is causing concern for Australians, namely, the increase in the foreign debt. Australia has a worse level of foreign debt than does Brazil and Mexico. As one of my colleagues said earlier, Australia has a foreign debt of $150,000m, which is a heck of a lot of money. Moreover, Australia's per capita earnings have fallen behind those of its near neighbours. The Prime Minister talks about Australia getting on with South East Asian countries. I can inform honourable members that a check of the figures will show that those other countries are leaving Australia for dead. Fightback is all about trying to address the abysmal fall in productivity in this country and the reasons why this nation is not competitive. It is also about reducing input costs imposed on business and with changing cost structures so that businesses can become internationally competitive. Fightback is also about reforming the education and training system to make sure that Australia is the best country in the world.

Under Labor Party management, Australians' living standards have absolutely plummeted. In 1983, it cost 37 weeks of average earnings to buy a Holden Commodore. Nine years later, it costs 49 weeks' wages. Since 1983, real wages—that is, the amount that men and women can actually spend—have fallen by 5 per cent. The great tax reformer, Mr Keating, has presided over a rise from 30 per cent to 39.25 per cent in the marginal tax rate applied to average weekly earnings. Incomes derived by retirees have been cut drastically by this Government, whereas welfare benefits have doubled since 1970. Right now, Australia has nearly one million people who are unemployed and a lot more than that who have given up even looking for a job.

Mr Dunworth: It is a tragedy.

Dr WATSON: It is a tragedy that Australia is experiencing at the moment, and this is something that the National Party and the Liberal Party in coalition will do something about. The Fightback package is more than about a tax reform package. It is about tackling Australia's major problems and it involves fundamental changes in Australia. As I said earlier, it is also about making this nation internationally competitive and ensuring that we start to meet the world's best standards. We cannot expect to live in the South East Asian region and compete against neighbouring countries' exports if we are not internationally competitive and do not adopt the best practices. Fightback is also about the protection of those who are weak. Under Labor's management, the weak have been trampled on and they are the people who are suffering. They are the people who form the dole queues rather than the employment queues; they are the people who have been thrown on the scrap heap; and it is their kids who have been given no hope and no future. These problems are all the fault of members of the Labor Party.

Fightback tackles the major problems and restores the confidence of Australians. It will set inflation at a realistic target of zero to 2 per cent. That will not be achieved by driving the country into the worst recession since 1930, but that is the way in which members of the Labor Party would achieve it. Members of the Labor Party have handled it by wrecking the Australian economy and putting a million people out of work. In the last couple of years, bankruptcies have gone through the roof, and that is the way in which Labor Governments manage the economy. In contrast to that, the coalition would achieve reform by adopting a rational economic program. Fightback is about cuts in business taxes and costs so that we can restart businesses and get on with channelling investment into them and begin employing people.

The Fightback package is about industrial relations reform. It is about getting rid of the closed shops and the union sweetheart deals that the Labor Party is all about. It is about making sure that average Australians have a chance to work and to improve themselves. It is about cuts in personal income taxes to restore incentive. The Liberal Party has a belief that it is up to individuals and private organisations to ensure that they develop the economy. Governments cannot do anything about it, but it is the responsibility of Governments to set up the structure whereby people can go out and achieve that. The Fightback package is about boosting education and training by some $3 billion to make sure that Australia achieves internationally competitive standards.

Unlike the Keating One Nation program, Hewson's Fightback program actually adds up. The most noticeable point in Keating's One Nation program is that all the promises are way out in the future and none of them are funded. With the Liberal Party/National Party Fightback package, we get what we see. People get the cuts in taxes, people get the services and they can see where that is coming from. The Liberal Party and the National Party will abolish seven business taxes. Let us put those on the record. We will abolish sales tax, petrol tax, payroll tax, the training guarantee levy, the lump sum superannuation tax and the coal export levy, which the Labor Party has already started to take up. We will make sure that there is a 30 per cent cut in income tax in Australia. Some $9 billion or $10 billion will be given back to Australians to decide how they will spend it rather than the Government deciding how to spend it. Pensions will increase by 8 per cent to make sure that the pensioners—the battlers whom Tommy Burns, the Deputy Premier, continues to talk about—are safeguarded. The Liberal Party and the National Party will look after them, as we will look after retirees and people who are disadvantaged. We will spend $3 billion on education to make sure that kids in our country have a fair go. That expenditure will be paid for by specific cuts in certain areas, which are specified within the Fightback package, of $4 billion. It will also be paid for by the goods and services tax. Unlike the Prime Minister's package, which is a set of mirrors—a facade—the Fightback package has the numbers. Those numbers have been through one heck of an analysis by the Treasury, and they add up. If the numbers did not add up by now, those matters would have been paraded right across the country.

The important thing is what will happen to the battlers. The Labor Party supposedly represents battlers, so it is worth comparing One Nation with Fightback. Let

us consider what happens under Keating's One Nation statement to those who earn less than $20,700 in Australia—the people with lower income levels about whom the member for Springwood wanted to talk about, but she has left the Chamber. Under Keating, there are no tax cuts for that group. They miss out completely, and their take-home pay will be eaten into by bracket creep. A $125 once-only family allowance was given to people a few weeks ago, just in time for the by-election in Wills, but it did not work. The Labor Party did not win the seat. One Nation provides for an increase of $250 for the first child in larger families, and a $3 a week increase in the family assistance for each child under 16 years of age. That is the end. That is what those people get under One Nation. That is what the Labor Party, which supposedly supports and represents the battlers, gives to those people.

Let us consider what those people get under Fightback. The tax-free threshold will increase from $5,400 to $7,000. They will receive a reduction in the bottom marginal tax rate from 20c in the dollar to 16.2c in the dollar. The family allowance will be doubled. That is not just a minor increase. The allowance will be doubled. The family allowance supplement will be increased by 6 per cent. Unemployment benefits and other social security benefits will be increased by 6 per cent. Petrol tax will be abolished. Under the Fightback package, the family car will cost less to fill—about $11 a week. There will be no tax on amounts up to $1,000 in interest on new savings for single people and $2,000 for couples under a tax-free savings scheme. The dependent spouse rebate will be increased by $300. First home buyers will receive $2,000 if their family income is under $40,000. A new, fairer superannuation scheme will replace Labor's scheme under which the rich receive tax benefits of 33.25 per cent while the low income earners receive benefits of only 6.25 per cent. The Fightback package provides health insurance rebates of up to $800 per annum, targeted at those who are most in need.

The Fightback package provides for the abolition of the regressive payroll tax. The pharmaceutical allowance will be extended and increased. All pensions, including aged, disability, veterans, war widows and sole parents pensions, will be increased by 8 per cent. That will more than offset any projected increase in prices under Fightback, which we estimated at 4.4 per cent but which Treasury estimated at 3.6 per cent. The Fightback package provides for a fairer assets test, special GST tax credits for those not covered by pension increases or tax cuts, extra health rebates for people over 65 years of age, and wealth compensation of $2,000 for those over 60 years of age, targeted at those with taxable incomes of less than $30,000. People who choose to work after they turn 65 and defer taking the pension will receive a larger pension later on. Finally, the Fightback package provides $90m for child care. That is what the coalition will do for the battlers whom the Labor Party is worried about. One does not even need to compare the lists. It is obvious from the lists that, under the coalition package, people are far better off. When one looks at its substance, the Fightback package leaves One Nation for dead.

The Labor Party has made a great deal of the single rate of 15 per cent goods and services tax to be introduced on 1 October 1994. It is important to realise that exemptions to that tax are provided, and they are provided for a very good reason. Health and education services are exempted. Government provision of non-commercial activities, including local government rates, is exempted. The sale of a business as a going concern is exempted. Welfare, religious and charitable institutions are exempted. Exports are exempted. The Liberal Party is about getting Australia exporting and being internationally competitive. Residential rates and construction are exempted. Financial services are exempted. Gambling and lotteries are exempted. The 15 per cent GST simply does not mean a 15 per cent rise in prices. If the effect of GST on prices is to be calculated, all of the taxes that will be abolished have to be taken into consideration. A calculation has to be made of the abolition of sales tax of 10 per cent, 20 per cent or 30 per cent which applies to a whole range of items which are bought by ordinary people such as us. I refer to taxes on items such as fruit juice, toilet soap and photographs, and to petrol tax and payroll tax. It is those taxes that will be removed.

The other battlers about whom the Labor Party wants to talk are the pensioners and the retirees. Under Fightback, they are fully protected. Pensions will rise by 8 per

cent, which is far greater than the estimated 4.4 per cent increase in prices. Tax cuts will be given to pensioners as well as to everybody else. Pensioners will retain their existing benefits. They will receive savings value compensation. They will have an improved Medicare system. They will be able to take out private health insurance for private hospital coverage. They will not have to rely simply on a welfare system that is provided by Labor Governments. If they drive a car, they will be able to buy petrol at something like 19c a litre less than they are paying now. The self-funded retirees, those people who have worked all their lives, who have built up their assets, built up their savings and are looking after themselves in their retirement, will also be protected. Their tax rates will be reduced. They will be given GST tax credits. Their savings will be protected through a compensation plan. They will be given rebates for taking out private health insurance. They will pay a lower capital gains tax and, like everybody else, their petrol will be 19c a litre cheaper than it is now.

There is no question that Australians will face a major decision at the next Federal election. One of their choices is the One Nation package of the Prime Minister, a man who has seen a reduction in our living standards since he has been Treasurer and then Prime Minister, a person who has put one million people into the unemployment queues, and who has seen our foreign debt go through the roof. People have a choice between that package and something which John Hewson is promoting, the Fightback package, which will create meaningful jobs that will last. By the year 2000, it will create two million jobs. Even the Prime Minister recognises that 200 000 extra jobs can be created by abolishing payroll tax. That is what the Liberal Party will do. The coalition will create a climate which rewards effort. It will create a climate which protects the aged and the needy and, most importantly, which restores national confidence and national pride in Australia. The Labor Party might wish to run a scare campaign on the GST. In by-elections a few weeks ago, Bannon tried it and it did not work. The Labor Party also tried it in Wills and it did not work there, either. I remind members opposite that, in South Australia, while the Liberal Party and National Party vote remained solid, the Labor Party was outpolled by the Democrats. That is how good the Labor Party is! That is how good its packages are! Fightback is an honest, open program. It addresses Australia's problems in an honest way and puts forward a comprehensive plan for dealing with them. It tells it as it is. It does not try to hide it from the Australian people in the way that Keating does. It is what must be implemented if we are to get Australia going.

Time expired.

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—Minister for Resource Industries) (12.27 p.m.): The job of winding up this debate on behalf of the Goss Labor Government is an easy task. Today in this House, the opposition parties were given an opportunity to tell the Parliament and the people of Queensland exactly what the Fightback package meant. They failed, and they failed miserably. A few moments ago, we heard the member for Moggill say that, with Fightback, people get what they see. Of course, that is what concerns us on this side of the House. What we see frightens us. The honourable member then said that the schemes will be paid for by cutbacks in other areas. However, today, not one member of the Opposition informed this House what those areas would be. They want the people of this country to give the Liberal Party a blank cheque at the next election. Today, I was looking forward to being able to respond to the contributions made by the members of the Opposition. However, they have simply come out with the same old cliches, the same old political jargon and the same old platitudes as they have in the past. They have said nothing new at all. They say that the discussion in this debate should be about the One Nation package. Through its leader, the Liberal Party has been presenting Fightback and asking the nation to discuss it and debate it. Of course, that is what we are doing today.

The goods and services tax is the policy that emphasises the real difference between the coalition and the Australian Labor Party. This is the choice which the people of Australia will have at the next Federal election. This debate today is about the effects that the GST will have on our great State of Queensland and in particular the effects it will have on the men, the women and children who live in it. Dr Hewson and the boys from Brazil claim that by changing the tax mix towards consumption taxes,

efficiency gains will occur and savings will increase. Sure they will increase! The cost of a weekly trip to the supermarket will be increased by 15 per cent yet they say that people will save more. Although 15 per cent will be added to the price of beer, petrol, clothing, to the cost of keeping warm in winter and keeping cool in summer and to the cost of going to the movies, to buying a TV, hiring a video, buying a car, a fridge or a toothbrush, or taking a cat to the vet, the Nationals and Liberals say that we will be saving more. What a joke! This certainly has not happened in the United States, and it certainly has not happened in New Zealand. Mr Hewson, Mr Borbidge and Mrs Sheldon realise that, so they now talk about changing tack. They are offering other measures to stimulate national savings, such as tax breaks for savings and changes to superannuation. Dr Hewson and the boys from Brazil say the goods and services tax will increase inflation by only 4.4 per cent. They say there will be no lasting impact on the trend rate of inflation. A 4.4 per cent increase in inflation—just when Australia's inflation rate is being brought under control at 1.7 per cent! Maybe Dr Hewson and the Ferrari set have not noticed, but the rest of Australia—every ordinary man, woman and child—has good reason to be proud of Australia's low inflation rate. That low rate certainly did not come easily.

Honourable members should remember what happened across the Tasman when New Zealand introduced a 10 per cent goods and services tax. Inflation soared immediately by 8.9 per cent, of which 6.5 per cent was attributed directly to the goods and services tax. The goods and services tax rate in New Zealand was increased in 1989 by a further 2.5 per cent. As a result, inflation rose immediately by the same amount. Dr Hewson and the boys from Brazil should go out into the streets of Queensland and ask ordinary Queenslanders how they feel about a sudden leap in the inflation rate. Ask the thousands of young Queenslanders who have just bought their first home—at interest rates nearly half what they were two or three years ago—how they feel about it. I am sure those people do not want an increase in their payments.

The best financial brains in this country have agreed that monetary policy would have to be tightened if a goods and services tax was introduced. It is all very well for Dr Hewson to talk about one-off blimps in the CPI index. However, the ordinary men, women and children of Queensland do not want, and they certainly do not need, one-off blimps in their cost of living. The Labor Government realises this. In its first two Budgets, it kept its promises of no new taxes. The 1992-93 Budget will contain no new taxes, no increases in tax rates and no increases in charges on average greater than increases in the CPI. This Budget will be a difficult one to put together. However, if Dr Hewson and his boys from Brazil are allowed to implement their Fightback package, putting together a balanced Budget will be impossible. Of course, members of the Opposition do not have to worry about that, because it will be many, many years before they will have the opportunity to bring down a Budget in this Parliament. In their rush to embrace the Fightback package, the State National Party and the Liberal Party are supporting these sorts of cutbacks in Commonwealth funding to Queensland.

Honourable members should examine the effects on this State if the Fightback package is introduced. There will be a 5 per cent cut in financial assistance grants, which are worth about $140m. There will be a further $150m cut in financial assistance grants—mostly in favour of New South Wales and Victoria—due to the impact on the distribution of such grants as a result of the abolition of payroll tax. There will be a $60m reduction in funds for public housing—and the Liberals talk about the battlers! There will be a $15m reduction in urban public transport funding. There will be $30m worth of responsibilities transferred to the States by the Commonwealth, in areas such as legal aid, the environment and occupational health and safety. In addition to this annual cost of nearly $400m, Dr Hewson would also abolish the Building Better Cities program, which would drastically affect the plans for the Gold Coast railway, South Townsville and inner-Brisbane, at an all-up cost of around $100m.

Every honourable member in this Chamber understands the importance of tourism to the Queensland economy. Tourism increases contributed approximately 4 per cent of Queensland's gross State product in 1990, which places tourism behind only mining, agriculture and the manufacturing sectors. Yet Dr Hewson's Fightback package gives

tourism a kick where it hurts most. Other export industries are exempted from GST, but not tourism. What does this mean? It means that Australia will suddenly look less attractive to hundreds of thousands of overseas tourists. All tour packages will cost an extra 15 per cent, as would all accommodation, all entertainment and all souvenirs. There is no point in expecting domestic tourism to make up the shortfall, because under Fightback, ordinary Australians will not be able to afford to take a holiday.

In my portfolio of Resource Industries, Fightback would have an immediate negative effect. An international bank has recently expressed concern about the future of Queensland's vast oil shale project near Gladstone. Dr Hewson has refused to give the company an assurance of support for this project. He has refused to match the Labor Government's offer of a one-off excise exemption for gasoline produced from shale oil. The Liberal Party has put Fightback ahead of one of the most exciting projects for Queensland for many years.

The impact of Dr Hewson's consumption tax cannot be underestimated. It will affect every man, woman and child in this nation, from the cradle to the grave. The Liberal Party's solution to Australia's problems is no solution at all. Fightback means that the price of luxuries such as Ferraris, pearls and French champagne will come tumbling down. However, it means that bread, butter, milk, clothes, electricity—and, as the member for Mulgrave stated before—Vegemite, baby food, telephone calls and all the other necessities of life would go up. It will cost more to start a family. It will cost more to die. There will be an additional 15 per cent on the cost of everything, from the cradle to the grave.

An independent study by Treasury shows that 70 per cent of families with a full-time wage and salary earner would be worse off under Fightback. The figure is 60 per cent for farm and self-employed families. A one-income family with children earning less than $57,000 a year would be up to $8 a week worse off. People earning $25,000 a year would be $14 a week worse off. A family with a self-employed breadwinner, who earns less than $61,000 a year, would be anything up to $12 a week worse off. Someone who earns $100,000 a year would be $73.20 a week better off. That is the difference between the philosophies of the parties in this Parliament. A one-income family with children earning less than $57,000 a year would be up to $8 a week worse off. People earning $25,000 a year would be $14 a week worse off. A family with a self-employed breadwinner, who earns less than $61,000 a year, would be anything up to $12 a week worse off. Someone who earns $100,000 a year would be $73.20 a week better off. That is the difference between the philosophies of the parties in this Parliament.

A GST has not worked anywhere in the world. It certainly will not work in Australia. A GST has increased in every country in which it has been tried. In England, the GST went up from 10 per cent to 17.5 per cent. A GST is divisive. It will split the nation and it will split the State at a time when we should all be working together. It has even split the Opposition in Queensland. In 1980, in the lead-up to his election to this Parliament, the Leader of the National Party, the member for Surfers Paradise, said that he would fight all the way to stop the value added tax that was being considered by the Fraser coalition Government. At the time the Leader of the National Party stated that the new tax—

> ". . . would prove to be extremely detrimental to intensive tourism and small business localities such as the Gold Coast and the National Party is completely opposed to its introduction."

Mr Borbidge has now turned full circle from his stand in 1980 when he rose to victory on the coat-tails of his opposition to a consumption tax. That was in 1980. Of course, in 1989, the Leader of the National Party distanced himself further from the Liberal camp when he described a consumption tax as—

> ". . . irresponsible and potentially dangerous to the tourist and small business sectors."

It is obvious that the member for Surfers Paradise has sold out his own beliefs and caved in to the Liberal Party's Fightback proposal. The Queensland National Party is in

total disarray over the consumption tax. Mark Stoneman went down to the Fightback love-in in Canberra. Like Paul, he saw the light on the road to Damascus.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! I remind the Minister to refer to members by their correct title.

Mr McGRADY: I apologise. The honourable member obviously did not read the Fightback package before he went down to Canberra. The political boy from the Burdekin was sold a pup by his political masters in Canberra. As a result, because of the package that he endorses, the industry that he represents will end up in chaos. The Seamen's Union has produced a special banknote to commemorate Dr Hewson's Fightback package. It looks like a $5 note in size, shape and colour, but the big difference is that the note is marked "$4.25". Under the coalition's policy, that is all a $5 note will be worth. Of course, the note is a fake; it is as phoney as the Fightback package itself. That phoney package will reduce the value of Australia's $5 note to $4.25, and Dr Hewson will slice 15 per cent off the purchasing power of every man, woman and child in this State and nation. There is no shortage of faces on Dr Hewson's phoney banknote. Dr Hewson and the boys from Brazil are all there.

Dr Hewson is threatening to bring in New Zealand's style of industrial relations. Anybody who watched the Four Corners program last night would have to be afraid of what that would mean. In New Zealand, people now work longer hours for less pay. Some people have taken pay cuts of up to 30 per cent. Of course, the age pensioners in that country have been asked to accept a reduction in their pensions. In Dr Hewson's Australia, people will be able to negotiate their own wage with their bosses. Dr Hewson states that he will set a minimum wage but, of course, he will not say what that will be. As Australians, and as Queenslanders, we are at the crossroads. The path we choose will shape our nation's future and will decide the sort of life that our children, and their children, will lead. The Australian people are being asked to punt on their future. The old National Party of this State, with all its faults—and it certainly had many—at least claimed to stand up for Queensland. Many times it did. Today, the National Party and the Liberal Party have demonstrated that they are prepared to go down to Canberra and accept their riding instructions from their political masters. In short, they have sold out this State, and when the time comes, they will be treated accordingly by the people of this State. They have betrayed Queensland. In particular, they have betrayed the people who live in mining communities, farming communities, and those people who live in the regional and remote parts of Queensland. I urge the members of this House to reject the Opposition's motion and to support the amendment.

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (12.43 p.m.), in reply: The most significant development from this debate today has been the failure of the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer and all the other key economic Ministers in the Goss Labor Government, to support the One Nation statement.

Mr Littleproud: Most obvious.

Mr BORBIDGE: As my colleague has said, it is most obvious. Today, the Opposition gave the Government an opportunity to compare One Nation with Fightback. Every key economic Minister, from the Premier down, wimped out of the debate. Instead, one by one, a procession of apologists for Labor mismanagement gave more of the same misrepresentation, more of the same deceit, and more of the same misinformation to smear what is the most comprehensive range of policy initiatives ever to be put before the people of Australia.

Mr Dollin: Can you tell us about tariffs?

Mr BORBIDGE: I am happy to talk about tariffs. I will refer to the Government's policy on tariff protection under One Nation, that is, no tariffs now, no trade-offs.

Mr Dollin: You want zero tariffs?

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member had his chance. He could have participated in the debate, but instead he interjects.

Dr Watson: He could not have done any worse than the Minister.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member for Moggill has said, he could not have done any worse than the Minister. I am happy to respond to the provocation. Under One Nation, there will be a reduction in sugar tariffs—effective from 1 July—without any compensation whatsoever for the industry, which is in the middle of the worst recession in 60 years. In the fine print of the Fightback package, there is not a move to zero tariffs but a move to negligible tariffs, to begin after all the compensatory factors such as waterfront reform, industrial relations reform and micro-economic reform across-the-board have been implemented. The honourable member for Maryborough should not raise his head on the tariff issue. If he wanted to do something intelligent, he should have got his Premier to ask the Prime Minister why his colleagues—his mates in Canberra—are dropping the sugar tariff from 1 July without any associated micro-economic reform or compensation.

Mr Dollin: And you're going to wipe it altogether.

Mr BORBIDGE: The member for Maryborough has closed four timber mills during his career in this House. Obviously, he is now into closing sugar mills. His record speaks for itself, and the people of his electorate will pass judgment at the next election. An absolutely shonky amendment has been moved by the member for Mulgrave. Once again, this shows the duplicity, hypocrisy and double standards of the Goss Labor Government. The amendment makes no mention of this Government's support for One Nation. Government members have conveniently ignored their own Labor Party policy. They have formulated five reasons why Fightback should not be supported. The first one relates to the impact of the 15 per cent consumption tax on ordinary Queenslanders. Government members have based this not on Commonwealth Treasury documents but on a shonky survey conducted by the Women's Electoral Lobby. By its own admission, that lobby admits that it did not take into consideration the flow-on of benefits that will accrue to manufacturing industry. I refer to the abolition of payroll tax to create jobs; the abolition of fuel taxes and fuel excises; and the deregulation of the labour market. The grab by the Premier, as reported in last Monday's *Courier-Mail*, was taken straight from the Fightback package, which will create greater flexibility in the labour market to tackle Queensland's chronic youth unemployment problem.

Mr Stoneman: The only thing was he didn't go far enough.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the member for Burdekin said: the Premier did not go far enough. But he used words contained in the Fightback document. By this amendment, the Government accepts that the survey conducted by the Women's Electoral Lobby did not take into account the flow-on benefits for manufacturing industry. Government members are decrying that dog food will be more expensive under GST. What is more important: jobs for Queensland kids and jobs for Queenslanders, or dog food being a little bit more expensive? Members opposite claim that a 15 per cent GST will be applied across-the-board. Australia already has a consumption tax. It already has a secret, hidden consumption tax through the sales tax regime of 10 per cent, 20 per cent and 30 per cent.

Mr Littleproud: $10 billion.

Mr BORBIDGE: A consumption tax worth $10 billion is already presided over by the Labor Party in Government. Yet it has the hide to claim that it opposes a consumption tax. Through the current sales tax process, the Government has perfected the most hidden, most devious and most sinister consumption tax that has ever been foisted on the Australian people. The second reason given by the Labor Party for not supporting the Fightback package is the plan to remove all tariffs—including that on sugar—by the end of the decade. As I indicated before when I was assaulted by the honourable member for Maryborough, that tariff issue speaks for itself. If Government members want to talk about tariffs, let us debate the tariff issue under One Nation compared with that under Fightback.

The greatest degree of hypocrisy surely must be the third reason, that is, the impact on Queensland's tobacco growers. Which party and which Government has presided over the deregulation of the tobacco industry? Not the National Party or the Liberal Party, but the Labor Party! Which party and which Government is changing the

laws relating to the packaging of cigarettes without consultation? Not the conservative coalition Opposition in Canberra, and certainly not the National Party in Queensland. Which Government and which political party is stopping tobacco sponsorship of sport? It is not members on this side of the House. Yet those hypocrites opposite have the nerve to come into this House and claim that somehow the GST will sacrifice the tobacco industry in Queensland. Who is sacrificing whom, and in what industry, is already well evident.

Members have heard the old furphy about the employment effects from the impact of the GST on tourism. No mention is made of the abolition of fuel excises or the hundreds of thousands of dollars in savings to cruise boat operators along the coast of Queensland. No mention is made of savings to the aviation industry or the motoring industry in Queensland. I remind members opposite that more than 80 per cent of tourists who visit the Gold Coast do so by car. Under Fightback, every time that those people fill their cars with petrol for the drive to the Gold Coast, that will represent a saving to them of $11.40, compared to One Nation. Again, the Government is dragging more red herrings across the trail.

Time and time again, the misinformation campaign of the Labor Party speaks for itself. Perhaps the highlight of this great, intellectual amendment is the blow to Queensland farmers—the effect on primary producers. As the honourable member who moved the amendment would well know, what he said is factually incorrect. Fightback enjoys the support of the National Farmers Federation and every primary industry group across Australia. What the Government is saying here about the degree of indebtedness that will have to be carried by primary producers is wrong, dead wrong, dead wrong. I challenge honourable members opposite to table the Queensland Treasury figures that they say are their justification for the opposition to Fightback. It is very clear that public servants have been working late at night in Queensland, just like their colleagues in Canberra, to try to justify for the petty minds opposite that Fightback should not be supported.

I will respond to comments made by the one Minister who was permitted to contribute to this debate on turnarounds on the issue of a consumption tax. I remind the Labor Party that Prime Minister Keating advocated a consumption tax as option C at the 1985 tax summit. He supported it as the way to go in terms of tax reform. What happened on that occasion? It was scuttled by the ACTU, not on the floor of the summit but in a back-room deal that was done in hotel rooms. The tax summit was presented as a fait accompli. That was how the wheels fell off the Keating tax cart. He supported a consumption tax as the means of real tax reform, and he was rolled. As I have said quite openly on other occasions, traditionally I have been cautious about support for a consumption tax. But Fightback is about more than GST; it is about an opportunity for Governments across Australia to abolish payroll tax, a tax that has been a scourge on jobs for over a generation. In the middle of the worst recession in 60 years, our priorities are so warped in this country that we tax employers who have the guts to take on extra staff. It is a tax that simply cannot be justified in Australia today. We have the opportunity to do something with fuel excise and to deregulate the labour market in the way in which the Premier wants to deal with youth unemployment and even in the way the Minister for Tourism wants to deal with new tourism projects only. The Premier talks about being financially responsible, but the Government takes the good bits out of Fightback and says, “This is a good idea. Let’s do it.” But it is not prepared, on the other hand, to adopt the policies that will be necessary to make sure that those two particular initiatives can be brought to fruition successfully. I say to the Premier and to Ministers that they simply cannot have it both ways. If they want to tackle the problems of 153 300 unemployed Queenslanders and a youth unemployment rate of 28 per cent, they have to do better. As has been made clear by every Government speaker who has contributed to this debate, there is not one answer in One Nation, which is a flimsy document which for two or three paragraphs refers to a four-year plan and infrastructure. There is no backup. It is a document that is presented on a false economic premise that cannot be sustained—a document that has been built on shonky economic figures.

Once again, the untruths continued in this debate. We were told that, because of the proposed cut in the financial assistance grant of 5 per cent, Queensland would be $140m worse off. Again, Government speakers ignored the fact that the abolition of payroll tax will carry with it a compensation by the Federal Government. Time and time again we see a failure by Ministers to estimate the direct and indirect costs of sales tax and fuel excise on Queensland Government expenditure. Under Fightback, we simply will not have those taxes any more. The savings that will accrue will be absolutely immense.

I have already dealt with the situation in terms of primary producers and the fact that the Fightback package is endorsed by the National Farmers Federation and by the major producer groups. But the Fightback package is about more than just a GST. As was mentioned by honourable members on this side of the House, the GST will have a one-off impact on price level, which has been independently calculated at 4.4 per cent. The Treasury analysis of the price impact is even lower, at 3.6 per cent. Yet all Government members can talk about is the price of dog food. With the financial mess in which Australia is today, the last priority of any member of Parliament should be the price of dog food. To ensure that the package does not have a regressive impact, the coalition has been at pains to detail its compensatory measures. As I mentioned earlier, the abolition of those seven taxes will allow for the funding of the largest personal income tax cuts in Australia's history.

Mr DOLLIN: I rise to a point of order. I wish to make a personal explanation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! The member will resume his seat. This is not the time to make personal explanations. Under Standing Orders, an honourable member cannot interrupt another member during the course of his speech.

Mr DOLLIN: I will wait for another day.

Mr BORBIDGE: The honourable member never ceases to amaze me.

Mr Gilmore: Or himself.

Mr BORBIDGE: Or himself, as the honourable member suggests.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If he wants to, the Leader of the Opposition can give the honourable member permission to make a personal explanation.

Mr BORBIDGE: I will think about that, Mr Deputy Speaker. As has been said on numerous occasions, I will pass. The cuts in personal income tax are directed to low and middle income earners and include the raising of the tax-free threshold to $7,000. Other elements of compensation are an increase of 8 per cent in age, service and other pensions. Other Commonwealth benefits will also increase by 6 per cent. The coalition will be providing retirees over the age of 60 who have annual taxable incomes under $30,000 with lump-sum compensation up to $2,500 for the effect of the GST on their savings.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr BORBIDGE: Prior to the luncheon adjournment, I was making the point that, unlike under One Nation, under the Fightback package there are various compensation measures for those people in our community who need assistance. The coalition has also carefully targeted people whose incomes are too low to be adequately compensated by tax cuts, but who do not receive a full pension or other benefit, with goods and services tax credits based on taxable income and the one-off price effect of the tax. For example, in the pharmaceuticals area the coalition will provide everyone over the age of 65 who is earning less than $50,000 per year with a pharmaceutical benefits concession card. First home buyers will be provided with a cash benefit of $2,000 for the purchase of new and established housing. The point must be made that compensation for the introduction of GST is best provided through extra cash. Exempting food, for example, makes less sense than providing compensation for price increases through the social security and personal tax systems. According to the Bureau of Statistics, figures clearly show that the richest 10 per cent of Australian society spends about three times as much on food as the poorest 10 per cent. To make food

tax free, therefore, would be equivalent to a $3 tax cut for the well off, compared with a $1 cut for the less well off. Lastly, in recognition of the special role performed by charities and religious institutions, they will be zero rated for GST purposes. In addition, various voluntary agencies, such as the Salvation Army, will receive extra funding of $50m in recognition of the enormous role that they play in delivering services to the most needy. The point should again be made that, unlike One Nation, when taken as a whole, the Fightback package is a progressive package. This contrasts with the approach of the Labor Party since 1983 whereby a single-income couple with two children on average weekly earnings are nearly 5 per cent worse off than they were when Labor came to power.

The other point that I wish to make relates to comments made by the Minister for Transport as part of the Labor Party propaganda exercise. The Minister stated that the abolition of fuel excise threatened to blow a $5 billion hole in the Fightback package. He also stated that the impact would strike hard at the funds available for roads. Wrong again! Fightback is fully funded. GST revenue completely covers the $6.6 billion cost of abolishing all fuel excise taxes. What Labor has failed to realise is that Federal Government spending on roads and road maintenance is to be drawn wholly from consolidated revenue. There has been an unequivocal guarantee that there will be no Commonwealth fuel-based road-user charges. The bottom line is the commitment to fully fund roads along with the absolute commitment to abolish all fuel excise tax. The big winners will be all fuel users who will have greatly cheaper fuel costs. Every motorist will save, as I indicated earlier, on average $11.40 a tank full. Under Fightback, transport will be massively cheaper.

In conclusion, I again refer to this dynamic, complex document—the summary of One Nation; the answer to Australia's ills as proposed by the Government's illegitimate Prime Minister and today ignored by the Premier and the Treasurer who are not even prepared to support it.

An Opposition member: And the other speakers as well.

Mr BORBIDGE: And the other speakers. I want to remind the House that the motion was about not only censuring Ministers for misrepresenting Fightback but also challenging them to debate One Nation. Each and every Minister in this Government and each and every backbencher failed that challenge. Government members had the opportunity to support One Nation, and failed to do so. Let us look at some of the enormous highlights of this featherweight document put together by this lightweight political party. The main point of One Nation was to bail out Joan Kirner and to save Victoria from bankruptcy. Under One Nation that is where the political largess went. It is a prime example of States such as Queensland, that have been prudent financial managers, being called upon to bail out a Government that has been criminally negligent in terms of its financial management, the finances of which have been totally corrupted in the worst example of financial mismanagement since Federation. That was the main purpose of One Nation: to try to help Mrs Kirner after the former Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, wrote to congratulate the former Premier, John Cain, on his services to the people of Victoria.

The other main benefit of One Nation—a $300m once-only bribe to families, a cheque in hand—was a vain effort to buy the former Prime Minister's seat. The first cheques that went out under this $300m bribe to families went to families in the electorate of Wills. What did the $300m buy for the Labor Party? It bought an Independent football coach, because not even the people of Wills would be fooled by such a blatant attempt at political bribery. As to the promised micro-economic reforms—for micro-economic reform under Labor, read tariff reductions without compensating reductions in business costs. It allegedly promoted enterprise bargaining—ACTU style—as agreed to by Martin Ferguson. The fact is that the industrial relations courts at both State and Federal levels already had the right and the power to push for enterprise-based agreements, but virtually none have gone through. What is new in One Nation? Again, absolutely nothing.

What about the Better Cities program? How many times can a Government announce the Gold Coast rail link or the widening of the rail gauge out to the port of Brisbane, or the improvements to the port of Townsville, which amount to a $90m apology to the people of north Queensland because Wayne Goss did nothing for two and a half years?

Mr Stoneman: Nothing for north Queensland at all.

Mr BORBIDGE: Nothing for north Queensland, as the member for Burdekin says.

An Opposition member: Nothing for south Queensland.

An Opposition member: Nothing for west Queensland, either.

Mr BORBIDGE: Not much for anyone at all! Let us have a look at these projects one by one. The Better Cities program is somehow necessary for the Gold Coast rail link. I have news for the economic guru, the Minister for Resource Industries. The Gold Coast rail link was planned years ago during the life of the previous Government.

Mr Elder interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: No. The land acquisition program for the Gold Coast rail link was completed during the term of the previous Government, not during this term of the honourable member's Government under the Better Cities program. Of course, the improvements to the port of Brisbane are simply old hat and, as a result of the negotiations in respect of Queensland Nickel, the $90m apology promised by Premier Goss for the port of Townsville now looks like being picked up by the Canadians. What we are seeing today from this Government is a policy failure and a policy apology. It is all very well for this Government to pick out of Fightback the bits that it likes, but when it comes to being responsible, it is not possible to take the whole package. Not one Government member is prepared to defend his or her party's alternative and not one is prepared to get up and support One Nation.

Mr Perrett: A dead nation.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the honourable member reminds me, it is a dead nation. As I indicated earlier, the amendment before the House is a fraud. It is based on a shonky survey that did not take into account the savings to manufacturing industry. Its reservation in respect of tariffs better represents the One Nation policy than does Fightback. The crocodile tears for the tobacco industry come from a political party that has effectively destroyed the industry, changed its packaging, stopped its advertising and has now moved to prevent the tobacco industry's sponsorship of sport. The item in the pathetic little amendment in respect of tourism utterly denies the enormous advantages of savings in transport costs derived from a reduction in fuel excise and the eventual abolition of fuel excise and the savings to be made by labour market deregulation, as well as the ability to deal with penalty rates and provide flexibility for young people who are unemployed. Item 5 of the amendment ignores the fact that every primary producer organisation in Australia has endorsed Fightback and has effectively rejected One Nation. What the Labor Party is saying in its amendment is, "Forget about the National Farmers Federation, forget about the UGA, forget about the Canegrowers, forget about the Cattlemen's Union, and forget about all the other peak industry groups. They don't really know what is good for primary producers but we in the Labor Party do." I say that that is typical of the Labor Government's attitude when it comes to dealing with anything at all relating to primary production, farmers, and rural and remote Australia. If I had the choice of opinion on what is good for primary industries between one coming from the NFF and one from the member for Mount Isa, Treasurer De Lacy or Premier Goss, I know to whom I would be listening. The Opposition does not accept the pathetic amendment that has been proposed by a Government backbencher. We express our disappointment that not one of the 54 Government members in this Parliament was prepared to actively defend One Nation and, instead, gave us more selective misrepresentation of the Fightback package.

Mr Randell: Not even Wayne Goss.

Mr BORBIDGE: That is right. Time and time again, the Premier wimps out. Every time a debate might embarrass him or he will not like it, he leaves the Parliament. Heaven knows that members of Parliament have been here for only 16 days in five and a half months. He will not come through the doors of the Cabinet room to debate the issue. He will make allegations during question time, and he prostitutes question time, yet when a debate can be brought on he will not be part of it, nor will the Treasurer. The Minister for Transport is the Minister assisting the Premier on economic matters, but he will not be part of it. They have to hide behind a junior Minister and two oncers from the back bench.

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

AYES, 31		NOES, 48	
Beanland	Stephan	Ardill	Livingstone
Booth	Stoneman	Barber	Mackenroth
Borbidge	Turner	Beattie	McElligott
Connor	Watson	Bird	McGrady
Coomber		Braddy	Nunn
Cooper		Bredhauer	Palaszczuk
Dunworth		Briskey	Pearce
Elliott		Burns	Power
FitzGerald		Campbell	Robson
Gilmore		Casey	Schwarten
Goss J. N.		Clark	Smith
Gunn		Comben	Smyth
Harper		Davies	Spence
Hobbs		De Lacy	Sullivan J. H.
Horan		Dollin	Sullivan T. B.
Lester		Eaton	Szczerbanik
Lingard		Edmond	Vaughan
Littleproud		Elder	Warner
McCauley		Fenlon	Welford
Perrett		Foley	Wells
Randell		Gibbs	Woodgate
Rowell		Goss W. K.	
Santoro	*Tellers:*	Hamill	*Tellers:*
Slack	Neal	Hayward	Prest
Springborg	Quinn	Hollis	Pitt

Resolved in the negative.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 49		NOES, 30	
Ardill	Mackenroth	Beanland	Stoneman
Barber	McElligott	Booth	Turner
Beattie	McGrady	Borbidge	
Bird	Milliner	Connor	
Braddy	Nunn	Coomber	
Bredhauer	Palaszczuk	Dunworth	
Briskey	Pearce	Elliott	
Burns	Power	FitzGerald	
Campbell	Robson	Gilmore	
Casey	Schwarten	Goss J. N.	
Clark	Smith	Gunn	
Comben	Smyth	Harper	
Davies	Spence	Hobbs	
De Lacy	Sullivan J. H.	Horan	
Dollin	Sullivan T. B.	Johnson	
Eaton	Szczerbanik	Lester	
Edmond	Vaughan	Lingard	
Elder	Warner	Littleproud	
Fenlon	Welford	McCauley	
Foley	Wells	Perrett	
Gibbs	Woodgate	Randell	
Goss W. K.		Rowell	
Hamill		Santoro	
Hayward	*Tellers:*	Slack	*Tellers:*
Hollis	Prest	Springborg	Neal
Livingstone	Pitt	Stephan	Quinn

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

AYES, 49		NOES, 31	
Ardill	Mackenroth	Beanland	Stoneman
Barber	McElligott	Booth	Turner
Beattie	McGrady	Borbidge	Watson
Bird	Milliner	Connor	
Braddy	Nunn	Coomber	
Bredhauer	Palaszczuk	Dunworth	
Briskey	Pearce	Elliott	
Burns	Power	FitzGerald	
Campbell	Robson	Gilmore	
Casey	Schwarten	Goss J. N.	
Clark	Smith	Gunn	
Comben	Smyth	Harper	
Davies	Spence	Hobbs	
De Lacy	Sullivan J. H.	Horan	
Dollin	Sullivan T. B.	Johnson	
Eaton	Szczerbanik	Lester	
Edmond	Vaughan	Lingard	
Elder	Warner	Littleproud	
Fenlon	Welford	McCauley	
Foley	Wells	Perrett	
Gibbs	Woodgate	Randell	
Goss W. K.		Rowell	
Hamill		Santoro	
Hayward	*Tellers:*	Slack	*Tellers:*
Hollis	Prest	Springborg	Neal
Livingstone	Pitt	Stephan	Quinn

Resolved in the affirmative.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mr J. Cavanagh

Mr GILMORE (Tablelands) (3.01 p.m.): Mr Speaker, I rise out of exasperation, sheer exasperation——

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr GILMORE: As I say, I rise out of exasperation, sheer exasperation, with this Government and with two of its Ministers, in particular the Minister for Justice and the Attorney-General, and the manner in which they have failed in their duty to a citizen of Queensland, one Mr John Cavanagh. Two years ago, this man had assets estimated at $2m. Today, he is a bankrupt. He has lost his two businesses, a trawler and a processing factory, his house and his family through the most horrifying misuse of Executive power that I have witnessed in almost six years as a member of Parliament.

Briefly, John Cavanagh's vessel, the Steven C, was arrested, subject to the Admiralty Act, in respect of a dispute over $17,867.32 with the receivers of a chandlery company. The date of the arrest was 18 December 1990. During the period of the arrest, the vessel was damaged extensively by wind and water and collision and grounding, causing the vessel to be unseaworthy and, upon release from arrest, unable to be put to work, namely, prawn trawling. From that time on, the fortunes of the owner, John Cavanagh, have declined to their current parlous state, all because the Crown has refused to acknowledge its responsibilities and to compensate Mr Cavanagh for his loss. The bailiff, or in this case the marshall of the Supreme Court, is a servant of the Crown and his actions therefore are the actions of the Crown.

Under the terms of the Admiralty Act, a vessel may be arrested, to be held by a third party—the marshall—until the matter under dispute is resolved, either by private treaty or by the courts. While the vessel is so held, the marshall, on behalf of the Crown, has a duty of care to ensure the safe keeping of the vessel. The marshall also must ensure that the Crown is properly indemnified by the plaintiff. In this case, he did neither. During the period of the arrest, comprehensive insurance held by the owner of the vessel has no force and no value. During the period of arrest, the owner may not board the vessel or otherwise deal with it without express permission.

Honourable members can now begin to appreciate the dilemma that confronted John Cavanagh when, on 23 December, cyclone Joy threatened the coast and later caused severe damage to his vessel. He finally managed to gain access to that vessel and discovered hatches and doors to be left open and numerous items of equipment to have been stolen. The security company employed by the plaintiff was not in attendance because it was a public holiday. I might add that the marshall was on holidays in Warwick. Later, the vessel was moved to Admiralty Island and anchored on the same anchor with another vessel. They dragged the anchor and were grounded, when, at that time, according to the marshall's report, further damage occurred to the engine area. Further damage occurred due to the lack of preventive maintenance to the vessel whilst it was under arrest.

Is it unreasonable for Mr Cavanagh to seek redress—compensation from loss brought down on him through no fault of his own but through the incompetence of an officer of the Crown? Of course, that is not unreasonable. For that reason, I have tried valiantly, but in vain, to rectify this matter. Over the past 12 months, I have approached both the Minister for Justice and the Attorney-General and numerous members of their senior staff. Therefore, no-one can accuse me of not giving the system or the Government adequate opportunity to right this enormous wrong before bringing it to the attention of the Parliament. Six months ago, I was to raise the matter in this place, only to be dissuaded at the eleventh hour by the Attorney, as he claimed the matter was sub judice, and also that to raise the matter might prejudice negotiations which the Government was allegedly about to enter into over the matter. Nothing could have been further from the truth. No negotiations have been entered into, and the Government has

apparently deliberately embarked upon a course designed to confound John Cavanagh in his attempts to get access to the courts.

The Attorney recently made much of condemning the legal fraternity in this State and railing at the cost of justice for the ordinary man because of legal manoeuvring, but now he blatantly uses these selfsame tactics on a citizen of Queensland in an attempt to destroy him, simply to mitigate the cost to the Treasury—and damn the individual.

The Crown has sought to confuse this issue, by raising irrelevant matters outside the scope of the case of Cavanagh v. The Crown. The case is a simple one and must not be confused. The marshall, while acting as the honest broker, holding a vessel under arrest for the duration of a dispute, failed in his duty to—

"(a) ensure that all hatches and doors on the vessel were locked to prevent—

(i) the theft of items of equipment and other property from the vessel;

(ii) water and wind entering the vessel so as to cause damage;

(b) failing to ensure that the vessel was adequately guarded and watched to prevent—

(i) the theft of items of equipment and other property from the vessel;

(ii) water and wind entering the vessel so as to cause damage;

(iii) the vessel coming loose from its moorings and suffering damage.

(c) failing to ensure that the vessel was securely moored and separated from other vessels so as not to suffer damage from contact with other vessels and failing to make regular inspections to ensure same.

(d) failing to lay the vessel up in accordance with standard international marine procedure as follows:—

(i) failing to seal and dehumidify the wheel house accommodation and machinery space;

(ii) failing to grease moving deck machinery parts;

(iii) failing to protect or otherwise grease wire ropes;

(iv) failing to pump out bilges upon arrest.

(e) failing to carry out appropriate procedures during lay-up as follows:—

(i) failed to turn over rotating machinery once per week;

(ii) failed to carry out megger testing monthly."

It appears that he also failed to have the Crown indemnified, and the Crown now tries to confuse the issue by attempting to link Cavanagh, the plaintiff—the receivers—and the security company employed by the plaintiff. That must not be allowed to happen. Further, the Crown has sought to blame Cavanagh for the damage because he allegedly failed to redeem his vessel before the cyclone struck and, therefore, is himself responsible for the damage. This is absolute trenchant rubbish and a further example of the inappropriate stance of the Crown in this case, which is nothing more than an attempt to delay proceedings and to increase the cost to be met by Cavanagh to the point at which he will not be able to continue. It will be checkmate by attrition, not by due process, and a clear denial of justice.

Clearly, there are a number of aspects to this complex and confusing case but, just as clearly, the Crown has a duty to compensate Cavanagh and then embark on whichever course is deemed appropriate to recover its costs. Obviously, the Crown has access to the funds and the time to pursue all of the available options. This case is clearly not sub judice. It is a civil case and is not listed for hearing but, on numerous occasions, the Crown has sought to hide behind the sub judice convention. Both the Minister for Justice and the Attorney-General have a case to answer. They must be made to be seen to act with expedition and to have this matter dealt with either by mediation, or before a judge, or both. No good cause is served by the Government of this State destroying this man, his family and his business in order to save a handful of

silver and to avoid embarrassment all round. The actions of the Crown up to this time indicate a readiness to throw further taxpayers' money away in a protracted court battle, only because the Ministers and their officers know that John Cavanagh cannot fight any more.

The Minister can win by attrition. He can win, and he can finish the job of destruction of this man, his family and his business by hiding behind the resources of the Crown. However, he will be guilty of perpetrating a gross injustice, which is the very thing that he claims to loath and detest and has promised to bring to an end in this State. The Minister now has a choice. He can choose to be remembered by history and by this Parliament as an arch hypocrite, or he can choose to pursue a just and moral solution to this matter and be remembered by this Parliament as a statesman. Whatever the Minister chooses to do, I trust that Mr Cavanagh, his family and his business will not be the losers.

Young Offenders; Prison for a Day

Mr FOLEY (Yeronga) (3.10 p.m.): The Liberal Party plan to send young offenders to prison for a day is foolish and regressive. It has been a spectacular failure when it has been tried elsewhere in Australia and overseas. The Liberals have ignored the recent evidence of the Victorian experiment where a similar project has been reviewed and discredited. They have ignored also the voice of practitioners working in this area. I congratulate the solicitor from Toowoomba, Mr Patrick Mallett, who in today's *Courier-Mail* described the Liberal Party plan as "utter madness." Mr Mallett is to be congratulated on speaking out in an area which has all too often been the subject of uninformed prejudice and all too seldom has been the subject of detailed hard work and research. Mr Mallett, whose firm Mallett and Woods has handled many Children's Court matters and who has considerable experience in dealing with juvenile offenders, has condemned the policy announced by the Liberal Party. It is extraordinary that members of the Liberal Party have failed to appraise themselves of the work that has been carried out in Victoria. It is only since 1989 that the project of a day in prison for young offenders was attempted. A review of that project has been undertaken and very grave problems have been identified in relation to it.

In summary, it may be said that the proposal to send young offenders to prison for a day is ineffective because there is no evidence that it has a long-term deterrent effect. Secondly, it does not address the causes of juvenile crime, namely, poverty, unemployment and inequality, nor does it address the dreadful handicaps and disadvantages faced by Aboriginal people which lead to their overrepresentation in the criminal justice system. Thirdly, this proposal exposes participants to the threat of violence and psychological trauma.

What the Liberal Party offers to the young people of Queensland is not a vision in which it may say, "Here is a job", or, "Here is training." It is a vision in which it holds out the prospect of a day in prison. Those unemployed people in my electorate who are young—and, sadly, one in three young people are out of work—are not being offered by the Liberal Party the prospect of effective training to equip themselves for the work force, but are being offered instead a trip along Ipswich Road to the Wacol prison to spend a day with murderers, rapists, burglars and car thieves. The Liberal Party touts this as the greatest contribution to the theory of punishment since the ancient mariner had an albatross hung about his neck. Let the Liberal Party note that it will have that albatross about its neck if it persists with this inane and regressive policy.

The superficial attractiveness of this proposal lies in the shallow argument that it is somehow a short, sharp shock, or that it is somehow cost effective. Let us consider the evidence. The evidence is that this concept originated in the United States as far back as 1964 when the Michigan Reformatory was used for so-called predeliquents aged between 11 and 13. In that case, sufficient public interest was generated to lead to a number of other programs throughout the United States, including Operation Texas, Prison Profiles in Illinois and Operation Crime Prevention in Tennessee.

In April 1979, maximum publicity was given to this proposal through the television program *Scared Straight*, which reflected the Juvenile Awareness Project Help that was introduced at New Jersey's Rahway State Prison. That program depicted a confrontation between prisoners serving long-term sentences and juveniles brought to the prison in an attempt to defer further delinquent behaviour. The television program *Scared Straight* showed prisoners using aggressive and offensive language and deliberately intimidating behaviour. That was 13 years ago. The Liberal Party is still offering this as a gimmick to win votes at the next election, notwithstanding the fact that the experts who have researched these areas have discredited them.

Mr Santoro: What does the Victorian Labor Government say about its scheme?

Mr FOLEY: I am glad that the honourable member interjects. The Victorian Labor Government had indeed tried this scheme. On 15 November 1989, the Police and Corrections Minister, Steve Crabb, launched that program. The honourable member for Merthyr might be interested to note that the program included young offenders being "received into custody in the normal way, fingerprinted, strip searched and interviewed." However, the honourable member should be aware that this issue has been the subject of an evaluation by Coventry and O'Malley. An excellent account of that evaluation appears in the summer 1991 edition of the *Socio-Legal Bulletin* of the National Centre for Socio-Legal Studies at La Trobe University. That analysis revealed some very great shortcomings of that program which should cause it to be rejected by thinking people. The analysis was summed up by the editorial of the *Socio-Legal Bulletin* in the following terms—

> " . . . despite the significant literature arguing that 'Day-in-Prison' programs are ineffective in altering behaviour, three Australian states have introduced such programs. I guess the programs may not 'work' in the sense of changing behaviour, but perhaps they work very well in securing the political objectives of their proponents."

That is where the nub of the problem lies. Are we to respond to the critical issues of justice and safety confronting our community by the politics of reason or by the politics of radical opportunism for which the Liberal Party has become notorious? This is not just about party politics, it is about the politics that divide generations. Is our generation incapable of offering anything better to young people than one-in-three unemployment and a day in prison? What about the efforts to try to create jobs and training for young people? What about the efforts to combat unemployment?

Mr Santoro interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Merthyr under Standing Order 123A for persistent interjections.

Mr FOLEY: What about the efforts to provide some more intelligent juvenile justice program whereby the offender may be confronted with the impact that he or she has had upon the victim through programs such as the French Bonne Maison program, community services and where a realistic level of police services are offered? I refer to the 1 200 extra police to be achieved during the term of this Government, including an increase in police numbers at the Annerley Police Station from 7 to 21. This is a most important matter for the Parliament to consider.

Time expired.

Proposed Casino in Old Treasury Building

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.20 p.m.): I rise to discuss the recent Government decision to grant preferred applicant status to Jupiters Development Limited in order that it might operate a Brisbane casino from the Old Treasury Building. Much has been said about the wisdom of this decision. Questions have been raised with regard to its heritage value—particularly since that site was reserved for the Government from the commencement of the settlement of Brisbane in 1824 and has been a State Government office block since 1886—to the town planning

and traffic questions, and to the propriety of the process for granting the licence to Jupiters. While not discounting the importance of each of those questions, I would like to concentrate on the latter question in this debate. The issue of probity has plagued the casino industry for decades. It is little wonder then that the interdepartmental committee—the IDC—evaluating the proposals for a Brisbane casino licence placed a great deal of emphasis on the process that it adopted in dealing with the applications and stressed the importance of ensuring that all applicants were treated correctly, fairly and equally when it came to the information made available and the standards for conducting the decision-making process. For example, on page 3 of its report the committee stated—

> "To ensure the probity of the process, a policy decision was taken that if any issue of significance was raised by a potential bidder before Expressions of Interest closed, then all parties who were registered as having taken out full documentation would be advised of the question and the response thereto. The question was required to be in writing and the response was provided by way of addendum to the main set of documents.
>
> In all, there were 5 addenda issued."

I will refer to the fourth addendum at a later stage in this debate. Finally, on page 13, a full section is devoted to the probity of the applicants and an assurance is given by the IDC of the extensive checks of backgrounds, personal history, financial affairs, etc., of those wishing to be considered for a casino licence. From this context it can be taken that the Government and its bureaucratic committee, the IDC, went to great lengths to assure everyone that the process, the decision and the chosen applicants satisfied the strictest probity criteria. As indicated earlier, the IDC went to extreme lengths to ensure that every possible applicant was fully informed and was well aware of the Government's requirements and expectations. Those expectations were laid out in the original brief and the subsequent addendums. In Addendum 4 the Government answered one question that has been put to it by applicants—question 18 in the addendum—which is particularly important and relevant. The question asked was—

> "Please confirm that additional Founding Shareholders can be introduced after the awarding of Preferred Applicant status, and prior to granting of the casino licence."

A critical section of the answer was—

> "The proposed corporate structure and Founder Group must be identified in the submission. An Applicant cannot proceed to the short list without the Founder Group being in place. An Applicant cannot be awarded 'Preferred Applicant' status prior to the corporate structure being in place."

It is worth repeating that last sentence—

> "An Applicant cannot be awarded 'Preferred Applicant' status prior to the corporate structure being in place."

It would appear, however, that Jupiters Development Limited has breached those conditions. Jupiters has been granted preferred applicant status when a substantial founder is still to be identified, examined on the critical issues of probity, and approved. This is a result of Daikyo announcing that it was withdrawing from the tender and was to sell all its shares in Jupiters. Moreover, it appears that this breach of the tender document process was specifically condoned, or actively pursued, by the Premier.

Following questions that I had drafted in a press statement issued on 29 May 1992, an article by Tess Livingstone in the *Sunday Mail* of 31 May stated—

> " 'I told the Treasurer that before a decision was made we can't have any doubt over that, that they must be in or out,' Mr Goss said.
>
> We had to get a definite statement from Daikyo. They could not be in a position where they go one way or the other."

Why was it critical to the decision on the granting of this licence for the Premier to know whether Daikyo was in or out? According to the criterion spelled out in Addendum 4 which I quoted earlier, there was only one choice. Daikyo had to be in, otherwise the Jupiters bid breached the conditions laid out in Addendum 4 and, thus, the Jupiters bid would fail.

When Daikyo informed the Premier that it would sell its founder shareholding in Jupiters and withdraw from the Brisbane casino licence bid as a founding shareholder, the Jupiters bid should have progressed no further. In fact, the opposite happened. Daikyo informed the Premier that it was to quit. Subsequently, Jupiters was awarded the "Preferred Applicant" status, despite not meeting the "Founding Shareholder" requirements at the time the decision was made. There is, therefore, only one possible conclusion. The Premier wanted Daikyo out of Jupiters Development Limited and out of the Brisbane and Cairns casino licence bids. He wanted Daikyo out so badly that he delayed the Cabinet meeting for one week and gave an ultimatum to Daikyo to get out. The Premier wanted Daikyo out so badly that he was prepared to unquestionably compromise the decision-making process so carefully laid down by the IDC in its briefing paper and the five addendums.

Among the questions the Premier must now answer are—

(1) Why was it so critical for Daikyo to be removed from the casino licence bid?

(2) Why were the criteria for the founding shareholder group and the corporate structure, as per Addendum 4, ignored in awarding preferred applicant status to Jupiters?

(3) Is it not a fact that at the time the decision was made to award preferred applicant status to Jupiters the other applicants met the stated criteria?

(4) What was the effect on the decision of delaying the Cabinet meeting and entering into negotiations with Daikyo for its removal from Jupiters?

Finally, it is absolutely clear that this Government did not follow its publicly stated criteria in reaching a decision on the awarding of preferred applicant status to Jupiters. It is about time the Premier came clean, disclosed all the relevant information and told the people of Queensland what really went on and why their heritage is being sacrificed to remove Daikyo from all Queensland casinos.

Mr P. Everingham; Casino Development

Mr WELFORD (Stafford) (3.28 p.m.): In only a few months' time the people of Queensland will go to a State election. No-one has forgotten the corruption of the National Party and no-one is going to vote for it again. But just in case people thought that the Liberal Party might be a realistic alternative, let me refresh their memory about the hero of rogues' gallery who is running that desperately dilapidated party at the moment. In a world replete with rogues and prima donnas, there is one "prima donna absoluta", and he is at the reins of the Liberal Party. Three months ago, I warned the members of this House and the Queensland public about the nefarious designs that the former Chief Minister of the Northern Territory had on the Liberal Party and the Queensland Parliament. I said then that he had already started in Queensland, and in the Queensland Liberal Party, the same plan he used to corrupt and bankrupt the Northern Territory. While some who may not be aware of Mr Everingham's history may well have thought that those sounded like rather wild accusations, as they were ungraciously described by Mr Koch in the *Courier-Mail*, the truth of the matter is that they were based on some very frightening facts. I discovered why he is so deservedly nicknamed Porky, because so close was I to the bones of truth about the Liberal Party President that he squealed like a stuck pig. And well he might because today I plan to bring home the bacon on "Porky" Everingham and the Liberal Party. I will tell the true story of backroom deals and fraud committed on taxpayers which has left the Northern Territory bankrupt and Northern Territory taxpayers with debts of hundreds of millions of dollars. Only a few weeks ago people in my electorate received a brochure from the Liberal Party. It contained a headline "Policy Highlights" and it stated—

"Only the Liberal Party will:

. . .

Give Queenslanders the honest, open, accountable private enterprise Government they deserve."

Let us look at what kind of honest, free-enterprise government was practised by the man who has duped the Liberals into believing that he will lead them out of the wilderness in Queensland. Contrary to the free-enterprise myth, Paul Everingham ran a Northern Territory Government which for years was feather-bedded by hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money, and Northern Territorians are now paying for it more than ever. Nothing exemplifies this more than when he stuck his sticky political fingers into the tills of the Ministries of Lands, Industrial Development and Tourism to manipulate the development of Northern Territory casinos. Contrast what I am about to say with the impeccable record of our Government, which has presided over a casino evaluation and selection process yielding a casino proposal which will not only cost Queenslanders absolutely nothing, but in which there was not the slightest scent of political interference. Anyone who has read the report of the evaluation of the Queensland casinos submissions could not fail to be impressed. The report itself states—

"The Committee decided at the outset to take whatever steps were necessary to ensure the utmost probity in the evaluation and assessment process."

That included measures to keep strict records of all documents, drawings, models and correspondence, and this record was confirmed by each of the applicants. Agreements which were reached at meetings with the proponents were accepted only if they were in writing. Out of the three comprehensive phases of that selection process, at each phase the parties were offered the opportunity to check their financial offers, and they were checked and rechecked without the slightest element of political interference.

Compare that with the political brawling that surrounded the selection of the Gold Coast and Townsville casinos, and compare it with the Northern Territory casinos. I suggest that the difference between our process and the Northern Territory process is stark. Some might say that it is the difference between beef and pork. Mr Everingham, in contrast, had grand plans to develop his own casinos in Darwin to attract the high-rolling gamblers from South East Asia. But, because the first casino did not perform too well, he announced with much fanfare a $300m redevelopment. He could not get his own way in organising that redevelopment, so what did he do? Like a Third World dictator, he passed legislation in the dead of night to compulsorily acquire the casino complex from its operators, Federal Pacific Hotels. He imposed a statutory eviction notice, taking effect on 1 October 1984. What he did not tell the public of the Northern Territory was that he had done a secret and dirty deal with another consortium to take over both the Alice Springs and Darwin casinos. Without reference to or the approval of Parliament—which sat only 19 days in his last year as Chief Minister—he committed $21m of taxpayers' money to partly finance the acquisition by this favoured consortium. He then plundered the till of the Northern Territory Development Commission to guarantee loans to the consortium totalling another $26m. He then waived the 8 per cent gaming tax, which had already been reduced from the 20 per cent which was previously levied against Federal Pacific Hotels. Just for good measure, he flogged off these compulsorily acquired assets—public assets—for $2.5m less than long-suffering Northern Territory taxpayers ultimately had to pay in compensation to Federal Pacific Hotels, leaving taxpayers with an interest debt headache worth $750,000. All this happened when the favoured consortium had barely committed $3m out of the $23m it had supposedly invested in the redevelopment.

If honourable members are starting to suspect that there may have been some special relationship between Everingham and this consortium, they are absolutely right. It transpires that the principals of the company Henry and Walker Pty Ltd—a company with a 57 per cent stake in the property trust set up to take over the casinos—were brown paper bag financial backers of Everingham and his Country/Liberal Party Government. He similarly plundered the pockets of Northern Territory taxpayers in the

development of the Alice Springs Sheraton Hotel and the Yulara Resort at Ayers Rock. A recent Public Accounts Committee investigation in the Northern Territory found that losses from the Darwin casino were $32m in 1990 and were projected to total $57m. With the Alice Springs casino, the Government guaranteed losses, which have now run in excess of $55m, and with the Yulara Resort, despite the promise by the Chief Minister to make a handsome profit by 1989, $67m was lost by 1990 and total projected losses are exceeding $158m. I will leave the details of that to another time.

There we have an endless saga of acquisitive self-interest and profligate squandering of public funds. No wonder after less than two years as Liberal Party President in Queensland, the Liberal Party is all but broke, dragging advertising agencies and the serried ranks of other creditors down with it. No wonder the Liberal Party in Queensland is left without a shred of credibility with its pledge to give Queenslanders a so-called honest, open, accountable, private-enterprise government they deserve. Queenslanders certainly do not deserve what the Idi Amin of the Liberal Party thought the Northern Territorians deserved—a poisonous cocktail of incestuous, sleazy deals and runaway taxpayer funded debt. No wonder then that after deserting the Northern Territory and the Chief Minister's job, he said that if he did not win a seat in Canberra he would go back to being a shyster. The dictionary's definition of "shyster" is a person given to unethical or unscrupulous practices, especially in business, law or politics. Mr Everingham satisfies the lot! The Northern Territory's best export has corrupted and bankrupted the Northern Territory. That is why I said last time, and I say again today, that he has corrupted and bankrupted the Liberal Party and now uses these witless, weary wimps opposite as instruments in his insidious scheme to see this Parliament and this State also bankrupt and again corrupt. That is why they stagger around Queensland's political landscape like drunks on the lurching deck of a sinking ship. They have blind faith in "Captain" Everingham, the Liberal Party wheeler and dealer and political master who has been at the wheel and in the deal of more financial Titanics than every media shark and Liberal Party beer baron in the country. That is why the Liberal Party faithful throughout the State are weeping with despair while their once great party is raped for no better reason than unmitigated opportunism. Mr Everingham will leave them penniless, but certainly not pregnant with electoral success.

Small Business

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South) (3.38 p.m.): The time has come to stand up for small business and for Governments to give proper recognition to the owners and their families whose businesses form the backbone of our nation and which have the greatest potential of all to lead this country out of recession. Small business also has the ability to reduce the degrading unemployment levels that plague our community and our young people in particular. The time has also come to realise that the massive potential of small business is struggling under an ever-increasing burden of Government taxes, regulations and imposts. It struggles under a State Government that lacks understanding, direction and leadership in addressing the real and practical needs of small business and it has to contend with a Federal Government that is not satisfied with simply ruining many small businesses with high interest rates and the Labor-imposed recession, but has continued to load small business with increased taxation and costs.

Small businesses are defined as those owner-operated enterprises employing 20 or fewer people or, in the case of manufacturing, 100 or fewer people. Figures produced in 1990 by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that in Australia there were 106 000 enterprises in the agricultural sector classed as small businesses. In the non-agricultural private sector, there were 719 000 enterprises which employed 5 341 000 people. Of those 719 000 enterprises, small businesses accounted for 692 700 and employed 2 547 000 people, of whom 1 683 800 were wage and salary earners and the balance were self-employed owners. The Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that in Queensland some 125 000 small businesses make up 96.8 per cent of all businesses in this State. There are 167 300 people working in their own businesses in Queensland and there are a further 277 900 people who work as employees. Altogether,

that is a total of just over 445 000 people, which is 52.3 per cent of all business employment in this State.

We all know that massive unemployment is a huge problem in this State and throughout the rest of Australia. It is the result of a recession brought about by Treasurer Keating and his continued escalation of interest rates. When rates were up to 16 per cent and business people and their families and farmers were screaming for mercy, he jacked them up again and again until they reached 23 per cent, while along the way he broke thousands of businessmen and ordinary people who were just trying to pay off their houses. As a result, the unemployment rate in Queensland is 10.4 per cent, which means that 153 000 people are unemployed. Moreover, the tragedy is that 34 per cent of the unemployed are this State's youth. I ask honourable members to consider what would happen if those 125 000 small businesses which employ fewer than 20 people were able to employ just one extra person. If that happened, this State's unemployment problem would be solved overnight.

We also face the problem of training people through TAFE and universities which is exacerbated by the growing list of unemployed people. At the end of the day, there are simply no jobs, so small business needs employment agreements which will make it possible to employ people at rates and on arrangements relative to the business operation that enable a profit to be made and the maximum number of staff to be employed. This Government has merely tinkered with this concept with the idea of having new tourist developments only eligible for enterprise agreements and this week's announcement of a possible youth wage. These measures amount to tinkering only and this Government needs to adopt a proper system of employment assistance for small business.

Small business is generally conducted by independent and competitive people, but it is full of hazards and events that are right out of the control of the business operator. Government taxes, regulations, costs and imposts are the greatest bane of small business. Imagine being in business and trying to handle provisional tax, superannuation levies, training levies, land tax, payroll tax, business registration, work place health and safety regulations, weights and measures standards, industrial inspectors, health inspectors, machinery inspectors, etc! The list goes on and on, and it is no wonder so many people in small business say that they would be better off buying a truck, turning up at the flea markets on Sundays and simply paying a $5 fee. Anyone who has had a business operation knows that when expenditure goes up, there is only one thing you can do—either increase sales or take remedial action. I have spoken to many business people, and it is quite frightening to be made aware of the number of people who are endeavouring to keep their training and payroll tax threshold levels below the rate which would result in their having to pay the levies.

In the last couple of weeks, the issue of trading hours has cropped up. It is about time this State Government stood up and took a stand in support of family operated businesses. The National Party Opposition stands for small business and will fight to retain the traditional protection for small business that has existed in regulated shopping areas. It is about time the Government made a decision on whether family operated and owned businesses have a right to operate in a fair environment alongside major business operations. In the present economic environment, there are incredible risks and hazards to be negotiated by small businesses if they are to be a success. Many of these risks are brought about by changes to Government regulations. Machinery dealers who once had viable businesses are now falling into ruin because of changes to tariffs and the downturn in grain marketing, but the industries that are probably closest to home at the moment are the bread industry and the milk-vending industry. Owing to the bread industry Act that was introduced by the Minister for Primary Industries, the bread industry degenerated into an absolute shambles. Although it was regulated to some extent, the regulation was so weak and ineffective that bread vendors, small corner stores and small bakeries were placed in a perilous situation.

The bread industry has now been deregulated, but the situation remains exactly the same because we already had virtually a de facto deregulation. Likewise, the milk-

vending industry is wondering where it is going. Following the Green Paper that was released by the Minister for Primary Industries, milk vendors are wondering what their future will be and what value will be left in their runs. The same situation exists for hotels facing the competition of clubs. They have been given a limited ability to fight back with poker machines. They are limited to 10 machines. Hotels will receive only a 5 per cent return compared with an 11 per cent return from clubs and are allowed to install only 10c machines. All those involved in the pork industry—small businesses and those supplying the abattoirs and the pork farmers—are similarly facing ruin because of the imported Canadian pork. That is all a result of Government regulations and charges which are completely out of the control of small business.

I turn to rentals and leases. Here we have the odious land tax, which the National Party Opposition has promised to wipe out in its first three years in Government. The abolition of land tax will lead to cheaper outgoings, cheaper leases and more money in the hands of private enterprise through both landlords and tenants to stimulate the expansion of their business. Small business also faces great difficulties in getting suitable finance. That is something that the National Party will address. As a rule, owners of small businesses have to mortgage their family home, and they usually pay a higher rate of interest than do big business.

Finally, I turn to the subject of crime, in particular juvenile crime, and point out the way in which successful small business can be a great aid in trying to bring about a better response to law and order in our community. Eighty per cent of crime against property is committed by juveniles aged between 10 and 16. It would be great to think that all those juveniles had a job and, by the time Friday night came, they would be a bit weary and perhaps looking forward to a game of cricket on the weekend instead of getting up to mischief. Seventy-five per cent of juvenile crime is committed by unemployed people. Much of that crime and much of the violent crime is committed against small business—the people who take all those risks.

In summary, land tax should be eliminated. The great aspects of the Fightback package need to be brought in to help small business. Adequate financial services are required for small business. Small business needs a voice at both State and Federal Government level, and it needs to be targeted with opportunities and advice on export and marketing. Small business will lead Australia out of the recession, and the National Party promises policies for small business that will show a real understanding of the basic needs of small business. This speech is in recognition of the importance of small business and the immediate recovery of our State and nation. I am telling the Parliament that the time has come for the Government to get serious about letting small business get on with the job and not to shackle enterprising and hardworking people with ever-increasing taxes, regulations and imposts. It is time to recognise that small business must make a profit and, importantly, that only then can small business reduce our youth unemployment.

Time expired.

Use and Reuse of Water

Mr ARDILL (Salisbury) (3.48 p.m.): The subject on which I wish to speak is the use and reuse of water, and the snake-oil policies of the Liberal Party. While the Liberal Party at Federal level is barnstorming Queensland with claims that it would reduce taxes and therefore Government spending by $35 billion per annum, the puny Liberal group at State level is promoting a snake-oil scheme for the gullible, involving a capital cost of $1 billion and an ongoing cost of many millions per year to pump all the sewage effluent of south-east Queensland over the Great Dividing Range into the great Murray-Darling River system. Not having heard of the recent problems with blue-green algae and having no knowledge of the importance of Australia's greatest river system, the Liberals blithely propose a pollution scheme of mind-boggling grandeur. To save the hides of a few undeserving, underachieving and virtually unknown Liberal candidates on the Gold Coast, they have promoted a harebrained scheme of expediency without counting the cost.

In addition to the financial cost, there is the environmental cost to the life-giving waters of the Murray-Darling system. That system already has to cope with the problem of treating the sewage of Toowoomba and its 80 000 people. All sewerage treatment plants occasionally break down, and the effect on Gowrie Creek, which continues into Oakey Creek before spilling into the Condamine, is more than enough problem for that area. The Liberals propose to transfer the problems of one and a half million people in the Moreton region over the range into National Party territory. It is ironic that here today the National Party is attempting to shore up the disastrous Liberal Party goods and services tax for the Liberals at huge expense to its own constituency on the Darling Downs and elsewhere. At the same time, the Liberals are attempting to promote a scheme of pollution on a massive scale for the Darling Downs. Sewage contains many pollutants, such as metallic substances, including potassium, nitrogen-based nutrients and phosphates, and pesticides such as organochlorides, which would be a disaster to the Murray-Darling system. Those pollutants are removed or reduced at various stages of treatment, at great cost.

What those careless people do not seem to understand is that the water in the Murray-Darling system is used, treated and reused many times. Each time it is used, it picks up more pollutants, which are then more costly to remove. Clean water from the water catchment to the west of Sydney and near Melbourne has a fairly low cost of treatment. A figure of lOc per kilolitre for a large, effective economic plant on a large river, such as those on our eastern seaboard—for example, the Brisbane River, the Clarence River and the Macleay River—can be achieved. However, the cost of treating dirty water, sewage and water previously used on agricultural land is at least three times that figure and often more than that. The compounding effect of reuse of the Murray water by the time it reaches Adelaide is immense, and the water is still of very dubious quality from the point of view of taste.

One of the irresponsible suggestions in the Liberal group's policy titled "Queensland First—Securing Our Future"—which, incidentally, should be considered by the Consumer Affairs Branch of the Justice Department——

Mr Beattie: It's false advertising.

Mr ARDILL: Of course it is false advertising, as the honourable member said. One of the irresponsible suggestions is to tip sewage into the Lockyer Valley. The Liberal Party has ignored two basic facts. The first is land disposal of liquid-suspended pollutants, which have a nasty habit of entering local creeks. To prevent this, it has to be solidified and buried in a secure situation. The second is that Lockyer Creek, which drains that valley, enters the Brisbane River above Mount Crosby. These residues would increase the cost of treating Brisbane's drinking water.

The introduction of 450 megalitres of sewage effluent every day into the river system of the Condamine would have a marked effect on the quality of the water, even after secondary treatment and particularly in times of low flow during winter, because the amount of sewage produced does not reduce in winter, when rainfall in Queensland is lowest. The Condamine supplies water to the Darling Downs, particularly to its agricultural and pastoral industries, before becoming the main source of the Balonne, which provides the life-giving water for our cotton industry. It breaks up near Dirranbandi into a number of rivers including the Culgoa, the Bokhara and the Narran, most of which enter the Barwon before discharging into the Darling in New South Wales. Any harebrained scheme which causes problems of this dimension to our agricultural and pastoral industries must attract criticism, ridicule and violent reaction not only from environmentalists but also from hard-headed farmers and graziers as well as the Governments of the States of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. It is very clear that unwanted pollutants such as metallic substances, high concentrations of nutrients and pesticide residues such as dieldrin expelled onto the land will eventually find their way into the waterways. Sooner or later, Australia must look at tertiary treatment of sewage, not only from the point of view of reducing pollution of our coastal waterways and marine environment but also as a means of reducing the primary use of water.

During the inquiry into the proposed Wolffdene dam by the then Public Works Committee, the Deputy Chairman and member for Archerfield, Mr Palaszczuk, and I recommended that the one-third of Brisbane's water usage which enters the sewers should be treated to a tertiary standard before being reused in the oil refineries and fertiliser works, which use an equivalent quantity of water. There are, of course, problems to be overcome. Certain chemicals in the effluent, such as potassium, must be removed before the water can be used in oil refineries, but it must be done. This would certainly make the cost of water for industry more expensive, but we cannot in the future expect to continue the practice of taking over our best agricultural land for water storage, as we have done in the past. Nor can we adopt the Liberals' ridiculous policy of pouring the pollutants I have already mentioned onto good agricultural ground. The cost of treating water to a reusable standard is continually under review, as many communities, particularly those in the Murray-Darling system, have to face this cost now in the harvesting stage. This, I believe, is the way to go, not airily coming up with pie-in-the-sky, billion-dollar schemes which are a sop to those concerned with the poor quality of effluent being continually or occasionally discharged into the ocean. While it is not possible to guarantee protection against plant breakdown, there will always be a risk to the marine environment. That is a risk which is unacceptable to a great many people. As most engineers will indicate, all engineering problems have an engineering solution. Finance, and lack of it, is the key and the problem. The present cost of treating sewage is usually only about one-third of the total cost of a sewerage system in a large city, so the total cost of treatment will not be doubled or trebled but increased.

If sufficient finance is provided for storage, the chance of overflow is minimised. If finance is provided for secondary and tertiary treatment, a suitable clear, potable drinking water can be achieved from effluent. If sufficient research is continued to counter the effect of new chemical compounds, our marine environment can be protected. Expelling into our inland river systems unsatisfactorily treated sewage containing dangerous chemicals and metals as well as the constituent culture to grow toxic algae is not the answer to clearing up our marine environment. Let us not pretend that we have a problem which compares to that of Sydney, where untreated sewage spills into the ocean. In Queensland, sewage receives primary and secondary treatment which removes the most obvious pollutants. The real concerns of environmentalists and scientists are the less obvious pollutants such as heavy metals, potassium, organochlorides and nutrients. What must be faced is the higher cost of improved treatment to tertiary standard. It can be achieved as is the case with town water, but the cost in dollars will be heavy.

Funding of Liberal Party Promises

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (3.58 p.m.): In the few moments that are available to me, I want to raise a number of concerns I have about decisions made by the Liberal Party at its recent State conference and commitments that it has given in relation to the finances of this State. The reality is that, if the Liberal Party was ever successful in coming to Government—and heaven forbid that it would ever be successful—it would send Queensland broke. It is trying to offer a fistful of dollars. It is not answering the question that needs to be answered, namely: where is the money coming from? I refer now to some of the promises that the Liberal Party has made. It promised the abolition of land tax. That is fine, but where does the money come from to make up the short fall? The Liberal Party talks about removing the toll from the Sunshine Motorway. It needs to be pointed out that, under the GST, the toll for vehicles would not be 60c, as it is now, but 69c.

Mrs Woodgate: Shame!

Mr BEATTIE: Indeed, it is a shame. In addition, the Liberal Party talks about the Seniors Card applying to people over 60, something we would all love to introduce. But the questions that the Liberal Party is not answering in relation to all of its promises are: who is going to pay? Where is the money coming from to enable these things to be done? I hope that, when people vote at the election this year, they are very mindful of

the fact that the Liberal Party has not presented any information about where that money will come from. What do honourable members see instead? They see "bowyang" Paul, the President of the Liberal Party, the bully boy from Darwin in the Northern Territory, continuing to make threats. Those sorts of threats and bully tactics may work there, but they do not work here. In terms of other promises that came out of the Liberal conference—the "day in gaol" concept was supported. The honourable member for Yeronga dealt with that issue to some extent. What was not realised by the delegates at that conference was that, as the experts will testify, 50 per cent of child offenders who do spend a day in gaol turn around and say, "Well, this is not so bad", and it is not a deterrent at all. The scheme is a fraud. For 60 per cent of kids, it is not a deterrent and it does not work.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! The time allotted for the debate on Matters of Public Interest has expired.

REVOCATION OF STATE FOREST AREAS

Hon. E. D. CASEY (Mackay—Minister for Primary Industries) (4.01 p.m.): I move—

"(a) That this House agrees that the Proposal by the Governor in Council to revoke the setting apart and declaration as State Forest under the Forestry Act 1959 of:—

(i) The whole of State Forest 608 containing an area of about 2 210 hectares;

(ii) the whole of State Forest 1748 containing an area of about 4 260 hectares;

(iii) all those parts of State Forest 1137 described as Lot 366 on Registered Plan NR839145 and Lot 367 on Registered Plan NR839146 and containing in total an area of 2.917 hectares;

(iv) all that part of State Forest 840 described as Lot 7 on Registered Plan CK835528 and containing an area of 358.9 hectares;

(v) all that part of State Forest 792 described as Lot 265 on Registered Plan CG808973 and containing an area of 3.466 hectares be carried out; and

(b) That Mr Speaker convey a copy of this Resolution to the Minister for submission to His Excellency the Governor in Council."

The proposals contained within this motion make provision for the excision of land from State forests near Innisfail, Tully, Bundaberg and Kilcoy. I mention at this juncture that these matters have been considered carefully by the Conservator of Forests and have his endorsement.

The first proposal involves the revocation from the forest estate of about 2 210 hectares, being the whole of State Forest 608, which is located near Innisfail. This reserve lies adjacent to the boundaries of the north Queensland World Heritage area, and has been identified by officers of the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service and of the Queensland Forest Service as an area to be excised as part of Stage 2 of the conversion of forestry land to national park.

The second proposal provides for the excision from the forest estate of about 4 260 hectares, being the whole of State Forest 1748, which is located within the boundaries of the north Queensland World Heritage area near Innisfail. While the major part of the area is to be made available for national park purposes as part of Stage 2 of the conversion of forestry land, small areas totalling about 6 hectares will be made available for further dealing by the Department of Lands in conjunction with a freeholding proposal over adjoining lands. Following an application by the lessee of Lots 163 and 169 for the conversion of these lots to freehold tenure, it was found that cane cultivation on the leased land had extended into adjoining State Forest 1748. During negotiations with the lessee, it was agreed that the State forest areas planted to

cane would be made available for inclusion in the freeholding proposal in return for about 73 hectares of the leased land being surrendered for forestry purposes.

The next proposal concerns the excision of two small areas totalling 2.917 hectares from State Forest 1137, which is located near Tully. Some years ago, the Johnstone Shire Council constructed facilities at Fenby's Gap and on Jurs Creek for the Mission Beach/Bingil Bay water supply. Since the initial construction the council has, with the approval of the Queensland Forest Service, sited an additional reservoir at Fenby's Gap. As the council is desirous of constructing further water storage facilities at both Fenby's Gap and Jurs Creek, application has been made for the excision of both sites from the State forest. I point out that the areas concerned, when excised from the forest estate, will remain under Crown control as reserves for local government water supply purposes.

The fourth proposal provides for the excision of 358.9 hectares from State Forest 840, which is located near Bundaberg. This area proposed for excision has been sought by the Bundaberg and District Range Committee for the purpose of establishing a sporting complex for shooting clubs. Investigations have shown that the subject area is not suitable for plantation purposes and its excision will not adversely affect the management of the balance of the reserve. After excision from the State forest, it is proposed that the area will remain under Crown control as a recreational area/rifle range under the trusteeship of the local authority. That, of course, is all due to the tremendous work and effort that has been put into this project by the honourable member for Bundaberg, Mr Campbell.

The final proposal involves the excision of 3.466 hectares from State Forest 792, which is located near Kilcoy. In 1935, the subject area was acquired to provide access for the removal of timber from an adjoining property and was subsequently included in the State forest. Since resumption, the area has been leased under special lease tenure for grazing purposes and the current lessees, who have held the area for over 20 years, have applied for conversion of the lease area to freehold tenure. The Department of Lands has indicated that it would be prepared to seek Executive authority for the sale of the area, subject to its prior excision from the forest estate, with all costs involved in the excision being borne by the lessees. As the area is no longer required for access purposes and the volume and value of the timber thereon is negligible, its excision from the State forest would have no detrimental effect on the management of the balance of the reserve. I strongly support all of these proposals and commend them for the approval of the House.

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (4.03 p.m.): Before the House is another revocation of forestry areas, to add to the revocations that this Government has already passed through this House. These areas now total well over 100 000 hectares. In this particular instance, about 7 000 hectares is involved. The revocations that the House is considering at present make a lot more sense than those that the Government has previously passed. When one is looking at the area around Innisfail, one is considering two areas that are already close to World Heritage listing, and these areas are affected to a very large extent by the World Heritage listing. Therefore, it makes sense, if those areas are to be involved in the World Heritage listing, that this area also would be included. I do question some of the activities and some of the results of the previous listings in this area. When honourable members examine the Lynch-Blosse report on the structural adjustment packages, they find that there are some interesting recommendations proposed. That report stated—

> "The structural adjustment package was fundamentally flawed in only attempting to solve the short-term difficulties caused by World Heritage Listing, when most of the problems were long-term ones."

In other words, it was politically motivated. The long-term problem was in fact what was promised and what in fact eventuated. The private sector assistance under the plan was insufficient to meet the real needs of those disadvantaged by the World Heritage listing. The public sector assistance was the only successful part of the package. The National Party would not disagree with this, but it would stress that in the kitty there is still $35m

that has not been distributed. There has been a massive loss of jobs as a direct result of World Heritage listing. Over 600 job losses have resulted directly from the change, and a further number have been lost indirectly. I refer also in this regard to the *Australian Timberman*, which was released recently. One of the articles in that publication is headed "New study exposes shock realities of Government promises". The article referred to a report by resource economist Diana Gibbs. It cost the community 1 300 jobs and $240m in lost productivity in the northern rivers of New South Wales. The article continues—

> "The effect of past political decisions on the NSW forest industries have been dramatically exposed in a new study just released.
>
> The report, entitled 'Promises and Realities: Political Decisions Affecting the Timber Industry', shows that political decisions in 1982, affecting forestry and timber milling in the state's Far North Coast, have cost 1 300 community jobs and around $240 million in lost productivity over the 10 years since 1982.
>
> The report was prepared by independent resource economist Diana Gibbs and highlights the socio-economic effects of national park creation in previous state forest areas . . . 'The timber industry has often claimed that knee-jerk political decisions backfire in the long term, when politicians' rhetoric is exposed . . . But, in the long-term business like forestry, the fruits of bad political decision are only apparent after several years—long after the political memory has lapsed'."

Two different situations are often experienced—one that is promised and one that is, in fact, reality. The reference to no jobs being lost in Queensland was a promise. It was not, in fact, reality. In fact, the article states that in reality—

> ". . . up to 600 jobs have been lost . . . regional employment could have declined by over 1 300."

The article also refers to the promise of increased tourism, but if one looks around Queensland, one sees that increased tourism is not a reality. In fact, the reality is that there has been very little increase in tourism.

There was also the promise of the maintenance of a viable timber industry. Over the last 10 years, the decline in activity in the timber industry has been enormous, and that has resulted from the policies of this Government. I am pointing out the reality of some of the decisions that the Government has taken in relation to the revocation of State forest areas. I referred previously to the Innisfail area. As the Minister has said, the revocation in the Tully area is required for the construction of a reservoir. That decision will be very well received and the area will certainly be utilised. I turn now to Bundaberg and the rifle range. I note that Mr Campbell will speak in the debate, as, in fact, will Mr Slack, the member for Burnett——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! I suggest that the honourable member refer to other honourable members in this House by their correct title.

Mr STEPHAN: With respect, the honourable member for Bundaberg will have his say on this subject, as will the honourable member for Burnett. I cannot help recalling approximately 12 months ago the media coverage that was given to the activities associated with the rifle range in Bundaberg. I certainly hope, for the sake of the sport and the people who live in that area, that that controversy has finished. An area of land in Kilcoy that had been set aside as an access road is no longer required for that purpose and is now being used for grazing. Although the area involved is small, it makes sense to transfer it for use for pastoral purposes. As the area of land involved is only three hectares, I do not think that anybody will object to that decision.

While I am on my feet, I wish to mention another matter that the Minister will need to consider in the near future in regard to revocations. I have taken the opportunity to write to him about access to some MHL areas in the Gympie mining fields. It must be remembered that after 1993, all owners of MHLs, which are fully paid up leases, will be required by this Government to convert to freehold. If they are not freeholded by the end of 1993, the Government will require an annual lease of 3 per cent of the Valuer-General's valuation. Under those circumstances, many holders of MHLs in residential

areas and business areas are very anxious to take this step of freeholding. However, to be able to freehold they need a dedicated access road. Some people have access to their properties only by the forestry roads. I point this matter out to the Minister because in future a revocation will be needed in this area. I do not know who wrote this letter to me, but it certainly was not written by someone who understood the problem. The letter stated—

> "The Department of Lands is the authority which deals with the dedication of areas as road . . . should direct any application for the provision of access to their property to that Department."

The people concerned have been working with the department for a long time, and the only access that is available—if the Minister would care to listen—is, in fact, through the forestry road itself.

Mr CASEY: What part of the revocation are you talking about?

Mr STEPHAN: I know I have deviated from the subject matter a little, but while I have the opportunity, I wish to point out that a revocation will be needed in the very near future before those MHLs can be converted to freehold land. This matter needs to be addressed, and it certainly needs to be addressed in a way that is different from the way in which the Minister, or whoever wrote the letter to me on 9 June 1992, addressed it. Several of these people have access to their properties through the forestry area. I have spoken to the local Forest Service officers, who have been very cooperative and have assisted whenever they could, but the fact remains that the people concerned must go through the proper channels. I suggest that ultimately a revocation will be needed to give access to these landowners who, in fact, want to freehold their MHLs but at the present time cannot do so. Under those circumstances, I support the revocation of the five different areas of land that are covered in the motion before the House.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (4.15 p.m.): It gives me much pleasure to support the Minister in these forestry revocations, especially part (iv) of the motion, which refers to part of State Forest 840, just outside Bundaberg. This will allow the provision of a very much needed facility for the Bundaberg district. That Crown land will be able to be leased for the development of a rifle range to meet the needs of various rifle and gun groups in the Bundaberg district. It must be remembered that when gun laws are introduced, it is important that shooters are able to learn to shoot properly. Facilities that allow shooters to participate safely in their sport are necessary. I believe that the Government is acting properly in making provision for this facility.

Neither the previous Government nor this Government left shooters in the untenable position in which they did not have a rifle range. This occurred because of some undesirable transactions between a shooting association, the previous Commonwealth Government and a developer. Other suitable land had to be found for a rifle range. The previous State Government could find no other suitable land except possibly on a section of the proposed Kinkuna national park. Quite a bit of work was done in evaluating a site at Kinkuna. However, a conflict existed between the use of that land as a national park and as a rifle range. Because it was decided that it would unsuitable to locate a rifle range beside a national park or to excise part of a proposed national park for a rifle range, the alternative site was found. That alternative site is unproductive forestry land. It is not suitable for forestry or agriculture. However, it is suitable for a shooting complex. It has taken a long time to bring this process to fruition. When the site at Kinkuna was deemed to be unsuitable, we had to consider all land within a reasonable vicinity that could possibly be suitable for a shooting complex. I say to the Minister that I believe an even better site has now been found than the one initially proposed by the various shooting bodies. The site is better because it provides easier access and will be less expensive to develop. Overall, it will provide a much better facility for the shooters.

Because this process has taken so long, I put on record that many people appreciate the work that has been done to find a suitable location for the rifle range. I received a letter from the secretary of the Bundaberg District Rifle Club, who stated—

"We were very excited to hear the news last night about the Rifle Range land and wish to thank you for the time and effort you put into achieving this for us."

In another letter to me, the Bundaberg branch of the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia stated—

"I am writing on behalf of the Sporting Shooters of Australia Association Bundaberg. The president and members wish to thank you for the support you have given to us. In the acquisition of a suitable site for a Shooting Complex in the district, our members acknowledge the considerable amount of time and effort that has been devoted by your goodself.

So on behalf of our members who really appreciate your support in this matter, we look forward to a satisfactory conclusion."

It has taken quite a while to find a suitable site for that rifle range. I thank the Minister for his efforts in making that unproductive land, which is unsuitable for forestry, available to fill a sporting need in the Bundaberg district. I also thank all members who have supported this process and welcomed this change, especially in relation to the revocation of part of State Forest 840.

Mr BEANLAND (Toowong) (4.19 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Minister's motion for the revocation of certain State forest areas and to express the Liberal Party's support for it. What should be of concern to all members is that a huge area of State forest is being lost to the people of Queensland as part of the forest estate while little or no land is being added to that forest estate. I hope and trust that, at some stage in the future, members will hear the Minister speak about what the Government intends to do about adding additional areas to our forest estate. For a considerable period, the forest estate has been whittled down. During the 1991 financial year, over 100 000 hectares were transferred from the forest estate. Large areas were transferred to national parkland. That, in itself, is good, but we should not lose sight of the fact that we need a forest estate for the long-term benefit of the people of Queensland. I ask the Minister what the Government proposes in relation to this matter, because in recent times little or no additions have been made to our forest estate.

Some 6 470 hectares are being transferred to national park areas. Although that is appropriate—and perhaps appreciated by many—nevertheless, it is also important that, when land is transferred, the Minister who is then responsible for it has sufficient management staff to care for that land. I question whether the Minister for Environment and Heritage, who now administers national parkland, has sufficient staff to manage those national parkland areas. It is quite clear that huge areas are also being transferred and acquired. A diversity of land is being added to the national parks estate. At the same time, there has not been an increase in the number of personnel to manage it. I believe that only 12 personnel have been allocated for that purpose this financial year.

This revocation involves a considerable area of land that requires management. Of growing concern in the community is the fact that areas that are being added to national parks are not being managed. Although the Minister might think that he is washing his hands of the problem, I believe that land is a valuable asset of this State which should not be handed over without ensuring that the relevant Minister and his department have the appropriate resources to manage that very important national asset of the people of this State. Two of the five proposed revocations are in the vicinity of Innisfail and relate to the transfer of the whole of State Forest 608 and State Forest 1748 to national park. The next proposal relates to water supply in the Johnstone Shire. The fourth proposal relates to the transfer of 358.9 hectares for the purpose of establishing a sporting complex for shooting clubs. It is important that we cater for shooting clubs. It is becoming more important that people be appropriately trained in the use of firearms. The best way to do that is to provide a rifle range where that training can take place. We often find that, with urban development and development of more intensive sporting fields, rifle and other shooting clubs are being put under more pressure to give up their large areas of land. The Bundaberg and District Range Committee will welcome this proposal. The final proposal relates to the conversion of a small area consisting of 3.466 hectares that has been held under special lease to be used for grazing purposes. The

Minister indicated in the notes that he provided that that area has been used for grazing purposes for over 20 years and is now to be converted to freehold tenure. I am pleased that the Minister has allowed this to occur, because I believe that, wherever possible, those areas should be transferred from leasehold to freehold tenure.

Earlier, I mentioned the need for the Government to give attention to the forestry area, and I return to that matter. Today, forestry areas are often transferred, causing long-term loss of jobs not only in the timber-felling industry but in the mills and related industries such as cabinet-making and building. Thousands of Queenslanders are employed in those small but important industries. Although these areas are being transferred to national parks, it is important that attention be given to the need to build up the forest estate. I trust that the Minister will indicate today how the Government will ensure that that occurs.

Mr SLACK (Burnett) (4.26 p.m.): I endorse the comments of the Opposition spokesperson on forestry, the member for Gympie. I will say a few words on the fourth proposal which relates to an area which was adjacent to my electorate and will be included in the new electorate that I represent. The member for Bundaberg has also spoken about this proposal. Prior to the debate, I told the Minister that I would make some points on this proposal. We all know that it took a long time to arrive at this compromise on what was a difficult situation in the Bundaberg area. I will not delve into the history of the matter, except to say that it was a rocky road. Commitments were given to the rifle range people and, after two and a half years, we have finally seen an honouring of those commitments. This proposal is reasonable. I will not argue with the member for Bundaberg or the Minister. The area is acceptable to the rifle range people. It is equally as good as the area that was applied for in the Kinkuna area. The problems have been resolved reasonably. However, the time factor has been a major problem for the rifle range people. They did have some problems with the previous rifle range. I will not enter into the debate on that, except to say that the rifle range committee has been the meat in the sandwich right along the line. We are now two and a half years down the track and have reached the stage at which this piece of land will be excised for the purpose of the Bundaberg and District Range Committee.

The problem that has now arisen is that the proposal will be put before the Lands Department and a suitable title will have to be issued. I wonder whether it is possible to give the committee possession of the land without actually having the title, particularly if it may take some time to be dealt with by the Lands Department. There is no argument in the district that the land should not be made available for this purpose. There is no argument within the Lands Department or the Forestry Service as to the revocation of the land for the purpose described. However, as the Minister would appreciate, because of red tape, it could take some time to get the title to the committee. The shooters have had to go to Biggenden and Maryborough to practise shooting. Police and cadets are involved, as well as sporting shooters. The shooters have been the meat in the sandwich in this matter that has taken far too long. If the Minister could recognise their problem and do something to assist them in rectifying it and having land available so that they can start building on it, it would be appreciated.

I have spoken to the Lands Department and to forestry officers about the matter. A question has arisen about the demarcation of a main road. I will not accept that it is through the efforts of the member for Bundaberg that the rifle range has been moved to the forestry area which is being sought to be excised. As the member for Burnett, with Kinkuna being in my electorate, I had a big input into the application by the rifle range people for land. Originally they wanted Kinkuna, and I supported that. However, I recognised the problems that arose at Kinkuna and I was supportive of this move by the Government. In fact, I suggested that the parties try to resolve the matter without political involvement so that they would not be involved in the ongoing wars that have been occurring between the member for Bundaberg and me. I am pleased to see this matter finally before the House and I hope the proposal is expedited quickly.

Hon. E. D. CASEY (Mackay—Minister for Primary Industries) (4.30 p.m.), in reply: I would like to thank all members for the manner in which they have participated in this

debate. All honourable members have been supportive of the proposed revocations. There are some points which have been raised and, as we do not often get comments in relation to forestry work, I ought to give a very brief explanation of some of those particular points. Firstly, the honourable member for Gympie raised a point in relation to an access problem in his own region. It really has nothing to do with the revocation, but it was a problem that was brought about through no fault of the Queensland Forest Service or my department. We will take up this matter of access with the Widgee Shire Council. Is it in the Widgee area?

Mr Stephan: It is in the Widgee area.

Mr CASEY: The matter will be taken up with the Widgee Shire Council in an effort to resolve it and I will advise the member of the result. As I have often said to honourable members, he is shadow-boxing with his criticisms of the World Heritage area. It is in place, we are proud of it and we will continue to be proud of it.

I thank the honourable member for Bundaberg for his comments. He has received the reward for the hard work that he has done. I accept that the honourable member for Burnett also made an input into the resolution of the problem. It was the honourable member for Bundaberg who, along with me, looked at alternative sites in the area and at the problems with those sites. It goes to show that he always works very hard in his electorate and that is why he gets the reward of the support of the people of Bundaberg for whom he continues to work. The honourable member for Toowong raised matters about the management of those areas that are being incorporated into the World Heritage area. The answer is quite simply that in this particular case it is only a matter of a National Parks and Wildlife Service ranger driving a bit further down the road than he now does. In relation to the other issue, the ranger already drives past the piece of land that has been included in the World Heritage area, so there are no additional management problems to be overcome. We must also accept that the Commonwealth has a major input into the management of these areas. The heritage authority funds a lot of the work that goes on in those areas.

The other matter that the honourable member talked about was the increase of the area of State forest. I can assure him that there are many activities going on in relation to this issue. State forest areas have been increased. We must not forget that these revocations are part of our review of the overall situation. If timber cannot be produced on Crown land that is suitable for national park purposes, we have added it to a national park somewhere. If it is an area that is currently being leased by industry, it may as well be permanently designated as a leased area. If it is an area that can be used for public purposes, we will transfer it to an area designated for that purpose. The Queensland Forest Service does not just sit on forests for the sake of sitting on them. Forests are there for future generations to use and, as far as the timber industry is concerned, in the case of State plantations they are there for future use. I draw attention to the tremendous work that is still being carried out by the Queensland Forest Service in State plantation areas. It is expected that within the next five to ten years we will double the area of plantation forests. We are getting further and further ahead of the other States in the proportion of State forests being used for plantation purposes. In addition, if the honourable member for Toowong had taken notice of the last month's release by the Premier of the Queensland—Leading State package—one of its initiatives relates to a cooperative effort being made by us, the Commonwealth and the local authorities in far-north Queensland in an endeavour to try to get additional reafforestation of some of the very valuable timbers that he talked about on both private and public lands in those areas. These were denuded in the past, and we accepted that that was a problem. We are doing something to rectify that problem. We should get credit for working in that direction.

I have already acknowledged the contribution by the honourable member for Burnett in his support for the Bundaberg rifle range proposal. It is true that when I became the Minister I faced another problem. It was not my commitment initially, but it was going to create a number of problems. He acknowledges that, and I am pleased to see his acknowledgment extends to his switching his support to the latest proposal that

we have looked at. I will look at the aspect of possession that he has suggested, but I draw two things to his attention. Rifle shooting is a dangerous sport and there may be complications in allowing possession prior to title actually being achieved. We will ensure that the Lands Department speeds up its dealings in this particular case so that we can get it through as soon as possible. The main thing that everybody within the region would accept is that the new site has much better access than the original site, which is very important to the people who engage in that sport. Again, I thank honourable members for their support. I assume that I can now also thank the House for its support for these measures.

Motion agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 20 May (see p. 5411).

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (4.37 p.m.): I want to say to the Minister that the Opposition will oppose the passage through the House of the Bill in its present form. Even though we have had some discussions, the Minister has gone back on his original course. I am pleased to see that. We did not take lightly the decision to oppose the legislation, but did so only after giving it very careful scrutiny—as the Minister knows from his officers—and only after taking a lot of advice from experts. Before I discuss the contents of the Bill, I want to compliment the Minister on his attitude to achieving informed debate in this House. I said the same thing the last time we dealt with local government legislation. If more of the Minister's colleagues did the same thing, it would save a lot of time, heartburn and ill feeling in this House. The Minister shows members of the Opposition the courtesy of allowing his officers to discuss the Bill with them. He comes out in the open and lets us know exactly what he is going to do. His officers have given members of the Opposition advice, and when we make a suggestion they give us advice on that, too. They must be taking our comments back to the Minister because I believe the Minister proposes to move some amendments at a later stage. I thank the officers who gave us the briefings. They have pointed out some of the efficiencies that the Bill will introduce, but I do not believe those things can make up for some of the basic flaws in the thinking behind this legislation.

The Opposition is concerned about several implications of this legislation, hence the decision to oppose it. The Bill seeks to hobble local government and make it fall into line with the social planning agenda of the State Government of the day. I hope that during the Minister's reply he will address some of the concerns I outline. This legislation appears to leave local authorities and ratepayers open to costly legal action simply for enforcing policies foisted on them by the State Government. I intend to deal in greater depth with this matter at a later stage. It provides incompetent and obstructive local authorities with a means of avoiding the need to justify their inaction in the Planning and Environment Court. It takes us down the obnoxious path of letting Ministers duck political responsibility for decisions taken in accordance with their wishes. I will go into that in greater detail later. It delivers ever more power into the hands of non-elected people who can indulge their own hobbyhorses without the discipline of facing the people. I mentioned this matter in a previous debate and I reiterate my belief that the Minister is shunting too much of his responsibility over to non-elected people, and I think he is dodging his responsibilities. Even if he does not, he leaves the way open for some Minister in the future to do so—a Minister who is not as strong-minded as is the present Minister. This legislation also takes away from thousands of small-businesspeople throughout the State specific protection afforded by the previous legislation. In a nutshell, this legislation makes local government authorities little more than gate-keepers.

Mr Beattie: Speak up! I can't hear you. Speak up!

Mr RANDELL: I cannot hear the honourable member from where I sit, either, so there is something wrong with the sound system in this House. There is certainly something wrong with the heating in my room, too.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order!

Mr RANDELL: I know that presently we are getting a lot of hot air from the other side of the House. As I said before, in a nutshell, this legislation makes local government authorities little more than gate-keepers. Under this legislation, their function changes dramatically to one where they are expected to do no more than enforce the implementation of Government policy. That is not the way things should be, and it is not the way the Labor Party pretends that they are. Local government is the very important third tier of government, with clear responsibility for the basic issues of how communities live and develop. It is often said—and I quite believe it—that local government is closest to the people. If that is true, as I believe it is, then local government knows best about most of the things which affect our daily lives, such as where and how we build our homes, where to shop, how to get to work, and the facilities available for recreation. This Bill and the Orders in Council for which it provides take away from local government much of its ability to decide those basic issues.

Mrs Woodgate: That's not true.

Mr RANDELL: The member will have a chance to have a say and she can go for it then. Anyone who has looked through the Bill will realise that the heart of it is new Part 1A to be inserted into the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act 1990. When that Bill was passed by the House, the Opposition did not oppose it because, in our view, it posed no great threat to local government or to the people of Queensland, but this new inclusion changes everything. One needs to go no further than page 4 of the Bill to see what the Government is up to. New section 1A. 1. (1) gives the Governor in Council and, effectively, the director-general—I repeat "effectively, the director-general" and point out that it is not the Minister, and I will be making many similar points during the debate—the capacity to dictate planning policies to the State's local authorities. It gives a State Government overriding power to dictate the most basic policies to the third tier of government. New section 1A. 1. (2) gives power to apply the State's wishes selectively against any local authority. I would like the member for Brisbane Central to listen carefully to what I am saying because I am quoting from the Bill, which states that the power applies "to the whole of the State except so far as it otherwise provides." In other words, a Minister or a Government is being given legislative power to conduct a vendetta against a particular local authority or its leader. I am not saying that the present Minister will do so, but this legislation will be a yardstick for his successors. What I am saying is not idle speculation. All honourable members would remember the campaign this Government ran against the former Liberal Lord Mayor of Brisbane in the run-up to the last local government election. This House and the power of Government were used in a very heavy-handed manner against Mrs Atkinson. We know, too, that the Treasurer is planning a campaign against the Cairns City Council because the people there had the good sense to break the stranglehold of the Labor front that had run the city for so long.

Planning guidelines are basic to the way in which every local authority handles land use applications. They are the information base on which council officers and councillors operate when they consider development proposals. To be able to dictate them to local authorities is a very potent weapon for a Minister or his officers to have available to them. Let me examine the types of matters that could be included in the definition of "planning policies". There could be matters such as the preservation of valuable agricultural land, and all would agree that too much good land is passing from production into housing. The problem arises when an attempt is made to try to work out what is valuable and what is not. I understand that the Department of Primary Industries has had a lot to say on that, apart from local government.

Mr Burns: How would you handle it, then? Leave it to the council?

Mr RANDELL: That is the Minister's responsibility.

Mr Burns: Should we leave it to the council?

Mr RANDELL: As I said, that is the Minister's responsibility.

Mr Burns: I am saying we have got to have planning. You say you don't want that.

Mr RANDELL: The Minister will have a chance to reply to my comments and I suggest that he should listen to what I have to say. Later on, he will have a chance to speak and we can debate this matter during the Committee stage. Problems also arise when we try to balance the need for land to accommodate urban expansion against the need for agricultural production to support the local economy. At the end of the day, perhaps decisions of that nature are best left to the local people. Many farmers who live in my electorate would sell portions of their land just to survive in an economic environment created by the hostile and ill-advised actions of both the State and Federal Governments. There is a real danger that new section 1.A. 1. (2) will result in the problem being taken even further because land use decisions will be made on the basis of the local authority that is in favour. Another State planning policy could involve building heights or site coverage. Where space is not at a premium, that would not be a problem, but it certainly would be in the Brisbane, Cairns or Gold Coast central business districts. Honourable members should think for a moment about the policies that Labor's newest and brightest star, Jim Soorley, has been trying to foist on the people of Brisbane. There is a great danger that Labor will use State planning policies to engage in a bit of social engineering. That might be justified where a Labor figure has won an overwhelming mandate for a particular planning policy at a local government election. Members of the Opposition would have no quarrel with that if he went to the people on that policy and won the election. In those circumstances, he should be allowed to go ahead with it.

I will never support the notion that a State Government should be able to impose such things on a local authority regardless of local conditions. Let us consider what Labor might do with State planning policies where the environment is concerned. We all know that radical greenies have the upper hand in this Government, and even the Minister for Housing and Local Government has not been able to put a dent in them. He will be under enormous pressure to introduce State planning policies along the lines of Brisbane's vegetation protection orders. What a disaster that would be for people all over the State. I know that a greenie is hidden in every one of us, but most of us recognise the dangers in going too far. I am saying that there must be a balance in whatever we do.

If honourable members think that I am worried about nothing, let me take their minds back to the Ash Wednesday bushfires in the south several years ago. We all recall that tragic event. Most of the deaths—and most of the property devastation—were the direct result of radical greenies getting their hands on the planning policy levers. People were allowed—indeed, they were encouraged—to build in those bushy, fire-prone areas. However, planning policies meant that they were not permitted even the most basic clearing of firebreaks or even safety zones around their homes. Some places simply had to become deathtraps of tinder-dry combustible vegetation. They became just that on Ash Wednesday, and a lot of people died for some greenie's warm inner glow. I remind honourable members of the many residential areas, particularly on the Brisbane fringe, where people have built their homes in very similar situations. I keep saying that there must be a balance between practical planning and planning in theory. As I have said, we should not have decisions by greenies to the detriment of the public.

Perhaps State planning policies will call for development approvals to include payment by developers for even more infrastructure—I say "perhaps"—which would be an extension of Labor's insidious user-pays policy for manipulating Budget outlays. The previous Government ensured that developers made a contribution to what we might call hard infrastructure—and we believed in that—such as water, sewerage and roads inside a development. I cannot see why ratepayers should have to put up with that. Will Labor now insist on soft infrastructure? I ask the Minister to tell honourable members in his summing up who will pay for that soft infrastructure, such as community centres, libraries, child care, or even social workers? Perhaps councils will even be forced to

demand schools and police stations from developers. That would free up even more Budget money for Labor's pet schemes. The only trouble with all that is that developers cannot afford higher contributions than they already make.

The little development that we have left in Queensland would soon dry up. When one considers the unemployment rate, one can see that we urgently need some development in this State. I remind the Minister and the Premier that we certainly need some development in Mackay, where we have 40 per cent youth unemployment. I note that, in the planning of Brisbane, $120m will be spent on South Bank. It is a pity that some of that money has not been spent in the rural areas to provide jobs for youngsters. Forty out of every hundred kids cannot get a job. It is tragic. I do not know the cost of the exhibition that will be held next Saturday, or whenever it is.

Mr Mackenroth: What have you done for South Bank?

Mr RANDELL: I certainly will not be going to it. I can tell the honourable member that. I do not want to see my kids out of jobs and the hardships that they are enduring, while the Government is sitting here in luxury putting on that sort of event at a time of hard economic pressure. That should be condemned, and I will condemn it. What about the $35m for the Indy Car Grand Prix on the Gold Coast? The Government should throw a bit of that our way. In my area, we want some dams, some roads and a new police station. I can see that the Minister is ready to get into me, and I will be looking for it when he sums up.

When we spoke with the Minister's officers—and I have already thanked the Minister for that—we raised concerns about the ability of the Minister or the department to insist that State planning policies be followed. Unless I am mistaken, his officers were of the opinion that such policies would merely be advisory. Although I accept that they honestly hold that view, I believe that they are wrong. I believe that the State planning policies are meant to be prescriptive. I ask honourable members to consider the words used in proposed section 4.4 (3A) of the Bill, which states—

> "The local authority must have regard to relevant State planning policies in making its decision on the application."

The words are that the local authority "must have regard". Those words, or a slight variation on them, appear all over the legislation. If honourable members go through the Bill, they will see the word "must". On one page, I saw eight "musts". The Minister should not tell me that the policies will be advisory only; the word used is "must". I refer honourable members to pages 9 and 10 in particular, relating to a number of matters dealt with by some local authorities on a weekly basis. There are the amendments to sections 2.19 and 4.4—Assessment of proposed planning scheme amendment; section 4.7—Assessment of rezoning of land in stages; and section 4.13—Assessment of town planning consent application.

There are further uses of those words with reference to applications for subdivisions and staged developments. To most people, the law means what any reasonable man would understand from the words used. I suggest that anybody reading that clause would understand it as meaning that the local authority must—"must" is the word in the clause—act in accordance with the relevant State planning policies. Certainly, a determined Minister would be keen to get into court and make a case for compulsion if a local authority went against one of those policies. I ask honourable members to consider something else. I am told that judges have often resorted to referring to a Minister's second-reading speech in seeking the true intention of an Act of Parliament—legislation that has been passed through this House. I know that I should not use quotes, but I will quote the Minister and he can go against me if he wants to. Among other things, he said—

> "Such policies would comprise a set of principles or more specific criteria which must be taken into account"—

"must" be taken into account, so it is not advisory—

> "when making planning decisions. The purpose of a State planning policy will be to identify the Government's position on planning matters of State significance and to

provide guidance for all decision makers on strategic planning and development decision making. State planning policies will provide a framework within which local authorities exercise discretion in accordance with local circumstances."

The word "must" is in there. Any reasonable man would interpret that statement to mean that the State planning policies must be the consistent skeleton of local government decision making. Decisions may only be fleshed out according to local considerations.

If the Minister truly intends the final Bill to mean what his officers think it means, I can assure him of support for a few simple amendments. All he needs to do is change the form of words used in several clauses of the Bill to make it clear that State planning policies are advisory—the Minister could use the word "advisory" instead of the word "must"—and may be taken into account if a local authority finds that they suit local circumstances. I am sure that the draftsman could come up with suitable amendments to allow us to support passage of the Bill tonight. Clause 5 goes into some detail about planning studies which local authorities must prepare—the word "must" again—in respect of each planning scheme, strategic plan, and development control plan. Each study must include a statement about the extent to which the local authority has had regard to State planning policies. Clause 6 makes it clear that those planning studies——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! I remind the honourable member that specific references to clauses should be left to the Committee stage. I have been very lenient with him until this time.

Mr FITZGERALD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek your direction. The member for Mirani was referring to a set pattern that comes up clause after clause. It says "must" instead of "may". I believe that he is not debating each clause, he is debating a pattern that occurs throughout the clauses. I draw that to your attention in this case.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am well aware of what the honourable member was referring to. I have made my ruling. I suggest that the honourable member for Mirani not make specific references to the clauses until the Committee stage.

Mr RANDELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, on the last occasion on which local government legislation was debated in this place, many members, particularly the member for Brisbane Central, criticised me for not referring to the Bill. So, on this occasion, I made certain that I was referring to the Bill. That gives the Minister an opportunity to reply to me in his summing-up. Mr Deputy Speaker, I beg your indulgence in what I am doing. I can delete reference to the clauses, if you wish.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Mirani will continue.

Mr RANDELL: The Bill makes it clear that those planning studies must be sent to the department and kept open for inspection. The Bill also requires the local authority to feed more paperwork into the department's files even before it prepares or amends strategic or development control plans. It must let Big Brother know what is happening even before the event.

Mr Burns: Now it has to ask his permission. I am taking away the requirement for asking me for permission and say that you have just got to tell me, and you are going crook.

Mr RANDELL: But the Minister is doing that selectively.

Mr Beattie: Get out.

Mr RANDELL: He is. The same thing is happening with this Bill as happened when the previous local government legislation was before the House. The Minister shunted over the sideline anything that was difficult or with which he did not want to deal. He is going to do what Ros Kelly did in the Federal Parliament, namely, say, "I am sorry. I didn't do that. My officers did it." When I was a Minister, there was no way in the world that I blamed my officers. I know that the Minister does not do it, either. A Minister should never blame his officers. If a Minister is prepared to accept the pats on the head, he should be prepared to get the kicks in the behind. That is what a good Minister should do. He should never blame his officers. During the three years that I was

Minister, I never blamed my officers, and there is nothing to prove that I did. A Minister might do them over afterwards out of the sight of the public, but he would not do it publicly. I would not expect the Minister for Local Government to do that, either. If he did, he would go down in my estimation. Why does the Government have to know every move that a local authority is planning to make? Why does the chief executive have to be kept informed? That is what I keep asking. I believe that the answer lies in Labor's fascination with centralised control and that Big Brother is always right.

Mr Beattie: Oh!

Mr RANDELL: Of course it is. It is coming through all the time. Labor should own up now and we can get matters back on the path of ideological purity. If the department and the Minister want the right to knock out of the ring a proposal that has local support, they already have that power further down the track. The end result of the local authority's planning work has to go to the Minister for approval by the Governor in Council. Perhaps they are ensuring that they can do their work in secret beforehand. Perhaps they want to avoid the odium of publicly imposing their will over that of the community-based local authority. Whatever the reason, it is now clear that there is a big push to centralise the most basic functions of local government in a politically controlled Government bureaucracy.

Mr Beattie: Who wrote this?

Mr RANDELL: The member for Brisbane Central asked who wrote it. I can reply to that. I have seen the girls slipping the memorandums to him. The other members try to get on the list of speakers, but he monopolises the speaking on every Bill that comes before the House. The girls come up and slip the memorandums under his door. I believe that, as a result of that, the other day he started speaking on the wrong Bill and had to pull out. That is the sort of thing that we get from the member for Brisbane Central. He should listen to what I am about to say.

Mr Burns: That was Bill Gunn answering the wrong question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr RANDELL: What about the time when the Minister was going to speak and Bill Knox pulled the pages out of the middle of his speech and ripped them in half?

Mr Burns: That was Chalkie.

Mr RANDELL: It was the Minister. We know what happens with the member for Brisbane Central. He gets his memos and his instructions and away he goes. I ask him to listen to this. The Labor Government inherited a Local Government Department with a staff of 40 very expert people to assist local authorities with planning matters. That help and advice was given on request. When I was a Minister, I made it quite clear that we would do nothing unless it was on request. It was a department which saw its role as one of assisting councils with problems, and that is what we did. Help was indeed available at all times, even at the end of a telephone; but those days are gone.

The Local Government Department has been subject to the Labor version of reform. Many of the experts have already been forced out and the rest know that they have very little time left. I have spoken to some of those who have gone out of the department. That department bears no resemblance to what it was under the National Party Government. Local government in Queensland has gone. There is now a new structure dominated by a planning area with a staff of 140. That is what has been put in its place—a planning staff. The Government forgets that somebody has to pay for those 140 staff. The taxes that are being used to pay for them are coming from the men who are slaving out in the rural areas. There is no doubt at all that this group will become a State planning authority based on the New South Wales model. I await with interest the Minister's reply so that it can be recorded in *Hansard* for all to see. For a considerable time, the State Planning Authority in New South Wales has been found wanting. I believe that there are now moves afoot by the Greiner Government to shift it back to the old Queensland model that we knew. The New South Wales Government has rejected what this Government is trying to implement. It is fair to say that the work being carried

out in the department now consists of studies which produce no identifiable end products of any use to local authorities.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr RANDELL: No way in the world! The Minister stood up in this House and called the intellectuals and academics in Canberra wankers. That is what he will have in Queensland—a mob of intellectual and academic wankers who will try to run local government. Local government cannot be run on theory. I have been in local government. I know that it is run on practical terms and that every three years those involved in local government are judged on that performance.

Mr Burns: I'll give you this book to read later. This is the New South Wales system following us.

Mr RANDELL: I will read it afterwards. Before it is too late, the Government should consider encouraging cooperative groups of local authorities, to study common problems and aspirations. The planning group in the department could then be redeployed to assist the regional groupings of local authorities. Expert groups could be called in at the sole initiative of the local authorities. One interesting and very important issue—and I would like the Minister to pay attention to this, if he comes back into the House——

A Government member: He does not want to listen to you.

Mr RANDELL: The Minister does not want to hear it. That is okay. Perhaps the honourable member might hear it and reply later on. One issue that appears to have escaped the attention of the draftsmen is the matter of legal liabilities of councils for actions that they take in accordance with this legislation. Land use rights conferred by a planning scheme are almost as important to an owner as the title to the land. They determine the difference between financial success or failure. Councils will be required to administer planning schemes drawn up not in accordance with their own wishes and locally based policies, but in accordance with the wishes of the State Government. I ask the Minister——

Mr Burns: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr RANDELL: Yes, I do. There appear to be no provisions in this Bill which protect councils from action by land-owners for injurious affection. Ratepayers could well be required to meet compensation judgments flowing from policies set by the State Government. If a writ is issued because the Government has instructed a council to do something on behalf of the State, who will bear the cost of it?

Mr Burns: You know the answer only too well. There is no injurious affection for a rezoning.

Mr RANDELL: I am not talking about rezoning in isolation. I am talking about all the actions that a local government will take on behalf of the State Government. If a council has to go to court and compensation is awarded, who will foot the bill?

Mr Burns: Rezonings are knocked back every day of the week.

Mr RANDELL: The Minister well knows that a local authority could be involved in a compensation claim. Where is the equity in forcing a council to take actions which might land it in court and make the ratepayers liable for big payouts? The Minister might tell the House who will foot the bill. Will the Minister guarantee that he will foot the bill?

Mr Burns: No.

Mr RANDELL: No, the Minister will not guarantee that.

Mr Burns: And neither will the council, because there is no injurious affection for a rezoning. People are refused rezonings every day of the week.

Mr RANDELL: I am not talking only about rezonings. I am talking about the myriad actions that local government will have to undertake because of this legislation.

Mr Burns: There is no change. You are distorting it, and you can't read.

Mr RANDELL: No, I am not. That is not fair. The Minister should not again pass responsibility to local government. It is all very well for the Minister to tell local government what to do, but he should be man enough and statesman enough to say, "If anything like that happens, we will foot the bill."

Mr Burns: There is no injurious affection for a rezoning.

Mr RANDELL: I am not talking only about rezoning. I cannot seem to get through to the Minister. I have said that there are myriad consequences that local government could have to face because it has the responsibility for State planning.

Mr Burns: I will answer you in full in my reply.

Mr RANDELL: The Minister is interjecting now. Now is his chance.

Mr Burns: I will answer you in full in my reply. You will have to listen when I reply.

Mr RANDELL: That is fair enough. However, I want the Minister to understand that I am not just referring to rezoning. There are myriad issues that could result in a council being involved in a claim for compensation. If that occurs as a result of some action that a council has been told to take on behalf of the State Government, who will foot the bill? That is all I want to know.

As I said before, this Bill provides the opportunity for incompetent or obstructive local authorities to avoid their responsibilities indefinitely and to escape the need to justify themselves in the Planning and Environment Court. Applicants who have gone to local councils for approvals have long been safe in the knowledge that the council must give a decision within a specified period. Only the Minister can extend the time period, on the application of the council concerned. Protection for the applicant lay in his right to appeal to a court if he deemed that because the time limit had expired, without a decision being made, the application had been refused. In other words, no decision in the time allowed meant that the application had not been granted, and there was cause for an action. This Bill allows a local authority to grant itself further time for consideration. Under the provisions of this legislation, for no good reason, a local authority could keep extending its own time limits to deal with a difficult matter and successfully prevent an applicant from exercising his rights to appeal to a court. That is simply not acceptable. If there is provision in the Bill for the Minister to step in and ensure that the council must deal with that matter, I would be quite happy if he could point to that. The Minister should take that into account.

There should be provision in the legislation to enable councils to pass to the department for expert advice and assistance any applications which are too big or too complex for them to handle. Again, I emphasise that that should happen only at the initiative of the council. The discipline of a time limit would help a council to decide on the need for help.

Mr Mackenroth: How about giving us a condensed version of this speech?

Mr RANDELL: No, I will not. The honourable member is not even in his correct seat.

Mr Mackenroth: Mr Speaker takes care of that. You don't have to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order!

Mr RANDELL: I would love to have time to deal with the honourable member. As I said earlier, the Opposition is concerned that this legislation allows the Minister to dodge responsibility for a great many things that can be done by others under the proposed Act. All through this Bill, there are amendments proposing to move certain functions and duties from the Minister to the chief executive. I am aware that the Minister will still have to take matters to the Governor in Council. I am aware that he will still have to give final approval to various planning schemes and decisions. However, he will no longer be part of the process of determining many of these issues. He will be the rubber stamp at the end of the process. In future, it will be all too easy for a Minister to wash his hands of unpopular decisions. He can simply blame the chief executive. I do not say that the Minister will do such a thing, but the legislation will allow future Ministers to do so. I mention again Ros Kelly. That was a great opportunity for a

Minister to blame a mistake on the department and walk away from it. Even worse, the Minister and the Government will eventually—after this legislation is passed—be able to blame local authorities. Given time, these State planning policies will become a settled part of local government decision making. There will be no answer when a Minister claims that a decision was routine—one that was made by the local authority in accordance with its normal practice. Contentious decisions will be made and implemented before any real dissent and opposition can develop. Effectively, issues will be hidden from public debate.

This Bill has caused a great deal of distress among organisations that represent the many thousands of small retailers in Queensland. The Bill proposes the omission of section 8.3 of the Act, which refers to major shopping developments and the requirement for economic impact assessments before approval can be given. Russ Hinze had that requirement included in the Act some years ago as a means of protecting small retailers from the possibly disastrous effects of the inappropriate placement of huge shopping developments.

I am sure that all honourable members would agree that there is no sense in approving new developments when the inevitable impact will be the destruction of other businesses. New developments should be approved only when the market catchment is sufficiently large to accommodate the new and the old shopping facilities. The economic impact assessments that were demanded were possibly inconvenient, and sometimes very costly, but they served an excellent purpose. They protected the investments that people have made in retailing businesses, yet they allowed for the expansion of facilities when unmet demand could be shown. They even protected potential investors against unwise decisions.

I make a further point that this amendment could allow developments to slip through, which could injure small businesses that thought they were safe because they had already gone through the assessment process. The National Party raised its concerns with the Minister's officers and they have been very helpful in explaining the thinking behind the amendment. They believe that major shopping centres can be efficiently handled by including them with designated developments that require environmental impact assessment, which is covered in section 8.2 of the Act.

Schedule 2 to regulation 16 would be amended to accommodate major shopping centres as presently defined. I am sure that the intention is good and that the people who drafted the changes believe that they are promoting efficiency. With goodwill and very careful attention to detail by the officers drafting the terms of reference under Regulation 17, things may work out. I say "may", because the definition of an environmental impact statement relating to section 8.2 places little emphasis on economic considerations. I do not intend to take up the time of the House by reading the relevant definitions, but they are included in clause 4 of the Bill. I paraphrase those definitions by saying that they refer to things commonly associated with the natural environment.

I do not believe the new proposals adequately cover the need to protect thousands of existing small businesses from devastation. The National Party is concerned about that. The proposals are not necessary and simply play into the hands of very big business. We all know that the Minister never misses a chance to tell the media how he supports the little fellow and the battler. He can prove that commitment by withdrawing this odious amendment in the Committee stage of this debate. The National Party has an unshakeable commitment to measures which give small business a go. I assure the House that it will fight hard to retain that measure of protection.

I am sure that Government members are dying to get on their feet to remind us that the Local Government Association has not been in the media screaming blue murder about what this Bill does to its member councils. They are quite right. Very little adverse reaction has been reported in the media, and there are some very good reasons for that. Since the Labor Government came to power—and the member for Brisbane Central would know this—local government has been preoccupied with literally hundreds of

written replies to Government committees of inquiry, EARC position papers, CJC investigations and all the rest.

Mr Burns: Come on!

Mr RANDELL: The Minister knows that local government has been completely snowed under.

Mr Beattie: The only one who is snowed around here is you. Come on!

Mr RANDELL: The honourable member for Brisbane Central knows what the Government has done to local government in this State. Let them get on with the normal business of looking after ratepayers. The Government has snowed local government under. Local government is punch-drunk and drowning in paperwork. Shire clerks have forgotten what a normal day's work in dealing with normal council business is about. Since December 1989, they have been spending all their time trying to justify their boundaries, defending their council's tendering policies and fending off the new breed of Department of Local Government experts who are trying to find out how local government really operates. Of course, they have not had time to consider this Bill properly, let alone write considered responses to the draconian provisions it contains.

For the most part, Lord Mayors, mayors and shire chairmen are not in a better position. In case honourable members have not counted, let me remind them that 80 of those people were replaced at the last local government election. That is almost two-thirds of the local government leaders in Queensland. I might add that some very talented people lost their positions in that bloodbath, including even some good Labor people such as the former Mayor of Rockhampton, Jim Webber, and the Mayor of Mackay, Peter Jardine. The end result is that Queensland has many new local authority leaders who are still trying to come to grips with their own jobs, let alone the assaults from a centralist Labor Government. Even the Local Government Association is still struggling to find its new identity. All those new local authority chiefs have to be felt out and their views accommodated. The stunt the Labor mayors of Brisbane and Ipswich are trying to pull with respect to the Local Government Grants Commission must be accommodated. I compliment the Minister on the speech that he delivered on the Gold Coast recently. The Minister said exactly what most people think. It is about time those mayors were pulled into gear. The Local Government Association still has to fill the gap created when the Minister seduced Greg Hoffman away to the job of Local Government Commissioner. The association is having a hard job filling that position. It should not have happened. The point is that, right now, local government is in no position to understand fully what the Government is pulling on it, or how to fight back. Local government is also painfully aware that it relies heavily on the financial largesse of the State Government. Bob Hawke's efforts to fiddle with Queensland's Federal constitutional arrangements will be missed by few people indeed, but at least he promised a fixed share of the tax pool for local government. When Paul Keating scuttled the new federalism, he scuttled the hopes of local government for a better financial deal, as well as a new measure of independence.

Only a few weeks ago, amendments to the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Act were passed. Those amendments were basically sensible. They allowed local government bodies the capacity to take more responsibility for their own destiny. They were a step in the right direction, and they recognised that local government has a legitimate place in the democratic system. This legislation goes the other way. Once more, it places the hobbles on local government. It reverses the gains that were made a few weeks ago. Queensland is now back to Labor's dream of centralism and control by a capital city bureaucracy. Great parallels can be drawn with the treatment of the States by the Commonwealth. Since Labor came to power in Queensland, even Mr Goss has come to realise some of the dangers of absolute domination of one sphere of government by another which is more powerful. When one considers this legislation, one can see similarities with the increased use of tied grants and the treaty power to allow the Commonwealth to intrude on areas that were previously considered the preserve of the States. That system, which was used so heavily by Whitlam, Fraser, Hawke and now Keating, often makes the States no more than administrators of Federal

programs rather than their own. This legislation makes local government the administrators of State policies. They will wear the flak for policies which local people do not want a bar of. Several members of this House have been involved in local government, and they know what a great burden this legislation imposes on aldermen and councillors who will have to face the people at the next election on policies that they will have had no part in setting.

This whole Bill is based on concepts that we cannot accept. It paves the way for a State planning authority to take over the most important decision-making functions of local government. Throughout this Bill there is a major shift of emphasis away from the Minister and onto the department. That is not acceptable when we are dealing with matters as important as the third tier of government in our society. State Premiers object most vociferously and correctly at increasing incursions by the Federal Government into areas rightly the responsibility of the States. They quite rightly demand a proper regard for the separate areas of responsibility inherent in the idea of our Federal Constitution. Why should we not accord the same independence to local government? Why should a chief executive send his Minister off to Executive Council with regulations that bind local government in basic areas? More and more power over local government is vested in the Governor in Council.

Mr Burns: Did Russell Grenning write this?

Mr RANDELL: No, he did not. I thought that he was writing speeches for the Minister.

Mr Burns: He is working for Cooper now.

Mr RANDELL: No, he is writing speeches for the Minister. The Opposition believes that any interference with the fundamental rights of local government should be done with the full and informed knowledge of the Parliament. The Opposition recognises that there will be rare occasions when the good of the whole State should override the wishes or the planning intentions of a particular local authority. I am thinking here in terms of massive economic developments with a Statewide impact, such as the space base or a major mine or processing facility. I believe that such matters of major importance to the State should be covered outside local government legislation.

Mr Burns: You don't want local government to be involved.

Mr RANDELL: The Minister and the Premier should be men enough to say that those matters are good for the State and good for creating jobs for our kids. Heaven knows that we want our kids to have jobs. The Minister and the Premier should have the courage to do something about this, instead of hiding behind someone else. If those matters are important enough, and if we must override local authority, the Government should have the courage to bring specific legislation into the House. It should be prepared to handle such matters openly, and not by stealth. The people of Queensland need to know exactly who to blame for planning decisions that they do not like. This legislation does the opposite, and we will oppose it at all stages.

Mrs WOODGATE (Pine Rivers) (5.18 p.m.): I will try to be a little more positive after such a negative speech from the member for Mirani. I enjoyed his speech about Coppabella much more than I did the one on this legislation. I am pleased to participate in the debate on this Bill. In his second-reading speech, the Minister quite succinctly summed up the Bill when he stated—

> "The primary objective of the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Bill is to streamline the planning system, provide greater autonomy to local government in matters of local concern and achieve a greater integration of State and local government planning objectives."

That is what it is all about—streamlining and more effective local government. Members know that the planning system has always been a joint responsibility of local government and the State Government, with local government taking the primary role by preparing the various types of planning instruments and controlling development at the local level. To date, the focus of the planning system has been at the local level. Whilst local government has been undertaking its role in quite a responsible manner at the local

level, it has never had any clear State framework within which to operate. Further, to date, it has had no clear direction from any State Government on planning matters that cross local authority areas. Currently, there is no State perspective and no clearly articulated State Government policy framework that reflects public interest matters that have a State focus within which local government can carry out its planning responsibilities. This Bill attempts to redress that situation by providing for the making of State planning policies by the State Government that will in effect be a whole-of-government approach to planning for the whole State of Queensland.

In the past, the State Government has been criticised by local government and the community for not being up front about planning matters which the State Government considers to be in the public interest on a Statewide basis. This whole-of-government approach does not mean the creation of a State planning authority—regardless of what the member for Mirani said. This Government has no intention of creating a top-down planning system. Its approach means that the State Government will play a more positive role in partnership with local government. That can only be good. The purpose of State planning policies will be to articulate this Government's position on planning matters of State significance. This Bill provides that the provisions of those policies must be taken into account by the Minister, the Planning and Environment Court, the Governor in Council and local government in the planning and development decision-making process. State planning policies, which will comprise a set of principles or criteria, will be required to be taken into account when making a planning and development decision. However, those policies will be framed in such a manner that allows local authorities to exercise discretion in accordance with local circumstances. Those policies may be geographically based, or based upon a particular issue. Some examples of the proposed policies include the development and conservation of agricultural land. All members on this side of the House acknowledge that much of the State's economic wealth comes from the agricultural sector. Similarly, costs of living in Queensland can be kept low if locally grown produce continues to be available. The intent of this policy will be to protect the State's good quality agricultural land from development that could be situated at alternative sites.

Let me take another example, that is, in relation to planning for aerodromes. As members would be aware, local government and the community have a lot of money invested in infrastructure associated with aerodromes, and the effects of air traffic often cause conflicts with people living nearby. We want to safeguard both the operation of those facilities and the adjoining communities by providing a policy that will give guidance to local government when it has to make a decision about development in and around aerodromes. Policies issued by the Government will help local authorities fulfil their planning roles. They will also offer an ideal opportunity for State Government agencies to work with local government to achieve certain objectives within the planning system. An example would be habitat conservation, an issue upon which the Department of Environment and Heritage has been working very hard in order to establish a basis for increased protection of habitats. The planning system offers an ideal opportunity to identify and protect areas of habitat importance at a local level once again. A State planning policy would be able to advise how local government and the State Government could work cooperatively to achieve the objective of protecting habitats by way of the planning system.

Provision for State planning policies will improve consistency of and accountability for development and land-use decisions made by the State Government. All persons involved in the planning system—this includes Ministers and the Government—must have regard to State planning policies. In particular, the Bill provides that the Minister must have regard to the provisions of a State planning policy when proposing to amend a planning scheme. The Planning and Environment Court will be required to have regard to the provisions of a State planning policy when considering an appeal to the court against a local government decision in respect of an application for an amendment of a planning scheme, for the consent to use land or for the subdivision of land. The Governor in Council will be required to have regard to the provisions of a State planning

policy when making a decision on an application for the approval or an amendment of a planning scheme, a strategic plan or a development control plan.

Local government will also be required to have regard to the provisions of a State planning policy—

when assessing and making a decision upon an application by a person to amend a planning scheme, for the consent to use land and for an application to subdivide land;

when the local authority itself proposes to amend a planning scheme;

when the local authority itself prepares a planning study in connection with the formulation of a planning scheme, a strategic plan and a development control plan; and

when the local authority itself prepares a local planning policy.

The manner in which a policy will be formulated has not been provided for in the Bill, as the Government will have a prescribed administrative protocol. This is considered to be necessary, given the varied nature and content of policies. In practice, a draft policy will be formulated by the State Government agency responsible for the particular planning issue in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Local Government. The department's role will be to take overall responsibility for ensuring that such policies are consistent with each other and capable of implementation through the statutory planning system.

Following ministerial authority to publish—and by "ministerial", I mean the Deputy Premier and the Minister responsible for the issues addressed by the policy—a draft policy would be subject to consultation with all other State Government agencies, local government and particular community sectors, including the development industry, which may be affected by the proposed policy. When finalised, the draft policy will be put to Cabinet for its ratification. After this ratification has been given, the policy will then be submitted to the Governor in Council for approval. A minimum period for consultation on each policy will be two months and, where an issue is perceived to be particularly contentious, a draft planning policy will be preceded by a discussion paper. This Government views the consultation period as an essential component of preparing the policy and not something to which it merely pays lip-service at the end of the process. In effect, the Bill provides a vehicle for all State Government agencies to give effect to their planning policies, and the administrative protocol will provide a mechanism for a coordinated and integrated approach by the State Government in planning for Statewide public interest issues.

The Bill also provides that a copy of each State planning policy must be available for public inspection and procurement by the public at the office of the local authority and at the office of the Department of Housing and Local Government. The Act currently provides that a copy of a planning scheme, the strategic plan, the DCPs and planning studies must be available for public inspection and procurement at the office of the local authority as well as at the office of the department. The proposed amendment will ensure that the members of the public are aware of and can avail themselves of all types of planning instruments which govern the operation of the planning system. The Order in Council which gives approval to a State planning policy will not include a schedule of the text of the policy. This is now the practice for planning schemes, amendments to the planning schemes and any documentation associated with the approval of plans. In practice, the Department of Housing and Local Government will be responsible for the printing and dissemination of a State planning policy to local government and State Government agencies. The Bill further provides that each State planning policy must be numbered in a regular arithmetical series and that each policy is subordinate legislation. As a consequence, a State planning policy must be tabled in Parliament within 14 sitting days after the Governor in Council gives approval of the policy. The effect of this proposal is to provide for accountability mechanisms and to provide that the policy receives the scrutiny of the Legislative Assembly, which is only correct. The existing power in the Act which provides that local government may make

planning policies on local planning issues has not been changed. The Bill does, however, provide a name change to local government planning policies in order to differentiate between local government and State Government planning policies. The Bill replaces the term "planning policies" currently used in the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act with the term "local planning policies".

I would like to make a few comments on the streamlining of the development decision-making process. The State Government is committed to streamlining the development decision-making process to achieve as far as possible an Integrated Development Approval System—IDAS. The development industry is attracted to Queensland because it has a less complex development approvals system compared to that of other States. As part of this Government's commitment to its micro-economic reform agenda outlined in the State economic development policy issued in April, and as part of this Government's commitment to streamline the development decision-making process, the Bill provides that any development approval issued by local government, or any development application made to local government, may be modified in a minor way. The existing legislation allows for only a minor modification of an approval for the consent to use land and a minor modification of a staged rezoning application. In the case of all other applications and approvals, for example the amendment of a planning scheme and the subdivision of land, a person must lodge a fresh application and go through the advertisement procedures again to change a minor part of the application or approval. This also applies to conditions attaching to an approval.

In practice, it has been found that it is quicker and much cheaper to lodge an appeal with the Planning and Environment Court and obtain a consent order to change a condition of an approval in a minor way rather than to advertise the change in the condition of approval. We all know that this is both costly and time consuming for something which does not alter the substance of the proposal already approved. The existing Act defines what "minor" is, and this will not be changed. The types of applications and approvals which will be able to be changed in a minor way are, firstly, conditions attaching to all types of approvals, for example rezonings, consents and subdivisions with or without works; and, secondly, applications for an amendment of a planning scheme, staged rezonings, staged subdivisions, the consent to use land, the subdivision of land, the amalgamation of land and an access easement.

If a proposed modification does not fall within the ambit of "minor" as defined in the Act, an applicant must undertake the application procedures required by the Act for a particular type of development proposal. The definition of "minor" in the Act protects the public interest as it specifically provides that an application to modify cannot be approved by local government if the modification would adversely affect any person to a degree which would cause that person to make an objection to the application, the approval was the subject of an appeal to the Planning and Environment Court and the court made a determination on the appeal, and a modification is sought of a condition that was imposed because of an objection made, when public notice of the original application for approval was given. The Bill does not propose to alter these public interest protection measures. Both the development industry and local government support this proposal as it will save them time, money and staff resources in both making such an application and in the processing of the applications.

Before I conclude, I must pay tribute to those dedicated officers in the Department of Local Government who have, as always, been most generous with their time, their assistance and their expertise during the past few months on the many occasions that I have phoned them. I pay special tribute to Kevin Yearbury and Jenny Dobinson. I thank them most sincerely. As someone who has experience in local government in the capacity of shire councillor, and as a person who is vitally interested in good local government in this State, I am more than happy to support this Minister and the Bill.

Mr COOMBER (Currumbin) (5.32 p.m.): Before speaking to the Bill, I would like to thank a couple of people. I thank the Minister's staff who have taken the time to brief the Liberal Party on the Bill. I thank the National Party because it has indicated through the member for Mirani that it is going to oppose this Bill. That is good to hear, because

18 months ago when this Bill was introduced into the House the National Party decided to support the introduction of the Local Government Planning and Environment Bill, which I believe has put the development industry in this State back at least 20 years. When the Deputy Premier introduced the Bill in May this year, he said—

> "The primary objective of the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Bill tonight is to streamline the planning system, provide greater autonomy to local government in matters of local concern and achieve a greater integration of State and local government planning objectives."

Quite frankly, I do not think that I have heard a bigger load of rubbish since entering Parliament. This Bill places yet another nail in the coffin for local government, another nail in the coffin for local government planning autonomy, and sounds the death knell for development in Queensland.

This Government is moving rapidly towards a State planning authority and total control over development applications. The approval system is already in total disarray. This Act has successfully sabotaged the planning process used by local authorities and local government for the past decade. Councils are no longer able to get decisions from Government departments, and council officers, shire clerks and shire engineers are now bypassing the bureaucrats and talking directly to department heads and Ministers. The Minister may think that the process is working, but I can guarantee that the process is failing in the departments. Comments from bureaucrats in many departments openly proclaim that approval will be given "over my dead body" and, if possible, I would suggest that these are the dead bodies that should be removed from the departments.

However, this attitude problem to local authorities is not unexpected. The number of people imported from Canberra, New South Wales and New Zealand to fill highly paid middle management positions within this Government is totally unacceptable. Planning procedures in other States have successfully ground development to a standstill. This Act, with the requirement to seek information or criteria from all departments—some 26 or 27 before assessment can be made—is ridiculous, with the Department of Environment, in particular, professing absolutely ridiculous reasons for refusal or delay of applications.

This amendment legislation moves the control of planning closer to the Government. The Minister may honestly profess that he does not want a State planning authority, but it is his staff and bureaucrats who certainly do, and they will succeed. This piece of legislation provides for the Governor in Council to make policies on planning matters that are of State significance with the purpose of a State planning policy being to identify the Government's position on planning matters of State significance. These guidelines will be so prescriptive that local government's autonomy will be lost. However, the irony is that the State planning policies will not be available for local authorities to act upon because this Government has shown that it is unable to make the hard decisions and clearly enunciate the direction Queensland should follow.

State planning policies or decisions will have to be made for regions undertaking regional or strategic planning. This Government could not make a decision about daylight saving in the best interests of Queensland. When the political heat was turned on, the Government wimped out and reversed its policy. The same will apply to these policies brought down by each department of the Government. What is this Government going to recommend, say, to the Redlands Shire about the eastern tollway? It will recommend two lanes, protect the koalas and forget about the traffic, but for the Albert Shire and its new strategic plan, it will allow a road corridor of four lanes, a median and parking lanes, etc. The policies will be a joke, politically founded and bearing no relationship to what is best for the State—only what is best for the Labor Party.

The Minister raised the issues of water supply and sewerage as being State planning policy initiatives. Does this mean that a total takeover of assets of every council will occur and a water board will be set up to take over? How does the Wolffdene dam capacity get included in Albert Shire's strategic planning when it was this Government that rejected the dam proposal? It is this Government that still refuses to release the land that was acquired for sale. Councils have to have confidence in

Government to stick by decisions that have been made. This Government's record is not very good. In fact, it is quite shocking. With the concept of regionalisation, local authorities in Queensland can expect Government intervention into strategic planning. This applies not only to regionalisation planning but also to regionalisation and tourism, business development, health, police and fire services, Grants Commission methodology, State emergency services, workplace health and safety matters, heritage, environment and Commonwealth and State housing. The impact upon local authorities is therefore enormous. Local authorities are being given administrative responsibility for State Government responsibilities and are having their autonomy and decision-making powers removed.

I wish to illustrate briefly what this Government has dumped on local authorities to administer without considering the cost to the ratepayers of the cities or shires. Among other things, local authorities now have to administer State responsibility for swimming pool legislation, powers associated with noise, water and air pollution, contamination responsibilities, the storage of dangerous goods, and the responsibility for food sampling, which is a very expensive process. In addition, as a result of the AIDS virus and HIV, the skin penetration regulations of 1987 were gazetted and then passed on to local authorities to enforce. Water quality testing used to be carried out by the State Water Quality Control Council, but that no longer happens. The costs and the lists are endless, but the point is that the additional demands being imposed on councils will result in higher costs of equipment, training and administration. This will mean that rates will have to be increased because more funds will be needed from the community to provide these services.

There have been no new taxes imposed in Queensland by this Government, but a devolution of services to local government without compensation has occurred. The State planning policy guidelines are not ready yet, so honourable members are debating legislation while being completely in the dark as to how the State planning policies are to be recommended to the Governor in Council. I notice that the Minister for Environment is now in the Chamber. He certainly worries me but, more importantly, I know that he worries most local authorities in Queensland. His department is unworkable and unreasonable, and contains an endangered species called the deaf, dumb and blind bureaucrat. This Government is causing major concern to local authorities, in particular in relation to State planning policies implemented by Mr Comben's department which will probably be the opposite to advice given to local authorities in the past. For instance, the Minister for Environment may demand that sewage effluent be treated to tertiary standard to remove nutrient contamination. Recently, councils requested approval to upgrade to that standard, but permission was refused by the Minister. Consequently, in the case of the Gold Coast City Council, $23m has been wasted in installing a pipeline from Palm Beach to the Nerang seaway to discharge effluent into the ocean. State planning policies will be politically manipulated to suit party policy. Strategic planning is about planning for the future, the direction of the region, lifestyle, living style and the required infrastructure. If that is to happen, politics will have to be removed from the consideration of issues. I know that that certainly cannot happen. The eastern corridor is a good example of this Government being unable to make a hard decision in respect of traffic management. The Minister states that each planning policy will be drafted by each relevant Government department, but several parties will be consulted on all draft policies. I wish to list the different groups that he claims will be consulted. There is the community, the development industry, any Commonwealth agencies, the Department of Local Government, State departments and a new department named the Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning. The first time I knew about this new superdepartment was via the briefing notes left by the Minister's staff when the matter was discussed. The Minister clearly wants planning powers. How can he be trusted when he has said previously that there would be no ministerial rezonings? Noosa north shore was a ministerial rezoning. What about a piece of land at Springbrook that is currently national park and which the Minister plans to sell as freehold and then rezone?

Some elements of this legislation are certainly in the best interests of local government. Strategic planning is the correct way to plan for the future and most councils in south-east Queensland should already be preparing strategic plans. The problems associated with growth can be quite overwhelming and if not correctly planned and predicted could lead to disaster. This applies in particular, I suggest, to traffic, water supply and waste disposal planning. I mention also that population growth indicators suggest that Queensland is growing at a rate higher than the national average and that most of the increase is occurring in south-east Queensland. I believe there is a need for a planning study to be carried out, and that a planning study should accompany every strategic scheme which is filed, as required. The current strategic plan for the Gold Coast City is under review and planning studies have been undertaken to identify demographics, land use, traffic, tourism infrastructure, future water supply viability and, of course, refuse sites. The council has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in staff time and consultancy fees, and I certainly hope that a consequence of this legislation will not be a delay in the implementation of the new town plan and a complete waste of time and money for the council.

I am personally happy to note that a soil study report may be required for a wide range of planning applications. I am also pleased to note that this new legislation includes consent applications and subdivisions. I am concerned, however, that the legislation states "may", because I would certainly like to see the legislation make a soils test mandatory. This change in policy has direct implications for land that has been filled, restored, dredged or has had its natural contour changed. With more than 110 home owners in Palm Beach awaiting compensation for land subsidence, this legislation is long overdue. The public must be protected against pecuniary loss through a set of conditions which provide some method of recompense if problems occur. No longer should developers or councils be immune from responsibility, and no longer should the only course of action for affected parties be the legal system. As we all know, the only winner in that area is the legal profession itself.

The change in emphasis to strategic planning will give confidence to permanent residents of a city or shire. In the past, the planning process did not provide certainty for the electorate. The planning process did not provide certainty for people living next to high-rise zones or tourist zones. In the past, the zoning maps in a city or shire—if it does have a town plan—did not specifically detail the future of the area. Particularly on the Gold Coast, we have found that special residential zones, highway development zones and integrated resort zones all allowed one-off developments to occur in areas where such development would not usually take place. On the Gold Coast, different density applications have been approved, but now strategic planning would remove those aberrations to town planning. It is my belief that both the local authority and the applicant will be protected against each other by the provision of ensuring that decisions by the local authority, the Governor in Council and the appeal body—the Planning and Environment Court—must comply with the strategic plan. For the first time in Queensland, we will get a consistency of decisions. Town planning is a professional tool used for the betterment of our cities, and I believe that the planning intentions will be preserved.

The overwhelming evidence from all quarters is for the establishment by stealth of a State planning authority. Even the Premier himself is promoting the fundamentals of an overriding mechanism of local government planning powers. In a media release circulated by AAP on 2 June under the banner of "Queensland to streamline tourist development approvals", the Premier, when addressing a BOMA function, said that the State would retain a right to call in and decide on proposals of major State significance. He said—

> "The administration of planning and development approvals would be largely delegated to local authorities."

To me, the administration of planning applications, not the decision making of planning approvals, is a loss of autonomy. The Premier may see one-off applications as being very important to the State, but I certainly believe that, no matter whether the

application is for a spaceport, a tourist development or a duplex, it must go to the local authority in which the land is found. I do not promote the idea that the State should have the right to override local authorities in the manner that is being professed by the Premier.

One planning matter of significance in formulating the new strategies plan for the Gold Coast City is the question of whether or not the city should be a tourist city of international status or a holiday destination for Brisbane. It is my belief that the Gold Coast is an international tourist destination and that, with projected numbers of 10 million international tourists by the year 2000, planning for tourism is of major importance. Surfers Paradise is seen as the focus for tourism and the city must provide further accommodation areas to cater for tourism. The Whelan Street area is the logical land bank area earmarked for redevelopment and would provide high-rise accommodation and international hotels. However, the proposed town planning guidelines in the strategic plan limit development to a maximum of seven storeys with the consent of the council. That is certainly not in the best interests of the residents of that area. Seven-storey buildings are not financially viable and the area will continue to see three-storey buildings proliferate. The problem with planning such as this is that the Whelan Street area will continue to degrade. Crime and violence will continue to increase and values in the area will fall. In this case the council must accept the hundreds of objections lodged by concerned residents as valid objections to the draft strategic plan, and it must revise height restrictions.

Mr Burns: What is the current state of that plan—that Gold Coast plan?

Mr COOMBER: The period for public objection closed about two weeks ago. It is now back for the consideration of the council. I would like to address a couple of local government matters. Councils throughout Queensland see that they are being asked to undertake many responsibilities that were State responsibilities, but they are not being funded by the State. Slowly, under legislation such as the Bill before us, the powers of councils are being removed. Other functions of local government are being passed on to them, which they must fund. In a letter, the Goondiwindi council raised among other things the fact that, under the Building Act, the council now has increased responsibilities that were previously performed by shops and factories inspectors and the Fire Service. The council also said that, in relation to community arts, the council is now expected to match State Government expenditure. In other words, the council or local authority is expected to contribute $1 for every $2 provided by the State.

Councils are also concerned that the contaminated land legislation, which was passed recently, places increased responsibilities on local government not only for the reporting of contaminated sites but also for the elimination of the contamination in the event of the landowner not having the necessary financial resources. On the Gold Coast, particularly on the old sandmining sites that are contaminated with radioactive monazite, the cost could be hundreds of thousands of dollars. Local government feels increased pressure to provide community housing.

Time expired.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (5.52 p.m.): I rise with some pleasure to support the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Amendment Bill 1992. I want to speak chiefly about the reduction of State Government approvals and involvement in administrative decision-making processes but, before I do that, I want to make a couple of comments about some of the things said by the honourable member for Currumbin—no doubt, the future member for Surfers Paradise. I am disappointed that there has been opposition from both the National Party and the Liberal Party to this important hallmark legislation.

The important point that needs to be made in relation to what the honourable member for Currumbin said is that the Minister for Local Government has never said that there would never be any ministerial rezonings. In fact, he included regulation 5 to this legislation, which lists the types of rezonings that he as Minister can carry out. They cover Crown land and land for religious, cultural and community activity purposes. It is important to point out that what the Minister is saying, and what the Government is

consistently pointing out, is that there will be no use of Executive power for private gain but only for public purposes and public benefits. The State Government is concerned about the public interest. This is a total departure from what used to happen in the bad old days under the National Party, when in my electorate——

Mr Booth: You've been here for three years and you've done nothing.

Mr BEATTIE: The honourable member should not get too excited; it is not good for his heart, and I have to think of his family. The point that needs to be made in relation to that interjection is not only my concern about the honourable member's family but the fact that, when Russell Hinze was the Minister for Local Government, the National Party was only too willing to sanction ministerial rezonings. As the honourable member for Warwick will recall vividly—because no doubt he supported it—that for blatant political purposes the National Party rezoned a large block on St Paul's Terrace, the site of the National Party's Spring Hill headquarters. To this day, my constituents in Spring Hill complain about the National Party's intrusion. As a result of that rezoning, a car park was stuck at the back of National Party headquarters. All that did was pour dust, muck and soot all over the nearby houses and all over my constituents. But did the National Party express any concern about that? It could not have cared less. I am surprised that the honourable member for Warwick would have supported such a provision, because normally he is a sensible and sensitive man. But on that occasion he demonstrated a lack of both sensitivity and sensibility on these issues.

Mr J. H. Sullivan: A temporary lapse.

Mr BEATTIE: It was more than a temporary lapse. The ministerial rezoning in relation to National Party headquarters is typical of what the National Party used to do for private gain. In those circumstances, it was the epitome of private gain for the National Party itself.

As I pointed out, the honourable member for Currumbin is wrong. If he takes the opportunity to read regulation 5 to this legislation, he will see the types of rezonings that can be carried out. As I said, they are limited to Crown land and to land for religious, cultural and community activity purposes. I think that puts to rest a number of points that he made. In my electorate of Brisbane Central, the Inner North Eastern Urban Renewal Task Force is preparing an urban renewal strategy to revitalise Fortitude Valley and Newstead and to protect the residential integrity of the suburbs of New Farm and Bowen Hills. That is something that is very important to my constituents. This illustrates the partnership that should exist between the State Government and local authorities on major urban issues. It confirms again the valid place of local government in the planning system. It creates clearly the situation in which the State is not coming in over the top of local authorities. In these circumstances, planning is properly the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council or another local authority. This Bill frees up the regulatory environment in which the Brisbane City Council and other local authorities can work to address quality of life issues that are important to my constituents. They no longer need a Minister's approval for a DCP. If they think a DCP is the way to go, they simply will go and do it. Therefore, they are more responsive, they are free of administrative bureaucratic procedures and problems and they can direct their efforts to the real planning tasks that have to be faced. The sum total of that is more autonomy for local authorities to deal with local issues.

Over a long period, along with my colleague the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha, I have been concerned about planning and environmental issues in the inner suburbs. There have been issues of concern along Latrobe and Given Terraces in Paddington. In the past, those sorts of issues have flared up. Indeed, there have been issues concerning the development plan for Spring Hill. As I have indicated, there are strategy and planning concerns and sensitivities in places such as New Farm. For some time, the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha and I have been concerned about those issues. This legislation will be of considerable assistance to us. In common with my colleague, I am determined to ensure that local authorities are responsive to their local communities. This legislation will ensure that that occurs. On the other side of the coin, local authorities need to accept responsibility for the work that they are carrying

out or the decisions that they make. As the member for Brisbane Central, I can assure my constituents that I will be keeping a careful eye on how the strategy in New Farm, Teneriffe, Bowen Hills and the Valley works. It is an important consultative process, but it does require the involvement of all levels of government. This legislation will assist that process. The economic strategy, Queensland—Leading State, released by the Premier on 28 April 1992, stated—

> "State Government, in partnership with Local Government, plays a vital role in the development approvals process. State agencies are responsible for a range of approvals necessitated by particular development proposals, set criteria for the evaluation and performance of component parts of proposals and co-ordinate formal impact assessment processes."

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr BEATTIE: Before the dinner recess, I was talking about the reduction of State Government approvals and involvement in administrative decision-making processes. The need for local government to assume an important planning role is realised when one considers the rapid growth rate in south-east Queensland and the projection that Queensland will perhaps take over from Victoria as the second most popular State in Australia by the year 2015. One of the strengths of this Bill is that it gives local government that opportunity. It is important that the shortfall and the bad planning mistakes of the past are avoided. That is why this legislation is so important.

Earlier in my speech, I was quoting from Queensland—Leading State. The Premier continued—

> "A complete overhaul of State and Local Government development approval procedures is required. The Goss Government inherited more than 400 separate State Government development approval requirements. It is well advanced in its overhaul of State Government approval procedures under the 'Systems Review', which commenced in 1990. Within twelve months, a substantial proportion of them will be consolidated and rationalised. This reform will eliminate unnecessary and ineffective regulation and provide an efficient, open and accountable decision-making process. The final objective is an overhaul of both State and Local Government approval procedures, with State Government approvals being incorporated into local planning consents.
>
> The work being carried out by the Department of Environment and Heritage in the preparation of new Coastal Protection Legislation demonstrates the significant gains that can be made by such reform. This legislation will collapse relevant approvals presently contained in the Beach Protection Act, the Canals Act and the Harbours Act into one approval so that all issues relevant to development below the high water mark can be decided at one time. This will streamline approvals required for coastal tourist and other developments, while protecting the coastline.
>
> Other departments have also identified significant areas for reform. An example is subdivision approval within irrigation areas declared under the Water Resources Act, where the number of steps will be reduced from eleven to five, with a consequent reduction of about 6 weeks for the assessment of a simple application, and 24 weeks for more complex proposals."

This reform agenda is called the Integrated Development Approval System—IDAS. It is an extension of the Development Approval Systems Review. It represents a significant commitment by the Government to the reform of State Government approval processes. The reform task involves the identification and review of existing approval processes and the monitoring of any foreshadowed approval processes. As part of this reform, each department is preparing a reform agenda which will eliminate duplication of development approval processes—thank heavens—and the involvement of the Minister or the Governor in Council in the development decision-making processes, where such involvement does not contribute to the quality of a decision made. The Bill recognises the Government's commitment to this reform agenda by deleting and devolving some ministerial powers to local government in the decision-making process and by reducing

the Governor in Council's role in planning matters which should be decided by local government—a matter that the honourable member for Currumbin did not cover in his speech.

Mr Coomber: Local government is going to be bypassed.

Mr BEATTIE: No. Local government has an important role to play in this matter.

Mr Coomber interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: I will continue. The first of the proposals in the Bill is that local government—and I was coming to this point, if only the honourable member had been patient—can extend the time period, by a resolution of the council, to make a decision on a planning application without requiring the Minister's approval to extend such time period. Where council does resolve to extend the decision-making period, it must notify the applicant before the extended period begins. This proposal will apply to all types of applications to local government, that is, applications to amend the planning scheme, for the consent to use land, for the subdivision of land, for the amalgamation of land and for an access easement. I am sure honourable members will agree that this proposal will provide more autonomy for local government, will eliminate unnecessary red tape, and will reduce the role of State Government in matters which are of local concern.

I highlight this fact by informing the House of a problem that has arisen in New Farm. The previous National Party Government decided to extend New Farm Park, by ministerial rezoning, to include the land on which the New Farm Power Station is currently located. That was proposed by a former Minister for Local Government, Mr Hinze, and the decision was made when Sallyanne Atkinson was Lord Mayor. Although that decision was made at that time, the Brisbane City Council did not knock down the power station and did not extend New Farm Park. That land was given to the Brisbane City Council for park purposes. The urban strategy currently being prepared has revealed that some people want to preserve the power station, and I can understand that point of view. Others want to knock it down and use the site to extend New Farm Park. That presents a difficult situation, because there were no clear guidelines or a clear understanding of exactly who was doing what. That is one example of why the basic initiative in these matters should be left chiefly with local authorities. Personally, I would love to see New Farm Park extended, but that is a matter that will have to be resolved with the Lord Mayor, Jim Soorley, and the Brisbane City Council as time goes on.

Under this Bill, the role of the Minister has been retained in that he has the power to direct local government to shorten an extended period. The Local Government Association of Queensland supports the role of the Minister in this regard, as sometimes a decision-making period will be extended where a local authority does not want to make a decision for reasons other than those of acquiring further information on a development proposal, or where the community needs more time within which to assess a proposal, or where there is a need for more time to decide upon a complex development issue.

Another proposal in the Bill is that local government can extend the time period prescribed in the legislation for the submission of a proposed planning scheme or an amendment to a planning scheme proposed by local government without first obtaining the approval of the Minister. The intent of this proposal is also to reduce red tape, and to reduce the role of the State Government in matters which are of local concern.

The Bill also provides for the deletion of the requirement that the Minister must give prior approval for the preparation of a development control plan, a proposal to extend the area of a development control plan, the inclusion of an additional area in a planning scheme, and the commencement of the consolidation of a planning scheme. This Government believes that the need to prepare these types of planning instruments is a matter for local government, which has the expertise to decide such matters. It is not within the realm of the power of the State Government to say to local government, "Yes, you need to prepare such a plan." It is a local matter of a local public interest nature. The State Government will be able to have input into locally made plans which involve public interest matters affecting the community on a Statewide basis, when local

government notifies the chief executive that it intends to prepare a plan or an amendment to it. I hope that, when this legislation has been passed, local governments accept the political responsibility for their own decisions. Too often, one sees buck-passing from local authorities which try to blame the State Government for their own lack of will and lack of ability to make decisions. This legislation gives them a power. They should use it, and they should have the courage to take the responsibility for their decisions. We say wonderful things about how important local government is. It is important that local government be given the power, but with power comes responsibility.

The proposal to which I have referred is also another example of the State Government's commitment to reducing red tape in the development approval process. There is too much red tape and too many delays. It improves the efficiency of the planning system by assigning responsibility to appropriate levels of Government to avoid duplication and to enable procedures to be streamlined. It means a sharpening of accountability. The legislation further provides that local government would have the right to decide the appropriate contribution regarding the area of land or the amount of money required for the purpose of providing parks. The appropriate contribution will be set by a resolution of council in the form of local planning policy. The existing legislation provides that local government must describe those types of contributions in the planning scheme, or where it does not have a planning scheme, in its subdivision of land by-law. That involves gaining the approval of the Governor in Council for the amount of contribution, which adds approximately three months to the approval process. That proposal is strongly supported by the Local Government Association. I am sure that all members would agree that it is another step forward in the State Government's commitment to its reform agenda for improving the development decision-making process and reducing red tape. I am a strong supporter of reducing red tape. I hope that all other honourable members are as well.

Another existing legislative provision which the systems review identified as being worthy of deletion is the power of the Minister to request that local government provides the Minister with details of recordings in a trust fund established for the purposes of park contributions, and water and sewerage contributions, to issue orders and directions regarding the appropriate application of those contributions, and to issue orders and directions regarding the observance of a works contract between local government and the developer in respect of works required in connection with the development proposal. It is pretty obvious that those matters are not matters of State Government concern. They are local government matters and the legislation provides—and this is something that the honourable members for Mirani and Currumbin both missed—that the existing legislative provisions which give the Minister the power to intervene be deleted. The legislation also provides that the power of the Governor in Council to change the area of land, or the area of a building which constitutes a major shopping development, will also be deleted. It is proposed that a major shopping development and its prescribed area, exactly the same area as is now provided for in the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act, will be included in the regulations to the Act which deal with development proposals requiring an environmental impact statement.

As members are aware, the term "environment" encompasses ecological, social and economic matters. It is considered appropriate that development proposals requiring an economic impact statement should not be separated from the existing impact assessment process. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Government policy announced in the economic statement, which I have read previously, of having a standard whole-of-Government approach to impact assessments. It is also proposed that the study report provisions relate to—

> the gross floor area of the proposed development, the types of major retailing envisaged, vehicle parking provisions;
>
> the geographic identification of the primary, secondary and the tertiary market catchments for the proposed development, together with reasons to support that

identification;

an assessment of the existing population in each of the catchment areas together with the growth forecasts, demography and socio-economic profile for each population group identified;

an identification of existing and approved market competition for the proposed development in the catchment areas and the gross floor area and the nature of that competition;

estimates of the value and distribution of retail sales within the total catchment area of the proposed development for the second year of trading of the proposed development; and

identification of the beneficial and adverse effects that are likely to result from implementation of the proposed development will be carried over and improved in the regulation to the Act which deals with an application for terms of reference.

Those provisions are a replica of the provisions in the Act which deal with the terms of reference for a study report. In fact, the terms of reference and information required for a major shopping development will not be weakened. They will be strengthened because the department responsible for the formulation of terms of reference for an impact assessment, that is, the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development, will be able to add terms of reference in relation to a particular development.

In summary, all of those proposals are part of the Government's short-term reform agenda to improve the development decision-making process, provide local government with greater autonomy in the planning decision-making process, and to reduce red tape. If the proposals in this Bill are passed by Parliament, the Government will be eliminating approximately 70 instances of red tape.

Time expired.

Mr BOOTH (Warwick) (7.42 p.m.): In rising to speak to this Bill, I think that a few general comments need to be made. Firstly, local government is something that is dear to the hearts of most people. It is dear to my heart, and I am concerned about the number of Bills that relate to local government that go through this House. Eventually, local government will find that it will not be able to move. It will not be able to do a thing. This weekend—and I am not trying to knock it—the Government will open the South Bank development. Approximately $120m of Government money has been spent on that project. I cannot even receive $250 or $300 to help provide some playground equipment in my electorate, and I think that most other honourable members are in the same position. Last week on talkback radio, the Mayor of Toowoomba said, "Yes, they can get all that money down there, and I cannot get one red cent."

Mr Stephan: They have cut that out completely, haven't they?

Mr BOOTH: Yes, the Government has cut that assistance out. There is very little support of any description. Subsidies to enable people to carry out work, particularly in relation to sewerage schemes and water supply schemes, have been severely restricted.

Mr Burns: Right.

Mr BOOTH: That is right. I do not want to clash with the Minister, but I will give him an example. The township of Killarney is without sewerage, and something must be done.

Mr Burns: For years you did nothing, and now you're complaining.

Mr BOOTH: No, that is not the case. The Government has been in power for three years and it has not done much, either. I am trying to get a sewerage scheme for Killarney, and I would like to do that before I leave this Parliament. If I am not able to do so, I am sure that the new member, Mr Springborg, will try to get sewerage for Killarney when he takes over. I do not believe that the Government is supporting rural Queensland to the extent that it should. However, I have been in trouble before for speaking too long——

Mr Burns: You will not get into trouble with me.

Mr BOOTH: If there is not an election within the next two or three months, the Minister will have ample time to come good for those people who require help with water supply and sewerage schemes.

Mr Burns: You let them down for 32 years.

Mr BOOTH: No, we did not. We did our best. The problem has become worse. The Government is trying to rely on the fact that the area does not have a sewerage scheme. If everybody did what this Government is trying to do tonight, there would never be a new water supply scheme or a sewerage scheme, because the Government would claim that the last bloke did not do it. I am quite in order in trying to paddle the Minister's canoe. I will be trying to reason with the Minister. Although he might be a bit difficult, I believe that he will be reasonable when the time comes. He is a great bloke for supporting the battlers who are his mates. All the battlers at Killarney are my mates, and I am sure that they are mates of the Minister. He should get out there and help them.

Initially, I said that local government is the government that is closest to the people. I believe that this Bill will destroy some of that closeness. Prior to the introduction of this legislation, if a person or a council was in trouble, it could go to the Minister and talk to him directly. I believe that made the State Government and local government close to the people. Under this legislation, people will have to talk to the bureaucrats. The chief executive will be the man to whom they will speak, not the Minister. I do not want to refer to specific clauses in case I get into trouble. Nevertheless, one clause provides that an application for approval of a planning scheme is to be made to the chief executive instead of to the Minister. I do not believe that that will be good. I believe that this Bill will remove power from the elected people. In common with all other members of this House, Mr Burns was elected to this place. He was also elected to Cabinet. However, the chief executive will not be elected. He will not have to care much about what he does. I know that it could be argued that everyone in executive positions in local government has done the right thing. I admit that many of them have been good. But once a public servant is put into a position in which the Minister cannot hinder him, he will be difficult to deal with. He will have a book of rules, and he will play by that book. I believe that this Bill is made to measure for a bureaucrat. It is full of arbitrary decisions.

Mr Beattie: That is not true.

Mr BOOTH: The member for Brisbane Central is one of those people who Mr Justice de Jersey said take themselves too seriously. I am sure that he does. The greatest bit of gobbledegook that I have ever read is clause 12, which provides that the State planning policies must be taken into consideration in making the decision on an application for the staged rezoning of land. It also provides that the local authority must refuse to approve the application if the proposal conflicts with the strategic plan or development control plan, unless there are sufficient planning grounds to justify approving the application despite the conflict. If that does not leave the situation open to arbitrary decisions on just about everything, I do not know what I am talking about. However, I believe that I do, because I have seen what arbitrary decisions can do. The only clauses of the Bill in which mention of arbitrary decisions has been removed are those that refer to "must".

Another clause provides that the State planning policies must be taken into consideration in making the decision on an application for the subdivision of land. It also provides that a local authority must refuse to approve the application if the proposal conflicts with the strategic plan or development control plan, unless there are sufficient planning grounds to justify approving the application despite the conflict. I reckon that anybody could do just about anything with that type of legislation. I am surprised that this provision is included in the Bill. Mr Burns usually looks after the battlers. I do not believe that he particularly likes this type of legislation. When power is handed over to public servants, there is no doubt that they play by the book. They have a set of rules, and that is it. I believe that there should be flexibility in local government. For instance, it might be okay to farm land on a particular slope in my electorate, but because of the

different structure of the soil in another area, that might not be permissible.

I turn now to the problem of the greenies—for want of a better term—gaining complete control. That worries me. There will always be someone who can find some reason to stop development. There must be some sort of a refereeing decision. In the old days, a deputation could be taken to a Minister. That applied to councils and to people who wanted to develop land or do something like that. Under this legislation, in which the chief executive takes precedence, I will be surprised if people can still do that. That also worries me. In his second-reading speech, the Minister stated that he was trying to cut red tape. I believe that another member—perhaps the member for Brisbane Central—said that we would all like to do that. If there is too much red tape, I would agree with that. Nevertheless, the Minister stated—

> "The primary objective of the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Bill is to streamline the planning system, provide greater autonomy to local government in matters of local concern and achieve a greater integration of State and local government planning objectives."

Those are high-minded principles that sound great, but if many arbitrary decisions can be interfered with by people in executive positions, I start to wonder whether that procedure is correct. If State planning is excellent, it can improve development. However, if something is wrong with that planning or if it has been worked out in Brisbane, that planning might not suit places such as Cairns, towns on the Darling Downs or towns out in the west. We should still be able to approach the Minister about such matters. He should have taken greater control of the Bill and retained his powers. I support the Opposition spokesman, Mr Randell, in his opposition to the Bill, because I think its passage will cause a nightmare. We all agree that we must be more careful of the environment than we have been. One member said that the Minister for Environment frightens him. He frightens a lot of other people, too.

The other matter that worries me is centralised control. It is claimed that centralised control is the best way to go, but, when one considers that all Government power in matters such as these is held in Brisbane, one begins to wonder. The Bill should have provided more flexibility so that matters could be dealt with on a regional basis as well as locally. Local councils know what they want. Sometimes they have been accused of doing things wrongly. We have heard claims of improper rezonings, but that does not make this Bill right.

Mr Burns: Finish up. You've had enough.

Mr BOOTH: The Minister always has a go. There has been a lot of fooling around with local government matters. I will refer to the alterations to the internal and external boundaries. In many local authority areas, the councils are not prepared to do anything. Whole localities have been stifled by interference, which is not in the best interests of anyone. The Opposition spokesman said that, in the fires in the south, many people lost their lives and their houses were burnt. People were of the opinion that they should have grass and trees up to the side of their houses. Everybody wants that. I have trees close to my house, but I have established some fire breaks. Honourable members should try to tell a greenie that they want a fire break. The greenies will not listen. They say that nothing that grows should be touched. I worry about that attitude. I think that the charge of the green machine has probably gone too far. Those greenies are not as good as the Canberra green machine, but they have gone too far.

If the Bill is to succeed, the person who fills the position of Chief Executive in the Department of Local Government will need to have the wisdom of Solomon. I have a great deal of respect for leaders in local government, but I do not think they come within that category. Those people will have to work within a State planning policy, and I do not know how much flexibility will be included in that policy. If it is as rigid as I believe it will be, it will be impossible for anybody to do anything. That is of great concern to country people. They want to be able to do things. Their towns might be small and they might be ridiculed by city dwellers; nevertheless, they play a part in Queensland's development and in what happens in our State. If we adopt an attitude that we should stick rigidly to State planning policies, many people will be hurt. I hope that, no matter

what happens as a result of this legislation, the Minister will still meet with people who think they have been hurt. I do not know how he will get over that.

Mr Burns: Every time you've asked, I've done it for you.

Mr BOOTH: I know that. I am not referring to the Minister. He is like me; he is mortal. I am not suggesting that he has failed to meet anybody. I hope that he keeps that attitude up and does not take this Bill too literally when it gives powers to the chief executive. I also hope that his successor in the Local Government portfolio does the same. I am sorry if I hurt him by saying that he has not met us, because I think he has worked himself into the ground in meeting people. Whenever I have rung him, I think that he has always tried to bend the rules a bit to help me.

Mr Burns: I think you should sit down.

Mr BOOTH: Perhaps I should sit down while I am in front. There are two ways of damaging people: one way is by being too abrasive and the other way is by being too friendly. When I was in Government, the Minister always said, "Oh, I think the member for Warwick is a great bloke." That made sure that I never got anywhere.

Mr Burns: I'd just say you're a funny dairy farmer.

Mr BOOTH: He would call me a funny dairy farmer, too. Before I conclude, I state that, although I hope the legislation will work, I am afraid that it will not. I hope I am wrong, but I think I am right. The Bill will bring more problems than benefits. It will be a straitjacket for local government. If the Minister remains in the Local Government portfolio, I would like him to keep a close eye on the legislation.

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton North) (7.59 p.m.): I rise to speak in support of the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Amendment Bill 1992. In so doing, I want to pick up a couple of points that the National Party seems to be labouring tonight. One of those is that the National Party has the view that somehow the Minister is trying to abrogate his responsibility in legislative terms. Currently, the situation is very simple. People write to the Minister and that is documented. The correspondence goes to the chief executive and it is returned. If ever there has been a ridiculous waste of time and effort, that is it. I spent five years in local government. The thing that everybody complained about the most was the time that it took to get decisions from Brisbane. Any legislation that improves that must be the way to go. Whilst I was on the Rockhampton City Council, there were many occasions when the chief executive or the town clerk was the first port of call. In fact, in most cases, the correspondence was addressed to the town clerk rather than to the mayor. I do not see what the difficulty is in providing that the first port of call is the chief executive and then the Minister. It is not as though the Minister is ducking his responsibilities, because the buck does stop with him. Certainly, in this case, this Minister is more than aptly qualified to handle the matter. People ought to use a bit of commonsense in this matter.

I want to talk about State planning policies. The attitude of members opposite astounds me. I have listened to them talk about Big Brother, central planning, one law for the councils and one law for the States, and on it goes. It is as though it is the first time that we have ever had any sort of notion of overall planning. I can understand why members opposite do not have any understanding of long-term plans. One has only to look at the shambles they made of local government. Local authorities in this State function as well as they do only because of the goodwill of the people who work for them. There was certainly no legislative commitment from honourable members opposite. They were either interfering with them by way of rezonings or bringing in new Acts of Parliament. There are something like 400 laws that bind councils in this State in terms of planning. The fact is that under the building codes in this State, councils have always been bound in that regard. We have always had the situation in which the Health Act has overridden councils. I did not hear anybody squeaking and squalling about that because people accept, and quite rightly accept, that there needs to be a standard.

We on the Government side of the House are saying that there needs to be a standard of planning in this State. The decisions that are made by councils do not impact only on those councils. There is an overall State need to be met, there is a need

for proper planning processes for the good of the State as a whole, and there is a need to ensure that local authorities in this State do not exist in a vacuum. This is what this legislation effectively does. It is not about one law for the State, one law for the local authority and one law for the Planning and Environment Court. What we are saying is that a proper planning process can be put in place and, as a result of doing that, all those parties and stakeholders will be bound by it. I cannot see what is wrong with that.

I think it was Mr Randell who was talking earlier this evening about agriculture. I do not think anybody in this place would disagree with me when I say that over the last 100 years we have slowly but surely rid ourselves of arable land close to towns and pushed it out further to the less satisfactory land. That shows a lack of overall planning and commitment to planning right throughout the State. In the Livingstone Shire, for example, quite a considerable amount of land is presently zoned for agricultural purposes. I know that the Livingstone Shire and the pineapple growers would not want that to change. I can see the situation arising in which somebody who has enough money comes in and buys up a few pineapple farms—and this is happening in north Queensland with the cane farms—and all of a sudden one finds house blocks on them. The Livingstone Shire Council——

Mr Elliott: You say that does not happen in any local authority? You say it is something that suddenly happens like a cargo cult?

Mr SCHWARTEN: What I am saying is that it reflected two things. One is the lack of power that local councils had to enable them to win in Local Government Courts. Most of them lost because they had no legislative backing. The second thing it reflected was a lack of foresight on the part of councils. Those that allowed them to go ahead said, "That is okay. We'll just keep moving out". When I was a kid growing up in Rockhampton there were market gardens in the Frenchville area. Today, there are houses in that area. The standard of land that is available for small crop growing is nowhere near the standard that was available in those times. These planning policies that are of a Statewide nature will have an impact in that regard. I think that it is totally sensible.

Mr Burns: Beach protection, prime agricultural land.

Mr SCHWARTEN: As the Minister says—prime agricultural land, beach protection. I take that interjection because the Livingstone Shire is one of those shires that have both. It has beach frontage, and there is a need to address that. I note that the Premier made that statement in Queensland—Leading State.

Mr Burns: Everybody wants to know where the Government stands on this.

Mr SCHWARTEN: That is the first thing that a council will do. The first thing the council will do—especially with things like habitat protection and agricultural land protection—is go running and screaming to the State Government and ask what its policy is. There needs to be an overall plan. The way that process works is very simple. The department that is involved would firstly draw up the plan. That plan would then go to the Minister. It would then be sent out as part of a consultative process, which could take two months or longer. I have read that it takes at least two months. All of the stakeholders will be contacted to have some input into it. We are not thrusting something on them from above. We are saying that we want to hear views on how the Government should go about something. Someone who lives out at Boulia, for example, would not be interested in swamp lands, but someone who lives in the Livingstone Shire would be. That person would want to know how the Government manages these things. A person who lives in north Queensland and happens to have cassowaries would want to talk about wildlife corridors.

Mr Foley: The garden suburbs of Yeronga electorate.

Mr SCHWARTEN: The garden suburbs of Yeronga electorate, and so on. The fact is that the department has an obligation to gather that information and pass it on to the Minister, who will then take it to the Governor in Council. It is then brought into this place. It is publicly available. It is not behind closed doors. Everybody has a chance to view it. At the end of the day, everybody wears it as well. The Planning and Environment

Court, the Minister, the State Government generally and the local councils are all bound by the same rules, and I cannot see what is so problematic about that.

The other issue I encountered while I served on the local council was that developers frequently applied to the council for rezoning. The developer would have 30 days in which to advertise the proposal and the council would then have 40 days in which to deliberate. An appeal period of 30 days followed the process of deliberation and the appeal processes in Brisbane would take another 30 to 35 days. Developers, investors and councils were incredibly frustrated by that process. I can remember when the Rockhampton City Council wanted longer than 40 days to consider a rezoning application submitted by a developer. The council had to write to the Minister and seek approval for an extension of that period which, as far as I am concerned, was ridiculous. The member for Mirani, Mr Randell, said earlier today that local government is the government that is closest to the people, and I endorse his remarks. However, I might point out that it is also the most difficult level of government in which to work. The fact is, though, that the council ought to have been in a position to extend the period, and this amending legislation will provide councils with that latitude. Conversely, councils that want to go overboard and to deliberately stymie investment will find they are the subject of an appeal to the Minister to intervene. I believe that this legislation covers both situations.

Members opposite have indicated that strategic plans will be forced upon councils in this State, but that is not true. No great obligation is being imposed on councils to put forward strategic plans but, at the end of the day, the well organised councils will do it in any case. Obviously, there is not as much urgency attached to planning of residential, light industrial, heavy industrial, and noxious industry areas in rural areas, but by the same token it is no secret that the more densely populated areas experience a great number of planning problems, which is indicative of a greater need for strategic planning to be developed. For years, the well organised councils have been carrying out that task, but councils such as the Livingstone Shire Council have discovered that when the strategic plans are scrutinised by the courts, they are often pulled to pieces. A classic example was a quarry at Emu Park which conflicted with the Livingstone Shire Council's strategic plan for the area. In that instance, the developer—who bankrolled Vince Lester time and time again during elections—was able to take the matter to court, which cost the Livingstone Shire Council and the local ratepayers group a great deal of money.

By virtue of this legislation, strategic plans now will have some backing when they come before the courts. In other words, neither the Minister, the courts nor the Governor in Council will be able to ignore them. Credence being given to strategic plans is long overdue, and this amending legislation will mean that developers will have to have very good and strong reasons for development projects that conflict with the council's strategic plan. That is not to say that a developer who wishes to proceed with a project that the council has declared unsuitable for the area will be prevented from undertaking construction. It will still be possible for the council to apply conditions to the development which will ensure that the project conforms with the strategic plan, and that latitude is still available to developers. Basically, this legislation will provide support for councils, such as the Livingstone Shire Council, in their decision-making processes and will back up what the councils want to do. It is my belief that when councils are putting together strategic plans, they have a very difficult job. At the end of the day, they make decisions about local areas and, being closest to those areas, are in the best position to do so.

All the talk about Big Brother and big sticks being waved at people is simply nonsense. The Government has brought the proposal for strategic planning out into the open and has explained to councils its intention to make administration easier and to streamline processes so that developmental projects are not blocked. The process which previously took six weeks will be reduced by at least two weeks, which ought to be good news for developers. The bottom line for councils is that this legislation is intended to assist them. The Government is making it clear to councils that they have to comply with an overall State strategy but will nevertheless retain some discretion in relation to implementation. I take the point made by the previous speaker who referred

to the differences between shires and the differences in demands throughout the State. Of course, any Statewide strategic plan must reflect those differences. I am very pleased that the Minister has introduced this Bill. As far as I am concerned, properly projected planning with total consultation is the hallmark of this Government and the way to go. This legislation is long overdue in this State and I believe it will be well accepted by local authorities that have been screaming out for planning guidance for a long time. I support the Bill before the House and I commend the Minister for its presentation.

Mr SANTORO (Merthyr) (8.15 p.m.): This Bill seeks to streamline the planning system and allow local government greater powers in some respects while ensuring that local government decisions are in line with Statewide objectives. It is important that a consistent approach be taken to local government planning, particularly in areas where problems are likely to arise. I will discuss some of those shortly. Strategic planning will be enhanced by the Bill. For that reason, in many ways the Bill contains many positive steps. I want to take the opportunity presented by the debate on this Bill to talk about some aspects of local government planning where problems recur. I suggest that, through the application of the sentiments within the Bill, those problems could be addressed and perhaps tackled even with a Statewide strategic plan in mind. Without a doubt, the most common local government complaint to my office is about noise. We need a State policy on the response of local government to that problem. That is why I was very pleased to see the Bill, with the sentiments that it contains, introduced into the House.

I raise this issue as a result of many complaints to my office. Some of those are the result of what we might generally term industrial noise, but most are the product of domestic machinery. Government members will recall that I have spoken at length about the opposition—on the basis of noise from the breaching of local government regulations concerning noise—to the decision to introduce greyhound racing to Albion Park. Because I have spoken at length before in this place, I certainly will not go into it at great length tonight. However, it is important that I speak briefly about some progress that has been made with that concern in my area. It is a very real problem to local residents, but the Goss Government was not at all concerned when it introduced greyhound racing to Albion Park and therefore affected the nearby residents in the suburb of Hamilton. The degree of consultation was minimal. That is regrettable. I have placed that on the record both in the local media and in this place. As I said, I will not carry on for too long about it. Recently, I took the opportunity to speak to the Greyhound Racing Control Board and the trustees of Albion Park——

Mr Beattie: Were they helpful?

Mr SANTORO: Yes, they were helpful. I take the interjection from the honourable member for Brisbane Central. They helped to reassure me. In a while, I will tell honourable members that I suggested to them that they should also seek to reassure the residents. They assured me that all that is possible will be done to ensure that residents are not unduly disrupted by two nights of greyhound racing a week and that all local government ordinances and rules will be adhered to. The administrator of Albion Park, Mr Mick Cox, told me that noise pollution will be minimised and that new spotlights will be installed to ensure that no excess light shines out of the complex. Assurances have also been given about the purchase of extra property for additional parking, the adjustment of public address speakers, the muffling of kennels and several other concerns raised on behalf of residents. I accept that the trustees and the Greyhound Racing Control Board had very little to say in the matter of relocating greyhound racing to Albion Park, as the Government was determined to move dog racing to that complex come hell or high water. The two bodies say that they will do everything they can to minimise inconvenience to surrounding residents, and I urge them to undertake extensive consultation with their neighbours to solve any practical problems. It is to be hoped that their assurances will become reality, particularly in relation to noise pollution which, as I said, is one of the real problems that are constantly brought to the attention of members.

However, as I have noticed, organised events such as racing are not the cause of most noise complaints. I ask the Minister to give serious consideration to a better Statewide approach to noise problems, given the frequency of such complaints and the fact that the nuisance caused can become quite unbearable and completely unacceptable. To illustrate that, I will tell honourable members briefly about one incident earlier this year in my electorate. I am sure that many members both on this side and on the Government side of the House can relate to the example. A constituent of mine was understandably distressed by a burglar alarm that was set off by a storm late in summer and rang non-stop at ear-piercing level for 17 hours. Apparently, a power surge caused several alarms in his neighbourhood to go off. Most were immediately fixed by their owners, but one alarm—and it was a siren, not the normal bell—remained on. It began blaring at 7.30 on a Saturday night and stayed on until lunchtime on Sunday. During that time, several neighbours rang various firms that install and monitor burglar alarms but could not track down anyone who knew the story of that particular alarm.

I should also mention that the alarm box was 10 feet off the ground and apparently tamper-proof. No sticker or other indication was on it to tell anyone which company had installed the device. Eventually, the relevant company was tracked down and, at lunchtime the following day, that company sent a crew, who unscrewed the alarm and cut the wires. Soon after, the property owner, who had been away in Sydney, came home to what I suspect was a slightly less than warm welcome. The police were called on several occasions but they pointed out that they could not do anything themselves to disarm such devices because of the legal ramifications if they damaged them and that they did not have cause to enter the property, anyway. That is a strange situation. I dispute that reason because I would have thought that a noisy burglar alarm was the very thing that was supposed to bring police on to the property to search for the supposed burglars. I see the honourable member for Brisbane Central grinning and laughing at what I am saying.

Mr Beattie: I reckon the local member makes twice as much noise as any alarm. I don't see why they don't disconnect him.

Mr SANTORO: I am sure that, if I were that uncharitable to the honourable member for Brisbane Central, I could say with ample justification the same about him. I recall in recent times receiving many a complaint about the noise that he has been making at the New Farm shopping centre on Saturday mornings.

Mr Beattie: It's outrageous.

Mr SANTORO: Outrageous, but true. I agree. The fact remains that those events happen from time to time and leave a lot to be desired. The devices are permitted by law to sound for only 10 minutes. That is not a problem if the alarm turns itself off automatically or if someone is there to do it. However, if the machine malfunctions and people are away, the noise will continue, as it did in the case I have outlined. That is a major defect in the local government area which needs greater strategic input. Earlier, I heard the honourable member for Pine Rivers say, "What has this got to do with the Bill?" What I am talking about is an overall strategic plan to control the amount of noise that emanates from machines within residential areas. As an obvious suggestion, one such way of improving that particular situation would be a requirement that all alarm manufacturers or distributors affix a sticker or, even better, a metal plate to each alarm that they install with the name and contact number of the company on it. This way, people would know very quickly who to call to get the thing turned off. This is a good example of a major problem that can be fixed very easily by a bit of planning and a good management strategy.

While speaking about the need for greater effectiveness and consistency in relation to local government noise and alarm regulations, I would also like to mention the need for visual fire alarms. I suggest to the Minister that any building which under current local government regulations requires an alarm should also be required to install a visual alarm. It seems that councils and building developers have spent little time thinking about the safety of deaf and hearing-impaired employees who may work in such buildings. Some people may assume that, if a fire alarm went off, those who heard it

would alert their deaf colleagues. But in emergency situations, people panic. So that is a big and potentially fatal assumption to make.

Mr Beattie: A flasher.

Mr SANTORO: I suggest that the honourable member for Brisbane Central listen very closely to what I am saying. In many of the Government institutions that operate within the electorate of Merthyr, part of which the honourable member aspires to represent after the next State election, there are people who in fact have some very severe visual and hearing impairments.

Mr Beattie: You have won me.

Mr SANTORO: I knew I would win the honourable member very quickly. At long last, I can see some goodness emanating from his callous being.

Mr Beattie: If they are in my electorate, you have won me.

Mr SANTORO: It is not the honourable member's electorate yet; he will have to fight very, very hard to acquire that status. In the late 1950s in Warwick, a service station caught fire, probably because a cigarette was dropped near some spilt petrol. The whole place went up, with flames shooting approximately 30 metres into the air. Perhaps the member for Warwick remembers it. People covered in flames were seen running from the place. One person died in the blaze—the deaf brother of the man who owned the garage. His home was attached to the service station. In all the panic, his relatives, actually forgetting that he was deaf, called out to him to flee, but of course he did not—and could not—hear them. If relatives can forget deafness in that sort of a situation, what chance would workmates in other offices have of thinking clearly? I have seen some fire alarms that, in addition to the bells or sirens, also have big red and amber flashing lights. Some radio and television stations have them, too, because they do not want the noise of sirens in their studios. In my view, such visual alarms should be mandatory and local authorities should require their installation. This could be part of the State planning strategy and Statewide criteria to be laid down.

Because of a noise nuisance created by his neighbours, another constituent of mine has received no joy from the Brisbane City Council. For some reason, the neighbours decided to install an industrial-strength airconditioner at the side of their house. Unfortunately, this puts the airconditioning unit only a few feet away from my constituent's kitchen window, which he likes to leave open. As honourable members may appreciate, the noise is quite loud during the day and deafening at night. There seems to be agreement that the unit is illegally situated, but the city council does nothing to fix the problem. Indeed, the council argues that, because of the mess created by conflicting noise abatement laws in Queensland, it cannot fix it. In an attempt to have the noise problem rectified, my constituent has had a lengthy battle with the State Government and the council, only to be told that while he certainly had a problem with noise, nothing could be done because there was no specific provision for enforcement. This sort of red tape and excessive but ineffective law-making causes great frustration to the community. Hopefully, this Bill will set clearer guidelines for noise abatement standards and enforcement. Again, a Statewide strategy for noise pollution would be advantageous, especially if there were also some Statewide policy on how to deal with noise and how to rectify the present situation.

Yet more complaints about noise come from people who live next to properties in which private swimming pools are situated. The noise of filter pump motors can be quite loud, especially in some older models and those which are not enclosed in any casing. That noise seems a lot louder at night, which is when some pool owners choose to do their pool cleaning. The legislation is there at the moment, but its enforcement by local authorities is, at best, patchy. This is another area in which a better strategy is needed for all parts of the State.

Noise from traffic is something that is generally hard to police, but there are circumstances in which, under the law, authorities seem incapable of doing anything at all. Again, I am sure that members opposite would sympathise and quickly associate with this example, which involves a constituent of mine who has a young baby who is greatly

distressed by the loud music played by a mobile ice-cream vendor every night—not during the day, but after dark. Again, I would suggest to all honourable members that this sort of noise pollution is unacceptable and that a State strategy should incorporate means of dealing with these types of nuisances.

Some councils seem to adopt a somewhat ad hoc approach to planning, which is also causing concern. The best example I have seen lately again happened in my electorate of Merthyr. Honourable members will be familiar with the old New Farm Power House, which adjoins New Farm Park. The powerhouse is now disused and the Brisbane City Council is considering what to do with it and is having a study completed. The clear majority view of New Farm residents is that the building should be demolished and the parkland extended to cover the site. I strongly support this preference of local residents.

Mr Beattie: I agree. I support that.

Mr SANTORO: I note that the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who aspires to represent that part of the territory, agrees with that. I certainly agree with it. I also go on record to publicly acknowledge that my predecessor, Don Lane, while he represented the electorate, also pushed that idea very, very hard. He still does. He has made contact with my office and he has declared his very, very strong support for that project. However, I suggest to the honourable member for Brisbane Central that we get the message across that the vast majority of people in New Farm also want the same thing. But for some reason, documents circulating in my electorate at the moment indicate that the council may retain the building and use it for minority interest groups. This is well and good but flies in the face of the opinion of local residents.

On this matter, the Soorley Labor council seems to have no defined strategy at all but is making policy on the run. This is clearly not good enough and hopefully will be at least partially avoided by the mechanics and the sentiments contained in Bills such as this. In this case, the local authority may well end up choosing to disregard its own policies and oppose the will of the people, but this does not apply just to councils. I suggest that perhaps this is a case where a local community-based referendum should be conducted within the suburb, if the member for Brisbane Central—and I am sure he has no doubts, as he has indicated, about the strength of local opinion—or anybody else, including the Lord Mayor or the Brisbane City Council, has any doubts about the strength of feeling in the local community about the fate of that power station and whether it should be demolished and the whole site turned over to extra parkland. I am sure such a referendum would be supported overwhelmingly. The honourable member for Brisbane Central should not look so alarmed. I am sure that the people will make a wise decision. There have been several similar instances brought to my attention recently. I place the viewpoint of my local community on that issue on record.

Before concluding, I mention the concerns that exist in my electorate due to the fact that local authorities and Government departments are not required to give the same type of notification to various land-holders on what is happening in terms of rezonings and expansions as are local private property owners or developers who seek planning approval and possibly rezoning. Such a person has to make the plans public to allow for any objections to the proposed use of the property. In the case of local authorities, such notification is basically kept by the State as a State secret until it is too late to do anything about it. Consequently, residents often find strange buildings and car parks being built next door to them, and they rightly get upset that they were not even notified of the plans, let alone consulted about them. The State and Federal Governments—as well as local authorities—should, as a matter of course, follow the same planning and approval procedures as private developers do. That is another piece of strategic planning policy for which the Minister could regulate under this and other Bills that he should be considering introducing. Local authorities are all about community consultation and easy access to decision making. This Bill provides to an extent a framework for those concepts, but there is also a need for local authorities to strive harder to provide residents with the best possible quality of life. In conclusion, given the opportunities presented to me by this Bill, I have sought——

Mr Beattie: You have done extraordinary things, but you haven't dealt with the Bill in your whole speech.

Mr SANTORO: I take the interjection from the honourable member for Brisbane Central, but refuse to accept the totality of it, in that he implied that I have not dealt with the Bill. The Bill is titled the "Local Government (Planning and Environment) Amendment Bill". I have been discussing the opportunities that are open to the Honourable the Minister in charge of this Bill to generally bring about measures——

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr SANTORO: I am sure that the honourable member for Brisbane Central regrets the interjection he made, because I am showing up just how frivolous that interjection was. I do appreciate the latitude given to me by Mr Deputy Speaker to bring to the attention of the Minister and other Government members—particularly the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who obviously still, despite his activities in some parts of my electorate, needs educating as to what the people really think in that neck of the woods—some of the very specific concerns that exist in my electorate. I thank the House for its indulgence.

Mr SZCZERBANIK (Albert) (8.34 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to speak to the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Amendment Bill. I see this legislation as one step in a long train of steps that the Government needs to take in the environmental planning area of local government. I represent an area that is growing rapidly. The population in my area is expected to explode to over half a million people over the next 15 years. Environmental planning plays a big part in development in my electorate, and it is certainly central to the solution of problems that occur. People move to my electorate to live in a rural atmosphere. They enjoy that rural atmosphere. They think that it will stay that way forever, and they do not want things to change. However, the people in my electorate are affected as the population grows and expands into rural areas. However, the people in my area believe that boundaries should stay the same.

I am pleased to note that strategic plans are to be taken into account in State planning policies. One of the major problems is that most of the strategic plans that are included in various documents do not apply to my electorate. It is pleasing that in the next 12 months the Albert Shire Council will be undertaking a review of the strategic plan and its accompanying documents. Brannock Humphreys have been appointed as the consultants to undertake the review of the town plan. I am also aware that there is an officer from the Local Government Department on the planning review committee that has been set up by the Albert Shire Council. However, that is still a process that is carried out behind closed doors. The results of this type of process tend to be thrust upon people at the final decision stage, and they feel that they have not had any part to play in the process. I believe that some community leaders should be included in that committee, and the process should be opened up to the community from the beginning to the end. When one allows people the opportunity to participate in the planning process, one finds that the results are exceptional. The terminology I use is that they take it in hand and go hand-in-hand with it to the end.

As the Minister said, a State planning policy will be taken into account in future developments. There is a large area of agricultural land in my electorate, which plays a vital part in the community. It is flood-prone land and, in my opinion, would only be suitable for either canal developments or cane land. I would rather see it stay as cane land, because it contributes to the economic benefit of my area to the tune of $50m a year. Some people said that there were problems with the cane land, and that the eastern corridor that was to be introduced would allow development along the route through that cane land. It is only planned to take 65 hectares of cane land out of a total of just under 7 000 hectares. In my opinion, the Government has played its part in the eastern corridor planning process. All sides of the argument have been considered. In the end, the Government has to make a decision and plan for the future. That is the problem.

Mr Burns interjected.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: That is a problem that is occurring in the Albert Shire. The documentation that I have from the strategic plan——

Honourable members interjected.

Mr COOMBER: I rise to a point of order. I thought that the member for Albert was trying to——

Mr SZCZERBANIK: The honourable members are conducting a great conversation. I thought that I would let them go on. In the Albert Shire strategic plan documents, Object 13(e) states—

> "To conserve the open character of the cane land areas east of the Pacific Highway."

In the past, the Albert Shire Council has not done that. In its own documentation, the Albert Shire Council wants to preserve the cane land. I cite the example of the Benson and Hedges racetrack which is situated in 50 hectares of cane land. Under the council's objectives in the strategic plan, it was supposed to preserve that land. Instead, it has been turned into a racetrack. There are better places on which to site a racetrack, and that cane land should have been preserved. The council is not doing so, and it is blaming the State Government. That is a problem. The documentation does not have sufficient teeth to fight it.

Mr Elliott: Did you support the eastern corridor or not?

Mr SZCZERBANIK: I support the process of planning for the future. If people had said to me 20 years ago that the South East Freeway should not be built, that houses should not be pulled down, I would have fought that as well. I would rather see a minimal amount of disruption now for the benefit of the community in the future. That is the whole thing that this Government is doing. It is trying to plan for the future.

Mr Lingard: What about the Wolffdene dam?

Mr SZCZERBANIK: The Government is doing that. There is no teeth in the documentation. In this documentation, the Wolffdene dam was supposed to be preserved as a water catchment area. The council allowed people to build their houses there on the understanding that the land would be used as a water catchment area for a dam. In my opinion, the council was negligent in that regard. It should have said that there would be no development in that area. If it was proposed to be a dam site——

An Opposition member: You supported it.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: The National Party supported it. That is the problem. In this documentation, there was no planning for the future. The council allowed developers to go in and make a short-term gain at the cost of the people in that area . They are the ones who suffered. The council should be condemned for that. I wish to refer to another matter about which the honourable member for Currumbin spoke, namely, that this Government has knocked developers on the head. I must say that I believe that developers have knocked themselves on the head. During the last three years, they went willy-nilly to council with proposals. All they wanted to do was sell the land that they had rezoned, not for the benefit of the community, but to make a quick dollar. All they wanted to do was buy cheap agricultural land, which they bought for $10,000 a hectare, get the land rezoned, and then flog it off to the Japanese. It is their own fault and it has been their downfall. That has been the problem with developers on the Gold Coast. Seventy golf courses have been proposed in the Albert Shire. How many have been actually commenced and completed? I can count five. One would have to be Shinko, and another one would have to be Sanctuary Cove. The problem has been that in the past greedy developers have not been looking towards the long-term benefits of this State.

Other problems are occurring in my electorate which have come out of the documentation of local government. I must say that Mr Randell must be condemned for allowing the passing of laws that have no teeth. In this documentation, the Albert Shire Council was considering extractive industry zonings. The documentation on extractive industry states—

> "Extractive industry will not be permitted to be established in locations other than those designated on the Plan Map other than in exceptional circumstances, i.e. if it can be demonstrated that exploitation of the resource, and transportation of the extracted material, can be undertaken in a manner that will not detrimentally affect amenity nor cause environmental problems taking into account the preferred character of the potentially affected areas."

In my electorate, extracting zones have been placed right next door to residential areas which have been approved. At the moment, an extractive zone application is on the Minister's desk. The Albert Shire Council went down the track and allowed the developers to go in there and ask for rezoning approval. If one considers the history of extractive industry, one would know that the problem was that the developers went in there on the understanding that the extractive industry would be of a temporary nature. In the past, those "temporary" natures have gone on for 20 years. All the developers have done is gone in and said to the council, "Our two years are up and we want another two years to extract that metal." The developers have gone around this documentation and they have blatantly flouted the law. They have never been honest with people and said, "We want to mine this blue metal for the next 20 years", and they have misled the people. They have said that they will be there for only two years and then they will close up. At the end of the two-year period, as I said, they have continued their operations.

The Minister is conducting a review of the Planning and Environment Court. Before the last local government election, a rezoning application went before the Albert Shire Council. The council said to the people that it would fight the application in the courts. It said, "Just vote us back in and we will fight it in the courts. You will not have to worry about it. You can pull out of the court case because we will fight it." Straight after the election, the council went back to the developer, did a deal with him and changed the conditions that apply to that rezoning application. The council then went back to the people and said that it could not afford to fight the matter in the courts, so it pulled out. Councils do lie, but they must be taken at face value. The problem is that that council made a promise to the people and it reneged on that promise after the election. Councils should be more accountable. On the face of it, the council specified conditions to the applicant, changed the rezoning and approved it.

The council in Albert is setting conditions on development approvals within my electorate, and advising people of the conditions that are set down for approval. Down the track, if an applicant goes back to the council and says, "I want to fight these conditions", the council backs off and waters down those conditions. People first hear about the watered-down conditions when that occurs, and my constituents have no recourse. If the council has done a deal with the developer on behalf of the people of that shire, there is no recourse through the courts or the strategic plan. As to the different zones within zones in my electorate——

Mr Elliott: Do you support an ocean outfall?

Mr SZCZERBANIK: It can certainly be put on the downs, if the member wishes.

Mr Elliott interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hollis): Order! The member for Cunningham!

Mr SZCZERBANIK: It is good that hard and fast rules are being set down by the Minister. However, people in my electorate do not trust the local council to adopt hard and fast rules. They are worried that councils are being given autonomy; that councils will water down their strategic plans, allow various forms of development and will not abide by the rules. The Planning and Environment Court should be reviewed. People fear that the process through the courts is expensive and that, if they take a matter to court, they will lose. They fear also that, when matters are taken to court, the council will not stand by its decisions and will back down. Although some councils are good, other councils are bad. The problem is that bad councils affect people's lives.

I turn now to noise abatement and noise controls in my electorate. There are two specific problems in relation to this. I believe that Mr Lingard would be aware of one problem relating to a crayfish farm on the Wolffdene dam site. The operators of that crayfish farm can circumvent the legislation because they undertake primary or agricultural activities. As a result, they do not come within the provisions of the Noise Abatement Act. I understand that they have scatter guns and alarms to scare ducks on the lake. I am told that they start this process at 6 a.m. and continue it until 7 p.m. People say to me, "That bloke is doing that for 13 hours each day. Can you stop it? You had better stop it, or we will not vote for you." I have tried to explain that, under the present law, nothing can be done about that because the operators of that crayfish farm can get around the legislation by saying that they undertake agricultural activities. I believe that the Minister for Environment and Heritage is considering the noise abatement, clean air and clean water legislation.

Another problem in my electorate relates to Movieworld, which is situated within a commercial zone and is used for commercial or industrial purposes. At the moment, it is flounting the noise abatement regulations. The legislation that has existed since 1974 is so wishy-washy that people can get around it. People come to me with their problems because the council will not fix them. They say, "You are the State Government. You fix it." They do not realise that this problem must be addressed through legislation and proper consultation before it comes into this House. Members know that it has taken three years to properly and effectively formulate legislation relating to liquor laws.

The Minister has looked at water quality control at Springbrook in my electorate. The local council approved developments in Springbrook under the guise of special facility zonings. Once again, people expect the Government to fix the problems caused by strategic plans not being strong enough. I believe that councils are bending the rules willy-nilly.

Mr Comben: We fixed it, didn't we?

Mr SZCZERBANIK: I believe that we did, yes. There are problems with water quality control in my electorate. I would like a State Government planning council to be established. I am aware that the Minister is not in favour of that. Because my electorate is growing so rapidly, water quality control creates problems that would not occur in places such as Longreach or Beaudesert.

Mr Burns: The outback process will work. The process between councils and Government will work.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: Yes. The problem is that people expect things to be done yesterday. They do not realise that it is a long process. The planning department within my electorate has only one qualified town-planner. Because Albert is such a rapidly growing area, the advice that the town-planner gives to council is one-eyed. I believe that a town-planner who used to work for the Brisbane City Council will soon be employed in Albert. But that is not good enough for an electorate that is expected to contain half a million people.

Mr Burns: If we get out of this work we are doing, we will be able to provide assistance to council within our planning department. At the moment we are doing too much checking, dotting i's, crossing t's and answering phones.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: They are problems which arose before we came to Government, and they are continuing. I have liaised with the Minister's department and find it good to work with. However, at the moment New Crush Quarries has before the Minister an application that was lodged before the present Government was elected. That presents a problem.

Mr Burns: Has that been approved by the Albert Shire Council?

Mr SZCZERBANIK: It has been approved by the Albert Shire Council. The file, which is about 12 inches thick, is presently on the Minister's desk. That indicates how much toing-and-froing has occurred on the matter. I have written to the Minister asking to discuss the problem with him. Because it does not conform with the strategic plan, it

is presenting a problem. I commend the Minister's introduction of the Bill, which is part of a long process of reform.

Time expired.

Mr PERRETT (Barambah) (8.54 p.m.): I will not take up much of the time of the House, but I wish to make a few points. As members, we must be concerned about local issues in our electorates, and I am so concerned. If we are not concerned about the electorates which we represent, we do not have any right to sit in this place. As was pointed out by the Opposition spokesman on Local Government, the member for Mirani, we are opposed to certain parts of this legislation which take effective decision-making powers away from local government. Several members have said that local government is the level of Government that is closest to the people. We all recognise that. Therefore, it is important to maintain as much local input as we can by having good, effective local government.

I repeat the National Party's position that local government must be allowed to make important decisions on the basis of local knowledge and local needs. This Bill is taking the meaning of "local" out of local government. It is another example of Labor's centralist policies. We have already seen this Government take away a great deal of local decision making in a wide range of other fields, so we expect that this Bill will follow suit. Look at what has happened to fire brigade and ambulance services. They have all been changed to the extent that locals are little more than helpless onlookers when decisions are being made about local services. In my own area, we have the ridiculous situation in which decisions about local ambulance matters are made in Bundaberg, and decisions about fire brigade matters are made just as far away. Even when it comes to police services, problems after hours are referred to Gympie. All over the State, local hospitals boards have been done away with and their functions passed on to bureaucrats with absolutely no knowledge of local needs. The consequences for people in rural and provincial Queensland are most unsatisfactory. We now have the situation in which remote bureaucrats are making personal decisions which affect the daily lives of people. It might look good on paper, but it does not work in practice. This legislation will bring the same sort of problems to local government. Pretty soon, local councils will be making their decisions on the basis of what suits Ministers in whatever Government happens to be in power in Brisbane. In many cases, the basis for the decisions will be the pet likes and dislikes of the public servants who advise those Ministers.

Mr Burns: Why do you hate public servants?

Mr PERRETT: Some of them are all right.

Mr Randell: They have got rid of all the good ones.

Mr PERRETT: As the member for Mirani said, a lot of the good ones are gone. I am very fearful of the sorts of decisions that Ministers will be able to impose on local government via these State planning policies that they will be able to slip through the Governor in Council. We should remember that the voting power in Queensland is firmly entrenched in the heavily populated south-eastern and coastal areas. What Ministers based there think is a good idea will very rarely suit the more remote western and northern local authorities. They do not want to be saddled with planning policies which might suit trendy councils with plenty of money to spend. I acknowledge that we have to plan for the future. In my electorate of Barambah, we have seen much rural residential development taking place. I am not knocking rural residential development. When it is properly planned, it is good. Inevitably, people come knocking on my door complaining about a feedlot or a piggery that they have not noticed until such time as the wind changed and they smelled it. Then they want me to close it down.

Mr Burns: That's a bad planning decision by the local council.

Mr PERRETT: That is what I am saying. I am acknowledging the need for planning. That is why we need local knowledge. The Minister is saying that it is because of bad planning decisions.

Mr Burns: That is a local decision that went bad that you are talking about. There was no Government involvement in that feedlot. That was a council decision.

Mr PERRETT: I acknowledge that there are problems and that we have to get around them. We certainly need local knowledge. That is why I am saying that when you have bureaucrats sitting in airconditioned, plush offices in the heart of the city——

Mr Burns: That was done by the local council sitting in Kingaroy. That was done there, not done by the bureaucrats in Brisbane. It was done by your people there, and you say it's bad. You are killing your own argument.

Mr PERRETT: This is the third time I have acknowledged that there is a need for proper planning. That is why I say that we need local knowledge.

Mr Burns: Local knowledge didn't work in this case.

Mr PERRETT: I will not say that, because I believe that we are all wiser in hindsight.

Mr Burns: You need a State policy on feedlots, because there's a whole lot of those decisions that needed it.

Mr PERRETT: I hasten to say that the Minister for Primary Industries seems to be very slow in developing policies for feedlots.

Mr Burns: You're against State policies.

Mr PERRETT: I am not against State policies. I am supporting local knowledge.

Mr Burns: Are you in favour of State policies?

Mr PERRETT: I am in favour of local input into local decisions. I will maintain that stance as long as I sit in this House. I can assure the Minister that what might suit the Brisbane and Gold Coast councils might be a total disaster for councils in the South Burnett.

Mr Burns: That is why we are saying it should be left up to the council to implement the policy.

Mr PERRETT: There are a lot of councillors out there who are vitally interested in their own communities and I am sure that there are a lot of people who would be very offended to hear the Minister say that they know nothing about their local areas. There are people out there who have given up much of their time because they are community-minded people. The people I am talking about are not just members of the local authorities; they are people who are heavily involved in other community pursuits such as the local hospitals board, the fire brigade and the ambulance. That has all been taken away from them. Honourable members can understand why these people are justifiably hurt. Conditions are totally different. The economic circumstances of country councils are vastly different from those in the cities. In fact, if a couple of Labor mayors have their way, the smaller councils will be broke before long and I am pleased to see that the Minister has given lip service to the needs-based funding distribution by the Local Government Grants Commission.

After the years of abuse the Minister has heaped on anything rural, it was good to hear him say something nice. We have to wonder why. It seems very strange to hear the Minister support the regional and country councils one week and then impose legislation like this on them the next. If this Bill goes through, the Minister will set back local authorities by decades. Never again will they be able to decide the really important issues in local government—the planning issues that determine land use and the like. All those things will be dictated to them and they will be left with nothing to do but pick up the garbage. After a few years, when Cabinet has pushed a series of planning policies through Executive Council, there will really be nothing left for local authorities to decide. New strategic plans and town plans based on the Government's ideas will be put in place. Development applications will be decided on the basis of conformity with the plans. Councils will be left with no real local input and no real local initiative to exercise. It all sounds a lot like the centralised control the Labor Party has already imposed on the services I mentioned a minute ago. The member for Mirani said that he was worried

about the emergence of a State planning authority. Every Queenslander should be worried about that. The system has failed wherever it has been tried—in New South Wales and other parts of Australia and in the socialist regimes of Eastern Europe. We should be able to expect that this Government would be prepared to learn from the mistakes of others, but apparently not. The National Party remains firmly committed to the concept that local people always know what is best for them. Aldermen and councillors have a far better idea of what is needed locally than the armies of public servants working in the comfort and remoteness of offices in Brisbane. Those aldermen and councillors have a very good reason for making the right decisions—the ones the locals can understand and live with. They have to face their constituents every three years and answer for the decisions they have made and the sort of planning they have done for their local area. In the future, under this legislation, they could be answering for decisions they made on the orders of the State Government. Even worse, their councils and their ratepayers could face very costly legal action over those decisions they were forced to make under this legislation.

There is nothing in this Bill, as far as I can see, to guarantee that the State Government will carry the financial can for judgments against councils; judgments resulting from State planning policies devised in Brisbane. The member for Mirani went through some of those possible policies, and every one that he mentioned could give rise to legal action by frustrated developers and others. Planning policies which are totally inappropriate will make these actions inevitable. The administrative arrangements local authorities will face under this Bill will be nothing short of a nightmare. On just about every page there is a requirement for a council to send some sort of paperwork to the Director-General of the Local Government Department. I notice that there is even a requirement that he be notified when a council passes a resolution to do something about a plan. That is taking the Big Brother syndrome to the extreme. I know that a few people involved in local authorities are most concerned that the paper war will get on top of them. They are already having problems under the laws and policies of this Government. Time and time again I have received complaints about the extra time and clerical staff that are needed to maintain the laws by which they now have to abide. They are worried that councils will be simply unable to cope with the huge volume of bureaucratic nonsense imposed by the Labor Government's centralist legislation. Some of the smaller councils—the ones the Labor mayors want to take money away from—will have tremendous difficulty in coping. The big councils have an enormous capacity to raise money, automate clerical processes and hire specialist staff. The smaller councils will find the new reporting provisions crippling in cost terms and will endure a huge disadvantage. Much of this legislation is simply unpalatable, so I join with my colleagues in offering opposition to this Bill.

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (9.07 p.m.): The member for Pine Rivers and other Government members have provided the House with a clear account of the proposed amendments to the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act that will provide for the introduction of State planning policies so that the Government can identify and articulate its position on planning matters of State significance. I want to place on record my strong support for these amendments. I am, quite frankly, sick and tired of the rhetoric that we have heard during this debate so far from members opposite who have at length repeated misleading statements about the centralist, socialist policies of this Government. To find the model of centralist planning, one has only to look south across the border. New South Wales, with a Liberal Government, is the epitome of centralist planning and I suggest that honourable members opposite look there.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Dr CLARK: Not so, and I will demonstrate that to the honourable member. New South Wales has reached the point—I hope honourable members opposite are aware of this—that if a decision has to be made about an industrial development employing more than 20 people, it is made by the State Government. How much more centralist can it get than that?

To return to Queensland—whilst there will be many issues, no doubt, which the State planning policies will be addressing, one of the issues of great concern in far-north Queensland at present that is requiring a State planning policy is the use of prime agricultural land. I am quite disappointed that more members opposite who represent rural areas have not taken up this issue and spoken out strongly for the need to preserve agricultural land so that it does not end up under houses or other commercial developments. At present, the Minister for Local Government has indicated that applications for rezoning agricultural land for residential purposes are currently undergoing much greater scrutiny than was the case in the past. A State planning policy will in fact strengthen the hand of the Government and the position of local authorities that want to preserve agricultural land. I am sure members opposite would know of local authorities that are most concerned when the Planning and Environment Court overrules their local powers on this issue, which is particularly significant in the Mulgrave and Douglas Shires.

I am sure that the member for Mulgrave will support me in what I am saying because his electorate, which is located on the south side of Cairns, and my electorate of Barron River, which lies to the north of Cairns, are experiencing these sorts of problems at present because of the enormous growth in urban expansion. If there is no proper planning in that area, it looks as though it will finish up as an urban sprawl stretching from Gordonvale in the south to Palm Cove in the north. This State needs a planning policy in place so that decisions on the development of agricultural land will be made in such a way that they will ensure the continued viability of the sugarcane industry in the area; otherwise, more sugar mills will close down and more people will be unemployed, with the result that the area will become increasingly reliant on tourism. As everybody knows, it is inappropriate for a region to have a narrow economic base. Similar problems are being experienced in the Douglas Shire as fertile cane land in the area is threatened by residential and tourism development.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Government has recognised its responsibilities to assist with regional planning in far-north Queensland, which is the fastest-growing area of the State outside the south-east corner. In fact, a couple of weeks ago, the Minister for Housing and Local Government visited Cairns to open the first planning office in far-north Queensland. When I heard the member for Barambah again berate the Government for not providing services in regional areas, I wondered how he could possibly stand here and say those sorts of things when there had never been a planning office outside Brisbane under the previous Government. It took a Labor Government to recognise the need to take planning outside Brisbane so that people and local authorities would have officers in Townsville and Cairns from whom they could seek advice.

It took a Labor Government to make regionalisation actually work. In common with south-east Queensland, north Queensland is now setting up a regional planning advisory body to represent all the sectors of the community and State Government. It has been formed so that people can have input into the regional issues with which people who live in the area must come to grips. A regional strategic plan is also being formulated to encompass nine local authority areas. I commend the work being carried out by David Kanaley from the planning office in north Queensland. Formulation of a regional strategic plan will enable the question of appropriate location and scale of residential development in far-north Queensland to be addressed. Already it is very clear that it is the tablelands behind Cairns rather than the coastal plains that will have the capacity to absorb the projected property expansion in the decades ahead. It is very clear that if the area is to preserve its wetlands, retain its forested hill slopes and have some sort of agricultural industry, the growing population will have to be relocated up onto the tablelands.

As well as regional strategic planning, planning challenges are also being presented by smaller townships such as Kuranda in my electorate, which is under a great deal of pressure from growing tourism development. I am working with State Government officers to ensure that appropriate planning policies and strategies are in place for the Kuranda area, and I appreciate very much the support given by the

Minister and his staff for their assistance in performing that very important task. It is only through a very careful and coordinated planning process which takes into account the community's expectations that an urban nightmare will be avoided in far-north Queensland and the spectacular environmental assets of the region protected.

I turn now to other amendments in the Bill that also highlight the Government's recognition of this need for cooperation and coordination in planning. The Bill provides that local government will be required to notify the Chief Executive of the Department of Housing and Local Government when it intends to prepare a strategic plan or to amend a strategic plan, and when it intends to prepare a development control plan or to amend a development control plan. The purpose of this proposal is to enable the Government to facilitate a coordinated input and response to local government on State Government planning matters and to work with local government in the course of preparation of local government plans. This proposal, coupled with the existing requirements for local governments to notify the chief executive when it intends to prepare a planning scheme, will introduce a holistic approach to future planning for an area. This will significantly reduce the time and costs of the planning process as cooperative effort is applied to the plan preparation process. Presently, by the time a plan is submitted for the approval of the Governor in Council, a great deal of time and cost have been invested and it becomes an expensive process to instigate changes to take account of the Government's requirements. The member for Currumbin suggested that it would be an impossible task to try to coordinate various Government departments, but this work must be done. It is essential to recognise that fact and put the work into the project. The Department of Local Government is well placed to provide the necessary coordination because the officers of that department have the necessary expertise and commitment to make it happen.

The Bill also provides that local government will be required to give the chief executive written notice of a proposal by local government to amend the planning scheme prior to giving public notice of the proposal. The purpose of this proposal is also to enable the State Government to facilitate a coordinated input and response to local government on State Government planning matters. In practice, the Department of Housing and Local Government will notify all State Government agencies of a proposal to prepare or amend a planning scheme, a proposal to prepare or amend a strategic plan, and a proposal to prepare or amend a development control plan. The State Government agencies will then be responsible for giving advice to the Department of Housing and Local Government on their planning requirements for a particular matter. The department will then provide the local authority with a coordinated Government view on the proposal. As I indicated earlier, this is an essential task that must be carried out. The proposals in the Bill will also have the effect of reducing the time currently taken by the State Government in the processing of applications for the approval of a planning scheme, a strategic plan, or a development control plan.

All of those procedural improvements are consistent with the Government's commitment to applying micro-economic reform principles to public administration and to streamlining planning procedures. However, the efforts of both State Government and local government to ensure that a strategic plan or a DCP reflects good planning principles and takes account of all relevant issues will be wasted if they can in fact be later overturned by a local authority, if it decides that the planning scheme was not convenient to accommodate the needs of particular individuals, or by the Minister for Local Government. The Minister must not be in a position of being able, at a whim, to overturn the town planning scheme of a local authority. Of course, the Planning and Environment Court must be there to uphold the planning scheme of a local authority.

Thus, the Bill provides that, when proposing to amend a planning scheme, the Minister cannot proceed with a proposal if it conflicts with a strategic plan or DCP, unless there are sufficient planning grounds to justify proceeding with the proposal despite the conflict. The Bill recognises that there must be some discretionary power. Again, we are not talking in absolutes. There must be some certainty but there must also be a recognition of extenuating circumstances. Similarly, when proposing to amend a planning scheme or when making a decision on an application by a person to amend a

planning scheme, for the consent to use land or to subdivide land, local government must decide to refuse to approve the application if it conflicts with the provisions of a strategic plan or DCP, again unless there are sufficient planning grounds to justify approving the application despite the conflict.

Finally, because the Planning and Environment Court in effect stands in the shoes of the original decision maker, when considering an appeal in respect of an application to amend a planning scheme, for the consent to use land or to subdivide land, the court must reject the appeal if the proposal conflicts with the provisions of a strategic plan or development control plan, again unless there are sufficient planning grounds to justify allowing the appeal. Likewise, the Governor in Council will not have the power to approve an application to amend a planning scheme if the proposal conflicts with the provisions of a strategic plan or development control plan, unless there are sufficient grounds.

The provision that there may be some planning grounds which warrant conflict with the provisions of a strategic plan or development control plan recognises that such plans are not static planning instruments. Planning for an area is dynamic in nature, and an element of flexibility must be included so that local government can make decisions having regard to the particular circumstances of the decision to be made. That point bears repeating, because we have heard constantly tonight that local government will have no flexibility. That is a nonsense. It is quite clear that local government can exercise discretion. It can respond to the local circumstances and be responsive to the needs of that community, because that is what local government is there for, that is what it is doing and that is what it will continue to do under the legislation.

Another provision contained in the Bill clarifies that an applicant can apply to amend only a development control plan which is, in effect, a zoning plan. No doubt, there will be some who believe that these amendments to the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act still do not give the State Government sufficient control over land use in a particular local government area. Yes, I am quite sure that some people will think that. As we have heard, members of the Opposition believe that it gives the State Government too much control. Let me make it clear that the Government does not believe in the central control of planning by the State Government. It believes in local authorities being able to make decisions that are appropriate in their local area, using their discretion where it is appropriate. The Government believes in providing coherent policy frameworks which set out some strategic guiding principles to ensure that the interests of the State are given due consideration. Such an approach is sensible and sound, and I am sure that it will be welcomed by local authorities throughout the State. Indeed, the legislation has been supported by the Local Government Association.

Local authorities are too sensible to swallow the misinformation that we have heard peddled tonight by the Opposition. The Government has consistently reaffirmed its commitment to a cooperative relationship with local government. We saw that no more clearly than when we saw the way in which the Government handled the EARC recommendations for amalgamation of local authorities. The Bill is entirely consistent with that cooperative approach, and that will be recognised by anybody who is willing to consider the Bill in an objective fashion as opposed to seeing it through the prejudices that we have heard from Opposition members tonight, who were clearly not willing to look at what is in front of them, but prejudged the Bill from their own ideological standpoint. I look forward to a planning regime that is strategic, coordinated and coherent across both State and local government as opposed to the fragmented and ad hoc regime that currently operates. The rapid growth of Queensland demands nothing less if we are to successfully meet the challenge of the future. I support the Bill.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (9.21 p.m.): I wish to take the opportunity to make a few comments on the environmental aspects which the Bill has the ability to address from a long-term planning point of view. In the past decade, members of the ALP—particularly when they were in Opposition—came into this place and were very long on rhetoric when they proposed exactly what they would do about long-term planning for our environment when they came to Government. This afternoon in the

Matters of Public Interest debate, the member for Salisbury made what I thought was a good contribution when he spoke about the treatment of sewage effluent and its water component. What he said bears some relation to the Bill. It is important that we consider that matter, because it is one of the long-term planning problems that we must address, particularly in the south-east corner of Queensland and other areas such as Cairns and the larger developing areas along the coast of this State. The same problems apply in microcosm in many other centres in the State. The member for Salisbury also mentioned putting the tail water from effluent into the Murray-Darling River system, the Condamine River and various other rivers. What he said was true in that we do have the ability to clean up that water. But it really comes down to cost.

I find it interesting that the Minister's counterpart, the Minister for Environment, the Honourable Pat Comben, when approached by the board riders association, the wave riders and other concerned citizens, went down to the coast and at a public meeting spoke to them about their concerns for the basic planning for the future use of that water. Basically, he said that, at the moment, there is no problem. I think that is really gilding the lily a little. The long-term problem that will exist on the coast is one of massive proportions. Having spent some time in recent days with the Mayor, Alderman Lex Bell, I have first-hand knowledge of that. He is very concerned about this problem. He sees the use of the ocean for the outfall of effluent as being almost the Gold Coast's No. 1 problem, one that the council is trying to address with the limited resources and reserves that are available. To some degree, the effluent is being distributed elsewhere by being pumped onto parks, gardens, playing fields and so on.

I have had the opportunity to look first-hand at what is done in Orange County in California. The authorities there treat the effluent and bring it up to a reasonable standard. Two pipelines have been constructed in the local authority area. As a result, the water from the treated effluent is used for many different purposes. The taps and pipes actually have a colour-coded system so that people can use the treated water on their gardens. It must be remembered that California is the driest State in the United States; in fact, it is one of the driest places in the world. Australia is also a dry continent. Where possible, we should learn from other people's experimentation and research. I am pleased that the Premier is in the Chamber. He, as well as the Minister, should take these comments on board because ultimately the buck stops with him in relation to the planning of this State. I find it disappointing that, when the Minister for Environment went down to the coast to address the gathering that I mentioned, he did not acknowledge that the problem existed. I watched the report on television, and my understanding of what he was saying was that the ecoli count is not of such a magnitude as to be a problem and that he did not accept that there was a problem.

On the other hand, the National Party has taken a stance which is different from that of the Minister. It has committed itself to embracing existing technology. I refer to the D'Olieviera process of refining methane. People ask, "What has that got to do with it?" It has a lot to do with it because, by using that process to treat effluent, a whole new energy source can be utilised. That process is different from the old-fashioned way of processing methane. Of course, methane technology is probably a thousand or more years old. Under the old technology, the anaerobic reaction took seven days in which to occur and one was lucky if 13 per cent of the available methane was obtained from the sewage. Under the D'Olieviera process, virtually 100 per cent of the available methane can be obtained from the sewage within 24 hours. Before the methane is transferred to a refinery, the water is separated and drawn off in the same way as it is in present sewage treatment and held in dams and holding ponds. The result is a refinery that will make money. The National Party has made a commitment, through an environmental foundation, to work with the D'Olieviera company to actually make a profit for this State from a refinery that, firstly, produces methane and, secondly, produces organic liquid fertilisers that are obtained from the process. Because of the superheating of the sewage effluent in the methane process, all of the bugs which are now such a problem for local authorities in the disposal of effluent will be eradicated. The problems caused by its disposal at present will be overcome. That process also creates another product of which we are desperately short—urea. We have an opportunity to give our farmers

another source of urea. At the moment, farmers are at the mercy of the marketplace whenever they purchase petroleum-based products.

The D'Olieviera process is a very important technological breakthrough. It was offered to the Government. The company approached the Government but, in its wisdom, the Government did not even recognise it. The company went from one operational outfit to another. I guess that, finally, the old story was, "Don't ring us, we'll ring you." It is disappointing that, because of the Government's lack of foresight, it is not able to see, in a planning sense, far enough down the track the problems that will affect the Gold Coast. This process offers the ability to handle the solids in sewage. The Gold Coast is an ideal place in which this process could be implemented first up. Unlike many other large cities round the world, the Gold Coast does not have a large industrial base. If it would be possible to have such a thing as pure sewage, the Gold Coast's sewage is probably as pure as it comes. It is basically human waste. As such, it is an ideal place at which to implement this process. In addition, the process will provide an energy source which can be utilised in a far more satisfactory way than our present——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! Until now, I have been very lenient. I ask the honourable member for Cunningham what relevance this has to the Bill.

Mr ELLIOTT: We are discussing planning. This process has a three-pronged attack in regard to the problems of local authorities and States. We are discussing the management of sewerage, and then the disposal of the effluent at the other end. We are discussing environmental pollution and the planning for the traffic corridors between Brisbane, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. We are discussing the problems of the environment, particularly smog, that such projects bring. Honourable members should bear in mind that this is a local government environment planning Bill. I am talking about the problems of the environment. This methane process has the ability to solve many of those problems.

Mr Lingard interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: One only has to look around to see the many environmental problems that exist. We have to accept them. Unfortunately, the members of the Government do not have the foresight or the vision to look far enough into the future to see that some of these problems can be solved. Government members must be prepared to actively seek out these sorts of technologies. They are there. Honourable members need only consider what has occurred with the Sarich engine. That is typical of what Australia has done in recent times. This technology will give us a pollution-free energy source in the short term. It will not solve all of the problems, because this is a long-term project. Obviously, a concept such as Gogas, where there are pumps everywhere—for example, at service stations—will not happen overnight. However, it is an energy source which could be used by Governments. The Lord Mayor of Brisbane has committed himself to run LPG buses to overcome some of the long-term planning problems of the environment in Brisbane. If this energy source was used to run the buses that the Lord Mayor is purchasing, it would overcome the environmental problems. I think it is very important that all honourable members put aside their prejudices and the lack of foresight that is shown on the Government side of the House in some instances and do something about this. I urge Government members to look at this objectively. I was disappointed that the Energy Minister, who was recently involved in a meeting on this issue—and this is not something that I will use as a political football—appeared to be acting in good faith and then made noises about the Stephen Horvath car and Milan Brych. That is hardly conducive to an all-party approach to an issue, where people might be prepared to work together for the good of Queensland. In my opinion, that is very disappointing. I believe that the Energy Minister was endeavouring to set the D'Olieviera company up for some sort of serve in the public arena and trying to ridicule the process. He also indicated that they had been knocked back by the Lord Mayor and the Federal Government—both of which are totally incorrect and are outright lies, because that company did not approach the Brisbane

City Council for any assistance, other than to mention to it that there was a patent and that it should be careful not to infringe it.

I do not wish to take up any more time. I believe that Government members should be big enough to take ideas on board. The Government has already taken over the Opposition's policy on one issue. When the Premier was up in the Conondale Ranges, he announced my policy on the youth training program. The only difference between my exercise and that of the Premier was that I called it the Queensland Conservation Corp; the Premier called it the Youth Conservation Corp. The Premier intends to spend $l2m on that project. I thank the Premier for recognising a good idea, and I suggest that here is another one that he might consider. Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank you and the Minister for your tolerance. In terms of long-term environment planning, all honourable members must work together with local authorities and the State and Federal Governments to make certain that they take advantage of all the opportunities that are presented.

Mr DAVIES (Townsville) (9.35 p.m.): Although I do not intend to take up much time this evening, one aspect which pertains to the legislation and which I would like to address is the identification of contaminated land. I have listened to the negative contributions, particularly from the Opposition spokesman, the member for Mirani, Mr Randell, and the Liberal Party spokesman, the member for Currumbin, Mr Coomber. The member for Mirani expressed concern that the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Amendment Bill will centralise most basic functions of local government. The member for Currumbin also criticised the Bill for taking away the rights of local authorities in respect of rezonings. The honourable member for Brisbane Central, Mr Beattie, has corrected those opposition spokesmen. Hopefully, that additional knowledge will allow the honourable member for Currumbin particularly to concentrate on his main game in the upcoming State election, endeavouring to be elected as the new member for Surfers Paradise. These two honourable members must have read a Bill different from the one before the House tonight. This Bill provides for more decision making—not less—to be placed squarely at the feet of local government, but in a structured way. As the member for Barron River said, the Bill also reinforces that the State Government is committed to regionalisation. Recently, I had the pleasure to attend, with the honourable member for Thuringowa, Ken McElligott, the opening of a local government regional office in Townsville by the Deputy Premier. The two spokesmen to whom I referred must be going around with both eyes closed, because they are completely unaware of what is happening in local government in Queensland. It is being regionalised and more decision making is being devolved to the local authority areas around the State. As the honourable member for Brisbane Central has pointed out, the Bill provides for the deletion of the requirement that the Minister must give approval for the preparation of a development control plan; a proposal to extend the area of a development control plan; the inclusion of an additional area in a planning scheme; and the commencement of the consolidation of a planning scheme.

I turn now to the identification of contaminated land. As members should be aware, the existing provisions regarding contaminated land were introduced in 1990 in the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Bill. When introducing those provisions, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Housing and Local Government, Mr Tom Burns, stated that the provisions will—

> ". . . assist in identifying contaminated land throughout the State. These measures will be one aspect of the Government's approach to these matters . . . the amendments to the Bill will subject certain rezonings of land to scrutiny through a site contamination report. In this regard, the rezoning stage is the most appropriate one because it is generally early in the land development process . . . It is likely that separate legislation dealing with the clean-up of sites and the establishment of a register will be introduced at a later date . . . This is really an interim measure and a way of helping local authorities and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to address the problem . . ."

Since that time, the Contaminated Land Act has come into force. As foreshadowed in 1990, amongst other things it provides for a register of contaminated land. It is

considered appropriate that a whole-of-government approach be taken to identify sites that are contaminated. This Bill provides that when an application for rezoning, for consent to use land or to subdivide land is lodged in relation to land which is or was being used for a purpose which may contaminate land, then a site investigation report may be required by local government. Developments which may contaminate land are prescribed in a regulation to this Act.

It is intended to propose to amend the regulation to this Act to provide that the list of developments will be the same as those provided for in the Contaminated Land Act. The existing provisions regarding the preparation of a report by the Director of the Chemical Hazards and Emergency Management Unit will not be changed. The purpose of this proposal is to use the development application process as an additional mechanism to the register provided for in the Contaminated Land Act in order to identify contaminated land. I am sure all members would agree that the safety and health of the community in Queensland must be safeguarded, and this proposal will go a long way towards contributing to that. The Local Government Association of Queensland has given its full support to this proposal.

With those few comments, I will conclude. However, before I do so, I offer my congratulations to the Deputy Premier and his departmental and ministerial staff for the dedicated, systematic and consultative manner in which this Bill has been prepared. I support the Bill.

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (9.41 p.m.), in reply: Tonight, honourable members have seen an exercise of the heavy hand of the National Party—the old idea that Government must control everything. Somewhere along the line, the Government does not tell the people and the local authority what its policies are because, if it did, when someone handed over a few bob to the Ministers in the Government of the day—as they used to do—to get a decision made, they would not have to justify it by saying that they broke a policy. The previous Government was able to use any method at all to overcome local authorities. All night I have heard about the concerns of local government. Not one of the members opposite who spoke tonight stood up in the days when they were on the Government side of the House. They were taking the money and overriding decisions in Surfers Paradise and in other areas all over the State. Most of the recommendations contained in the Fitzgerald report related to graft and corruption. They were all associated with the rotten policies that the National Party implemented in this place.

Very simply, the Government is saying that it is going to make its policies open, fair and clear. When councils tell me that they want to know the policy of this Government in relation to a matter, there will be a State planning policy. That policy will be produced in the following way. The Government will talk to the people. For example, people involved in rural industries such as the sugar industry are beating a path to my door in relation to the need for a policy to protect prime agricultural land. Canegrowers in the Albert Shire are attending organised public meetings. They do not want their mill to close because there are not enough canegrowers in the area to keep it open. People from parts of north Queensland such as Cairns, where one mill has already closed, are coming to the Government and saying, "If you continue to allow the councils to rezone prime agricultural land and prime cane-growing land, there will be not enough work for the mill and the mill will close. Where are we going to send our sugar?" They are not the only people who are approaching the Government. For example, people want a policy in relation to aerodromes. Every council has its own policy. Councils are approving residential blocks of land right at the end of an air strip. The councils are saying that they cannot knock the applications back because old Joe is a mate of theirs and old Joe is going broke.

I return to the decisions that are made with regard to rural land and, in particular, how they affect the sugar industry. In central Queensland, I was told that one of the reasons why councils will approve a rezoning application is because a farmer is going broke and the only way that he will make a buck is if he subdivides his land. So that person subdivides his land. The people who live on those subdivided blocks object to

the farmer spraying, and he is stopped from spraying neighbouring properties. The people object to the farmer commencing work at 6 o'clock in the morning because he is waking them up. The council stops the farmer from working in the morning. The people object to all of those provisions, and then when the farms are closed and the farmers are sent broke, the council says that it is a bad policy. The councils are asking us to lay down clearly the policies that we want.

The spokesman for the Liberal Party and the spokesman for the National Party can say that they have gone around to the meetings and have not heard any attack on State planning policies. The councils know that this is the only way to go, other than to have a State planning authority such as exists in New South Wales. This is the only way for the State to pull together, and nearly every council in this State, without exception, has complained to me and said that they want to know where the Government stands on an issue. The way to do that is to determine the policy, get the community in, get the departments in, work through the process, put it out to consultation, bring it back, get Cabinet to approve it, and publish it in the *Government Gazette* for everybody to see. That is the way to go. That is fair, honest and aboveboard. But that is foreign to the National Party. It does not understand that. It does not believe in doing things that way, because there is no graft—no money—in it. It does not want to tell the authorities what the policy is. Instead, it keeps it to itself.

On the one hand, the Opposition spokesman claims that I am dodging my responsibilities. Last year, 1 800 letters came into my office from local authorities because the Act says that they must write to the Minister. Councils do not have to write to the chairmen of their councils, they can write to the shire clerks. But in Brisbane, the National Party believes that there is something wrong with my saying that councils should write to my chief executive. I have a staff of four or five girls who receive that mail. They put it onto a computer, acknowledge the letter and send it down to the chief executive. His people then put it onto another computer, acknowledge the letter, and send it back to me after they have checked it. I then approve it or knock it back, and it is then taken to the Governor in Council. Why do we need to do two lots of checking and filing? Why can it not go to the chief executive and save all that time and money and the slow process that delays it? Every developer in the business wants me to speed up the process. But the honourable member for Mirani claims that I am handing the matter over to the chief executive. This legislation contains no provision for the chief executive to make the decision. It is stupid that I have to give approval to a council for an extension of time. The legislation provides that it must have my approval, and I can knock it back. We should get away from these routine matters.

My Government knocked back the Brisbane City Council on a development control plan because it had not sought my permission to produce it. Although it spent $180,000 producing it, it was rejected because it had not sought my permission. Under this legislation, a council has only to let us know that it is doing that. This Government wants to know if someone is undertaking a development control plan in an area. We want to be involved and to have a say, because there might be issues that we want to address. Under previous National Party legislation, after the plan was produced, it was brought to my department. Approximately 40 or 50 town-planners could go through the process, have a look at it, and said, "We do not like this" or "We do not like that." They then recommend whether or not the plan should be overturned. That is not the way to go about this. If this system is to work, we must go down a new track.

It is estimated that by 2001, half a million people will have settled in south-east Queensland. A massive population growth is expected in north Queensland and right throughout the State. We must streamline these processes. There is no argument about local authorities being involved. I believe that they should be involved. I have more trouble in arguing for autonomy for local authorities than I do for anything else. When local authorities are given autonomy, they are also given responsibility. Although they want autonomy, they want me to take the responsibility. The idea is, "We will run our own act, but you will carry the can for us, Tom, if anything goes wrong." Mrs McCauley and Mr Randell would know that at any of the meetings that we have attended, I have never failed to say, "I will pass the legislation for you. I will introduce the amendments,

but you will carry your own can. When things go bad, do not blame the Labor Party, the Government or someone else. Carry your own can." That is what I am saying in relation to this legislation. This Government will follow the process of consultation. It has already been through that. The Royal Australian Planning Institute, south-east Queensland councils, other planning groups, surveyors' institutes and other development groups to whom I have spoken about this legislation want this type of legislation, because it will speed up the process. There is no reason for the heavy hand of Government to slow down that process.

It is true to say that I am getting out of the letterbox business. I do not want my office to become a letterbox. I want to be involved with the policy side of this. I want to be out there working with the councils. I want to cooperate with them and work with them. I want to work this through. No approvals to the Governor in Council will be given away to the chief executive. They will still be done by me. Nothing in the legislation has changed in that regard. If members believe that it has, I invite them to show me the clause in which they believe that it has changed, and I will omit that clause. If members can prove that the decisions will be made by the chief executive, I will omit that clause.

As to economic impact statements for major shopping centres—I give credit to the Opposition spokesman, who raised this issue with me. The Government has considered this issue, which will be covered in the regulations. I thank the member for his submission. My department said that the matter was raised by the member. I had a look at the policy direction and, as a result of the member's submission, it is covered in the legislation. He is entitled to some credit for that. As to Parliament being removed from the law-making process—that is not true. The tabling process, the laying of legislation on the table, the 14 days for disallowance, and other provisions still exist.

As to the ability to override local authority decision making in relation to major projects of economic significance—the Government makes no change to the current situation. The Bill does not provide the Minister with the power to take decisions away from local authorities in any type of development. The only Act that has ever allowed that to happen was introduced by the previous Liberal/National Party Government. That was the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act, which provided that the Governor in Council could declare that a proposal for the development of the mineral or energy resources of the State or a proposal for the processing or handling of such resources is a prescribed development. It also provided that the Governor in Council can declare any part of the State to be a State development area if he is satisfied that the public interest or the general welfare of persons resident in the State requires it. In other words, they could override an entire council and do it themselves. We are not doing that under this legislation. This Bill does not affect or alter any powers relating to developer contributions. It makes no changes to the existing legislation.

As to compensation for injurious affection—one of the great problems that the Government has with rural areas is that a town produces a plan, and it then produces a strategic plan around the town. It says, "We are going to put our water and sewerage services in a north-westerly direction." Along comes a developer who applies to rezone in a south-easterly direction. Because he talks about all the people he will bring to the area and puts forward a good case, the council approves that proposal in a south-easterly direction with no consideration for the strategic plan. They must have good planning reasons for that, not the reason that Joe is going broke or that it is a good proposal which might bring another 1 000 houses to the area. If the council decides to spend the public's money on water and sewerage services in a certain direction, it ought to stick to strategic planning. It is no good having a strategic plan and then deciding, on the whim of a developer or an approval process somewhere else, that that is the way to go. The Minister of the day must be able to look at a proposal and the council must show good planning reasons why it wishes to change a strategic plan.

As to compensation—the only way that a person can receive compensation is if he has a Residential A block which is rezoned Rural and because of that rezoning the property loses value. There is no provision in State policies to do that. Opposition members are worried about a person who is sitting on a block zoned Rural and paying

Rural rates in the expectation that down the track it will be rezoned Residential A and he will make money out of it. When a planning policy is put into place stating that it is prime agricultural land and cannot be rezoned Residential A, Opposition members think that that person should receive money. I do not believe that he should receive money for that rezoning. He should receive compensation only if the value of his block is decreased by a rezoning. If a case is presented under this legislation, the Government will look at it, but there is no provision in the legislation for that to happen. The Government is saying that councils should not allow rural land near an airport to be zoned Residential A. Because of noise problems, the residents will want the airport to be closed. Earlier, an honourable member mentioned feedlots. Everybody knows the problem with them. Their establishment has not been by Government decision; it has been bad local decisions that has allowed the feedlot to be established in the first place or the residential area to be established close to the feedlot. Sometimes the feedlot is already established and a bad town-planning decision is made.

Molly Robson raised with me the matter of the fellow who has operated a chook farm in the Logan City Council area for 20 years. The council allowed a townhouse development right next door. The council said that there might be some smells when the wind is coming from the wrong direction, but it forgot about the rats, the cockroaches and the other problems that are associated with those places. It is impossible to keep those places meticulously clean. If people believe it is only a little bit of a smell, they ought to be near a large poultry property on a rainy day. The council decision was wrong. It is no good saying that the Government should have the power to intervene in those circumstances; it should not, and it has not. It is too late to have that power down the track. Through regional planning and by working with councils, we should develop policies on where such operations should be established. A strategic plan would not allow a chook farm to be established near residential development. If that occurred, the town-planner should be shot, and so should the people who approved it.

Mr Randell: You are not getting to the point that I made.

Mr BURNS: What is the point?

Mr Randell: My point is that you direct local authorities.

Mr BURNS: No, I am not directing them.

Mr Randell: If it relates to a matter of State significance.

Mr BURNS: Right.

Mr Randell: You direct them to take certain action. Who pays the compensation?

Mr BURNS: We are not directing them to take certain action. Earlier, the honourable member could not even read how I was doing the mailbox. We will have to arrange reading lessons for him. Once he has finished his reading lessons, we will try to explain the Bill to him. We are saying, "Here is a State planning policy on prime agricultural land. When you are drawing up your planning policies for an area, you will have to implement this policy. If you are drawing up a planning policy and you are zoning an area at that time, there is no compensation for anybody affected by that zoning." Under the previous legislation, the town-planning principles never allowed anybody to sue for compensation. That has never occurred in the last 20 years, so why is it going to change now? Is the reason the fact that the Labor Party is in Government?

Mr Booth: That changes a bit. There will be a lot more unemployment.

Mr BURNS: I do not know that there will be a lot more unemployed. We need to protect prime agricultural land and we need planning policies. Councils and developers want to know the Government's policy on coastal management. Developers would like to be able to walk into a one-stop shop at the council and say, "I want to develop this area of the coast." The council would say to the developers, "Here is the coastal management policy of the Government. Here is the council policy in relation to town planning. You need an environmental impact statement." If the application is for a shopping centre, the council might say, "You need an economic impact statement or a social impact statement." At that stage, the developer will know everything he or she

should have to do. A developer should not have to chase around 26 departments, as someone suggested. He should not have to go to the Environment Department and then have to go somewhere else. It will take years to work through policy documents, but eventually we should have in place a policy on feedlots, coastal management, aerodromes and prime agricultural land. At that time, there should be some surety in the system. A person should be able to obtain information up front. We should make those policies on prime agricultural land by consulting with RPAG and people such as Bill Laver and Noel Playford from Noosa and people from Brisbane. A paper should be put out for discussion. At the end of that discussion and consultation, we should bring it back in and work it through the process. If we do that, there ought to be enough public consultation to eliminate most of the bumps. If there are difficulties, the Government will have to make the hard decisions and table them in this place so that members will have an opportunity to argue about them. That process has never applied before in this place. The process has always gone the other way. People would discover that the Government had knocked off a project and they never knew why. This is a far more open and honest process than we have ever had.

The Government is not looking at a State planning authority. Since the day I arrived in this portfolio I have opposed a State planning authority, and the Government has supported me all the way. In New South Wales, the State Planning Authority has 400 staff. Under the Liberal/National Party Government, that authority directed the Leichhardt Council to rezone land in an area for urban development. When the council refused, the State Government took away completely the planning powers of the council.That is the Liberal/National Party way. It has just produced a book and it is going down our track. It is starting to look at a cooperative planning system. The New South Wales Liberal/National Party Government is talking of removing the whole standover system. Using SEPPS—that is its State environmental planning policies—it amends local authority planning schemes and plans the State from Sydney. That is the New South Wales system. We are planning the State with the councils in a cooperative arrangement by putting offices in Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton, and we have a western Queensland planner.

The Opposition was in Government for 32 years and never once did it send a planner to the west; never once did it start talking about the problems of people in western areas; never once did it station anyone in north Queensland to talk about planning in Cairns, Townsville or any of those places. That was too hard. It was easier to keep it in Brisbane. That Government was centralist. Tonight, honourable members opposite have talked about centralism. The centralisation was under the National Party. Honourable members opposite oppose regionalisation. Tonight, half of them did not talk on the Bill because they are against regionalisation. They do not want it to go out into the regions; they want it centralised back in town. It was the Opposition's policy which was supported, proposed and spread around the State for years. We are talking about greater cooperation in the planning process.

As far as I am concerned, the Government departments would need to declare a planning intention. We need to try to get them involved. Everybody talks about that. Everybody argues about the Education Department putting a school in an area well after the decision was made to develop the area, and locating it on a main road with traffic problems. We have seen dozens of examples of that over the last 32 years. Each and every honourable member opposite can think of a school site in his or her own local area that was planned badly.

If we get the strategic plans and we all get involved in the process at the start, then we will know that the town is going to spread to the north west and that the sewerage and water is going there. The State Government would then have to start looking at education facilities and the long-term question of hospitals that are going into the area. Over the years, if we had some planning in the beginning, we should never have had the problems that were faced in Kingston, in Eagleby and in the south-western area of Brisbane.

Mr Rowell: What about Gurulmundi?

Mr BURNS: The point about that is that the Opposition introduced the industry to this State for a long time and never worried about where the waste was to go—not once. Waste management is part of planning. I have had to direct the Pine Rivers Shire Council to take garbage from Redcliffe because there is no provision for disposal of it there. In north Queensland, the Mulgrave Shire Council and the Cairns City Council have spent three years arguing about a dump for the garbage from Cairns. I think that the Mareeba Shire Council is now getting involved. No-one is worried about those things. Rubbish—that is what it is; it is rubbish.

Tonight, we are talking about strengthening strategic plans and trying to talk about long-term planning. I accept and thank the honourable member for Currumbin for his support for strategic planning. Anyone who has been on a council will know that that is the way to go. I cannot believe the argument that was being put forward by Mr Perrett. He was saying that there has to be local decisions, and then he argued that the local decisions were wrong. I think that we must help the councils in those areas, and we have to try to provide some assistance to them. We will do that by putting offices out in those areas; we will do that by regionalisation; and we will do that by having people in those areas who understand and can advise the Government by living and working in those areas. It cannot be done any other way. It cannot be effective any other way.

Tonight, we have produced a scheme that allows me to get rid of a lot of the routine things that come into my office and clog up the system and make it a mailbox. The mail is collected; the information is put on the computer; it is sent down to the director-general, who gets the office to check it out; it is put on their computer; they send it back; my people process it again and we send it to the Governor in Council. It is a complete and utter waste of public money. I am taking one set of mailboxes out of there. One set of deliveries——

An Opposition member: How many letters?

Mr BURNS: About 1 800 a year. It would be about 300 a month—probably more. I could give the honourable member the figures, if he would like them. There were 1 316 rezonings in the last 11 months; 47 ministerial road closures for the Transport Department; 19 ministerial rezonings; 16 DCPs; 6 strategic plans; 99 legal provisions; 31 by-laws; and 194 extensions of time.

Mr Coomber: You know that's only nine letters a day for five staff.

Mr BURNS: Some of the material comes in a foot thick. The Gold Coast town plan—what size will it come in? It will not come in a small A4 letter, will it? Someone in my department will go through and put on the computer all the material that we have received. Then it will go to another department which will put on the computer the material received. It is a waste of time and public money. It is just impossible to believe. What do we add to the process? People do not have to write to the Mayor of the Gold Coast. They write to the town clerk. Why can they not write to my director-general? I am not giving him any extra work. The town clerk does not run the council because he receives the letter. What happens when the town clerk receives the letter? It goes to the council to be dealt with. When the director-general receives the letter, it is the same thing. I am sure that when Maurie Tucker of the Department of Local Government receives all those letters he does not handle them personally and make all the decisions. If he does, I will get rid of 99 per cent of the staff. It is not true that it works that way.

It seems to me that a lot of the hot air that we heard about this process tonight is just not true. An honourable member asked a question on notification in relation to the *Government Gazette*. I am not going to change anything that is there. We do intend to put as much information in the *Government Gazette* as we possibly can. We do not really want to produce the *Government Gazette* page after page, but we will produce the documents and we will send them to every local authority in Queensland. I could extend it to every member of Parliament, if it was necessary. I have been sending every member of Parliament a copy of the rezonings in their area and they are all starting to whinge because they are getting too much information about matters that they do not think are of any value. Some people may be interested in it, but there are a number of

people who do not want the information. Again, it is just a waste of public money. I am prepared to extend it——

Mr Coomber: In growth areas like the coast, the public are interested as well. They come into my office and they want to see that gazette because they are interested in what's going on.

Mr BURNS: We are not going to publish a lot in the *Government Gazette* in the future. It is cheaper not to do it in the *Government Gazette*. We will publish the documentation, and if the honourable member wants to register his name with the department, we will send it to him. That is the best way out of that. If anyone else wants to register, we will send it to them, too. It would be better than just sending it out and clogging up the mailboxes of people who do not want it but, by the same token, it is available if people need it. There are no problems with that.

I do not think there is a great deal more that I should do except thank members of my committee. Over a period, the committee has worked very, very hard. It has determined that there will not be a State planning authority and that Queensland will not go down the New South Wales track. We have decided that councils should be given as much autonomy as possible and that they should be assisted throughout the process. We have also decided that there should be no hidden agenda and that everything should be up front. As far as planning in Queensland is concerned, we are facing an interesting period characterised by some areas of tremendous growth and other areas which, for the first time, are beginning to illustrate the need for proper planning. All the evidence of poor planning in the past is available for people to see. Because hindsight is the best view of all, there is no need to be critical of people who were responsible for planning in the past. When I look back, though, I can see so many mistakes that have been made over the years that I say to myself it must be possible to do things in a better way.

I thank the secretary of my committee and member for Pine Rivers, Margaret Woodgate, for her work. I also thank the other members of my committee, namely, the member for Brisbane Central, Mr Beattie, the member for Rockhampton North, Mr Schwarten, the member for Albert, Mr Szczerbanik, the member for Barron River, Dr Clark, and the member for Townsville, Mr Davies. I also thank the member for Mirani, Mr Randell, the member for Currumbin, Mr Coomber, the member for Warwick, Mr Booth, the member for Barambah, Mr Perrett, the member for Cunningham, Mr Elliott, and the member for Merthyr, Mr Santoro, for their submissions. As far as I can tell, I have answered most of the queries they raised.

The member for Warwick complained that people have not been able to talk to the Minister, but I have tried to make myself accessible. I believe that the only way to make good planning decisions is to talk to people. For example, I will not be in Parliament on Thursday because I will be in Tara and will go on from there to the local government conference at Tannum Sands. I try very hard to consult with people because I do not think the planning process works in any other way. When people speak about local decision making, I have to agree that in most cases local councils can make the right decisions. Nevertheless, they need assistance.

Earlier, Mr Szczerbanik said that the local council in his electorate had only one town-planner. When that young man tries to make a speech, people try to interject, but he has done a lot of work in the Albert electorate. It is the fastest-growing area in Australia and it has major problems. It contains a sugar-growing area in one part, canal development areas in another part and a hinterland area where people are spreading out in the search for cheaper land. In addition, there is a tract of rural residential land and probably more golf courses in one shire than in any other shire in Australia or in the southern hemisphere. When all that diversity is put together, it is obvious that his electorate has massive problems that are increasing all the time and most of them centre on competing demands. Earlier in the debate, someone referred to the koala corridor. When people move into these areas, they find that koalas are in the trees nearby. Their next move is to try to stop someone else from developing the block next door. I do not disagree with that, but the point is that someone should have found out about the koalas

before the first block was developed. That all relates to planning, and it highlights the need to find out everything possible about an area before the developmental stage is reached. If any other matters remain unanswered, perhaps further questions can be asked at the Committee stage. In conclusion, I thank each and every member for the contributions that have been made to the debate.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 47		NOES, 32	
Ardill	Mackenroth	Beanland	Stephan
Barber	McElligott	Booth	Stoneman
Beattie	Milliner	Borbidge	Turner
Bird	Nunn	Connor	Veivers
Braddy	Palaszczuk	Coomber	Watson
Bredhauer	Pearce	Dunworth	
Briskey	Power	Elliott	
Burns	Robson	FitzGerald	
Campbell	Schwarten	Gilmore	
Casey	Smith	Goss J. N.	
Comben	Smyth	Gunn	
Davies	Spence	Harper	
De Lacy	Sullivan J. H.	Hobbs	
Dollin	Sullivan T. B.	Horan	
Eaton	Szczerbanik	Johnson	
Edmond	Vaughan	Lester	
Elder	Warburton	Lingard	
Fenlon	Warner	Littleproud	
Foley	Welford	McCauley	
Gibbs	Woodgate	Perrett	
Goss W. K.		Randell	
Hamill		Rowell	
Hayward	*Tellers:*	Santoro	*Tellers:*
Hollis	Prest	Slack	Neal
Livingstone	Pitt	Springborg	Quinn

Resolved in the affirmative.

Committee

Hon. T. J. Burns (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee will come to order. Members on their feet will either leave the Chamber quickly or resume their seats. I call the member for Mirani.

Clause 4—

Mr RANDELL (10.21 p.m.): Clause 4 relates to planning policies, in particular State planning policies. It states—

> "1A.1.(1) The Governor in Council may, by order in council, make planning policies in relation to town planning and related environmental matters that are, in the Governor in Council's opinion, of State significance.
>
> (2) A State planning policy applies to the whole of the State except so far as it otherwise provides."

That effectively gives the Governor in Council—and the director-general, under what the Government has done tonight—the capacity to dictate State planning policies to the State's local authorities. The clause gives the State Government overriding power to dictate the most basic policies to the third tier of government. If the Minister wants to have State planning policies, why does he not do it himself? He should do it himself rather than through a local authority. The Minister has not yet adequately explained compensation. If a local authority has to carry out works, the Minister directs it to do something on a State planning matter, and a writ could be issued for compensation.

People could require compensation for myriad things. Who will provide the compensation? Will it be the State Government or the ratepayers of that authority?

Mr Burns: There isn't any compensation.

Mr RANDELL: But there could be compensation.

Mr Burns: There can't be compensation.

Mr RANDELL: There could be. If a developer does not get what he wants, he could sue that council.

Mr Burns: He can't.

Mr RANDELL: Why not?

Mr Burns: He doesn't today.

Mr RANDELL: Of course he can.

Mr Burns: Show me the last case.

Mr RANDELL: I cannot show the Minister any last case. I am talking about the clause here. The Minister will have his chance in a minute. He can get up and tell me what he wants to tell me then. He should not keep interrupting me——

Honourable members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee will come to order. The member for Mirani will continue.

Mr RANDELL: I am asking the Minister what happens if the State directs a local authority to do something and the local authority does not do it to the satisfaction of a developer, who takes action in the courts against the local authority. The Minister must have heard of that before. He must have heard of a local authority having to defend itself against a developer.

Mr Burns: When?

Mr RANDELL: Of course the Minister must have heard of it. Who will get the compensation? I will never support the notion that a State Government should be able to impose conditions on local authorities regardless of local conditions, but that is what the Bill does. The Government is overriding local authorities. The Minister can do what he likes. In his reply, he totally confused the situation. The Minister went round and round in circles and I still cannot understand him. Many other members on the Opposition side of the Chamber cannot understand the Minister. The matter of compensation is very serious. In State planning matters, the Minister should be prepared to foot the bill.

Mr COOMBER: The member for Mirani is concerned about the fact that clause 4 deals with the State forming a State planning policy. As I understand it, each Government department will produce a policy document. As each local authority prepares a strategic plan, it will have to abide by those policies for each individual department. When a plan is produced and gazetted and those policies have been through the House, every development application that comes to a local authority must abide by not only the town plan but also the policies of those 26 departments. I am happy to acknowledge that the Minister said that I do support strategic planning, because I do. It is the only way to go so as to give some certainty for the future of cities or shires and to the developments which can take place in certain areas. I believe that the State policy initiatives will conflict with the approval process of the local authority.

I draw the Minister's attention to the transport corridor between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. This Government has said that it will upgrade the highway to six lanes. It has also said that it will construct an eastern corridor. That eastern corridor will run parallel with the highway. When the community started to respond and apply the heat, the proposal for the eastern corridor was quashed. As a result, the local authority concerned, the Albert Shire, will let that eastern corridor happen by natural growth. Those sorts of policies are very important because once the Transport Department has made a decision as to a transport corridor, that will be marked on a strategic plan. That is

what I understand will happen. The strategic plan will be open and available to the public. As a result of this legislation, there will need to be alongside it a copy of the State Government's policy objectives. I do not believe that that will occur and that it will be possible to use one as a consequence of the other.

I will cite another example, and this involves the Department of Environment and Heritage. Currently, there are—and have been for nearly four years—applications before the Maroochy Shire Council. The reason why they have not been approved or proceeded with is that the department is now in search of that famous ground parrot. The ground parrot has not been seen for 10 years; but the Department of Environment and Heritage has told the applicant that the parrot is heard at night. Consequently, the applications have not proceeded. Subsequent to that, an Aboriginal midden was found on the development site. Once again, the applications are being held up. This is quite disturbing. The Minister himself has said that he wants to see all the red tape removed. I suggest to him that Government departments will be putting in front of development applications more red tape than he has ever dreamed of. I think the policy guidelines that each of the departments will produce will stifle development applications and make it impossible for a local authority to conform with them.

I turn now to the Minister's own Department of Local Government. I believe that, in some ways, the Minister will have an ability to prezone lands. In a statement to the Building Owners and Managers Association, the Premier said that the number of zones in town plans will be reduced. A statement that is made just like that is disturbing to local government. What does the Premier mean? How is it going to be applied? What impact will it have? If the Department of Housing prepared a State Government policy on housing, I believe that the Minister has the ability to say to local authorities, "We want a certain number of low-cost houses in your area. We want to see the strategic plan developed in such a way that it reflects that objective." That is the sort of thing that can happen. A question is raised in relation to strategic plans themselves. Will they have a life? The City of Brisbane town plan has not been totally revised; it has just been upgraded in an ongoing way. I do not think that is quite good enough, either. Whole regions have to be looked at in a given time span. Usually, the Gold Coast and the Albert Shire have worked on a complete review of their town plans and strategic plans every seven years. In growing areas, that is probably too long a time span. How often will State Government planning policies or initiatives be reviewed, looked at, revised or changed? How will they really be able to reflect the policies of the Government? As I said in relation to the eastern corridor, once the pressure came from the objectors, the Government backed away from even requiring a corridor to be maintained to allow the road to be built. That is of quite some concern.

Do the State planning policies apply to Crown land? Will Crown land be exempt from a strategic plan? I will cite an example. It involves The Spit on the Gold Coast. The Department of Lands has been talking to an Aboriginal group which plans to put a cultural centre on Crown land. This land was zoned by the council as parkland. Without contact with the council, that land is now subject to negotiation between the Department of Lands and the Aboriginal group, which intends to construct a building on The Spit. The local authority has not been contacted. That is one instance whereby a policy of the State Government is totally unacceptable to the local authority.

Mr Burns: There will be a State policy on that. You're arguing my case.

Mr COOMBER: I do not think that I am arguing the Minister's case. I am saying that there will be a State policy which is totally opposite to the feelings of the locals and the local authority. I also see the Government having the ability to direct local authorities as to the height limits of buildings. There might be a Government that does not like to see a building over 10 storeys high. Certain policies might be in total conflict with the policies of local authorities. It may be that there will be a town plan, a strategic plan, which has a certain purpose that will be in total conflict with the objectives of the State Government. Honourable members should consider the issue of recycling. The Minister for the Environment is always on TV in amongst all the rubbish, claiming that everyone needs to recycle. The sort of policies that the Minister talks about might be totally

incompatible with the policies of local government in Queensland. They may not be practical and may not be achievable and, therefore, are just totally unworkable. Despite that fact, councils will be asked to try to conform with a policy which will cost them a mint and be totally unworkable. The issue of sewerage effluent quality has been raised tonight. The State Government is actually lagging behind what local authorities want to achieve. In many instances such as this, the local authorities are driving the Government—they are forcing the Government to make decisions and reconsider the position it has held for many years.

I do not believe that what the Minister is trying to achieve will be practical, even though, in many respects, it is to be applauded. In many ways, a number of development applications that one department may have—such as the Department of Environment currently has—will be held up because a bureaucrat in that department says, "Over my dead body." That sort of attitude now will be reflected through all the senior and middle management people in each department, and the result will be a policy which is totally unworkable for local authorities and the development industry in Queensland.

Mr ARDILL: The member for Currumbin talked about the lack of new town plans that have been introduced. He mentioned the fact that a completely new Brisbane town plan was introduced at the behest of the then Minister for Local Government, Mr Hinze, in 1975. That town plan was not accepted. A further totally new town plan was introduced in 1976. That town plan contained a statement of intent which was not part of the former plan. In the late eighties, a further town plan was proposed. It was allegedly a totally new town plan—despite what the member for Currumbin says—but, in fact, the statement of intent was not changed in accordance with the changes in ordinances. In many respects, the plan contradicted itself.

I believe the member for Currumbin implied that the Government has no right to have planning policies which are enforceable on town plans. Of course, that is patently ridiculous, because the Government is responsible for providing services such as transport, and it certainly is involved in providing water resources for urban areas. The Government must have an interest in town planning. Unless I misinterpret what the honourable member for Currumbin said, he implied that the Government does not have a right to have enforceable planning policies. That is patently ridiculous. Any authority that is providing services which will be an integral part of planning should have the right to propose publicly policies which are enforceable. I believe the honourable member is right off the beam.

Mr SZCZERBANIK: I was not going to make a contribution, but I take exception to the member for Currumbin's comment on the eastern corridor. No other member of this Assembly has copped more in respect of development applications than me. I find it offensive that the electorate of Albert has no forward planning policy. The policies of the council and the previous State Government were never taken into account in my electorate. This State Government is endeavouring to undertake some forward planning. The problem is that the Government is limited in its options in the future, and it had to take some steps because of the growth that is occurring in my electorate. I would be negligent if I did not say that it was a good thing that this Government looked at providing a corridor for the future. A corridor has been laid down for the electorate of Albert, and no other electorate has such a corridor. In respect of planning policy—the Government is also looking at providing a rail corridor down to the coast, and is considering further planning for the future. I congratulate the Minister on formulating some planning policies that will apply to Queensland in the future. There must be some policies implemented that will take this State into the future. I refuse to leave my children in a situation in which we might have to bulldoze their houses. That is a problem that past Governments have not looked at.

In relation to the South East Freeway—the previous Government never laid down any planning policies for the future. Thousands of houses were bulldozed to make way for the South East Freeway. Twenty years ago, people were saying that the South East Freeway was not needed. I must say that the freeway was needed. If we did not have

the South East Freeway, how would people travel from the Gold Coast to Brisbane? That is my point of view and the point of view of the Government. The Government must plan for the future. I know that some people will be affected by the plans, but the Government would be negligent if it did not plan for the future. The options are limited, but this corridor must be built. In 20 years' time, people will applaud this Government for building the corridor and doing so now for the benefit of all of Queensland, not only the south-east corner. If Opposition members say that this Government is not planning for the future, they are deluding themselves. They are lying to the community and not providing benefits for the community.

Mr BURNS: The best way to address the confusion about this issue is to talk about how one would take the attitude and policies of the Government into consideration if it was not done in this way. The way it is done in every other State in Australia is by a State planning authority. That authority completely overrides the councils. I have already given the example of the Leichhardt Council. When the Leichhardt Council would not implement the policies that the Government wanted, the Government took away the council's planning rights. That is the New South Wales Liberal/National Party Government. It is not a matter of politics; it is a matter of record.

The Government has two options: it can set up a State planning authority or, as I have determined, it can go down the track of working with local authorities. Mr Randell says to me, "Why do you work with local authorities?" That is what the Opposition has asked. That is exactly what Opposition members were saying throughout the debate—that local authorities have the local knowledge, that they are the ones that the Government should work through, and that local plans are the way to go. The Government could adopt the previous Government's Sanctuary Cove policy. It could introduce special legislation and override the councils. As has been done in the past, it could introduce special legislation to remove the rights of councils. I spoke to those Bills and I voted on them. On the other hand, the Government can discuss planning and cooperative arrangements. On my recommendation, the Government has determined that it ought to work out a process whereby both the councils and the Government work together. To do that, it must be accepted that councils have the right to plan. Town plans, development control plans and strategic plans are the right and the responsibility of councils. How does the Government then put some of its decisions into that process? The only way that I know is to prepare a policy document that will not be a secret, that will not have 20 departments all running their own race; it will be a Government policy.

I have referred to prime agricultural land. The Opposition says, "Why is it of State significance?" If the Government allows developers to use all the good agricultural land, how will Queensland feed its people? What will happen to rural industries if the Government allows large areas of agricultural land to be decimated by dividing it up into rural residential blocks, or by allowing it to be taken over by industries, such as noxious industries? If the Government states that prime agricultural land is of State significance, it says, "How are we going to do something about it?" My view is that the Government consults with the agricultural industry, which is a process that is starting now with RPAG. A document must be prepared and circulated for discussion. At that stage, the paper should be circulated as widely as possible for discussion, and every Government department should be asked to have an input. All the Government departments have a say, the community has a say, the rural industry has a say, and local authorities individually and collectively have a say. By that stage, the document is taken to Cabinet, it is tabled in Parliament and I say, "That is of State significance because it is prime agricultural land." It will not apply at Bollon, because I do not believe that that is the type of area that will have pressures placed on it. It will not apply in the stony and rotten parts of the State where there is no good agricultural land, but it will apply to the Atherton Tableland, it will apply to the sugar-growing areas, it will apply to the good wheat-growing areas, and it will give the councils an idea of the policies of the Government of the day.

Mr Ardill interjected.

Mr BURNS: It will give the developers an idea of the policies. There is some certainty about putting it that way. The only other certainty is for the State to use its heavy hand and say that it is going the other way. The one thing that people say is that for a long period, no-one has known what the Government's policies were. They are not talking about the Labor Government, they are talking about the previous Government. During my first year when I attended Local Government Association conferences, everybody said the same thing—"We ought to know what the Government stands for and what it is going to do." The Government is formulating a policy that does not constrain councils. For example, if the Government has a policy concerning prime agricultural land, and if a person has a block of land that is zoned Residential B, Rural Residential, or Residential A, that prime agricultural land policy will not override that zoning. There will not be any compensation, because the Government will not rezone that property. If a person owns Residential A land, it will stay Residential A land. This policy cannot turn back the clock. The Government is saying that no new blocks of land that are zoned as rural or are designated as prime agricultural land can be turned into Residential A blocks. It cannot be done unless, of course, the council in question determines on the strategic plan that it will go in that direction. If the council prepares a plan which sets out urban areas for future growth, then the council can override the Government's policy. The Government is not telling local councils that they cannot plan——

Mr Littleproud: With the approval of the Governor in Council.

Mr BURNS: That is right. For example, if the Albert Shire decides that it will prepare a strategic plan with a view to turning its cane-growing land into Residential A blocks, it will go through all the fights, all the public processes, and all the objection processes. That strategic plan then comes to my department. Let us say that my department finally approves it. I hope that when people read the *Hansard* record of this debate, they do not think that I am going to turn all that cane land into a Residential A zone. But if this Government were to approve it as Residential A, Future Residential, Future urban, or whatever, that would be the end of the argument about prime agricultural land because it would be zoned that way. If this new policy comes in, my department would have a look at it in the light of State Government policy and say, "We are going to override that. We are not allowing you to turn that into Residential A."

Because Mr Randell was a former Minister for Local Government, he would be aware of what happens with town-planners, development control planners or strategic planners. The current town-planner on the Gold Coast is a classic example. If I read the newspapers correctly, thousands of objections have been lodged against a particular proposal. If that is finally approved by the council, many people will write to my department and say, "I do not agree with what the council has done." No matter what a council does, people will complain. At that stage, my department becomes involved. We apply a State attitude to the matter. We consider the objections and how the council has handled the matter. We then make a determination. Unfortunately, not every determination makes everybody happy. But that is the role of this Government. That is the way that the system operated under previous Governments, and that is how it will operate under future Governments. There is no way to change that system. That is the only way that it can operate.

We should tell everybody up front what the Government's policy is. We should let the developers and the councils know. In that way, before a council zones land for residential purposes, it knows that the State Government believes that prime agricultural land has State significance and that the Government might say, "Because of our State policy, we are not prepared to approve that town plan to rezone that at this stage." If we knock it back, it is the same old process: table it, gazette it, and away it goes. There is no secrecy about that. I am not trying to pull any tricks.

As to compensation for injurious affection—if a bloke has a block of residential land, there is no policy for prime agricultural land that can override that and revert that zoning to rural. This is not about removing the rights of zonings, it is about future zonings. A person does not have a God-given right to compensation if he owns a block

of rural land and he expects that, in the future, it might be developed for an international tourist resort and hotel worth millions of dollars. No right is built into the law by which he can demand that his land be rezoned in that way. If there was, we would be in the courts every day of the week. Anyone who is involved in local government knows—and I am sure that Mr Coomber knows—that every day of the week councils knock back applications such as that. Applications are made, signs are erected, but councils refuse to approve them. People have no right to sue in relation to that, nor do they have any right to compensation. It relates to a town-planning decision. It is a matter of State law that will be around for years to come.

I believe that Mr Coomber is tilting at windmills. I believe that he is concerned about problems that do not exist. I believe that a State planning authority would be a disaster. This legislation represents the only way in which the State can tell people up front what its attitude is and what it wants to do, and can let councils and developers know about that before they make applications.

Mr RANDELL: Under this clause the Governor in Council may, by Order in Council, make planning policies in relation to town planning and related environmental matters that are, in the Governor in Council's opinion, of State significance. If the matter comes back to the Minister, he is the State planning authority. This Minister does have a State planning authority.

Mr Burns: No, I don't.

Mr RANDELL: Yes, he does. The Minister has the authority. He will be taking those matters to the State Government. He has just admitted that State planning policy will override local government policy.

Mr Burns: But you've always done that.

Mr RANDELL: The Minister is introducing this new legislation as a matter of State significance. I believe that he is removing practical local knowledge from local authorities. The Minister can override a local council.

Question—That clause 4, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 47		NOES, 33	
Ardill	Mackenroth	Beanland	Springborg
Beattie	McElligott	Booth	Stephan
Bird	McGrady	Borbidge	Stoneman
Braddy	Milliner	Connor	Turner
Bredhauer	Nunn	Coomber	Veivers
Briskey	Pearce	Cooper	Watson
Burns	Power	Dunworth	
Campbell	Robson	Elliott	
Casey	Schwarten	FitzGerald	
Clark	Smith	Gilmore	
Comben	Smyth	Goss J. N.	
Davies	Spence	Gunn	
De Lacy	Sullivan J. H.	Harper	
Dollin	Sullivan T. B.	Hobbs	
Eaton	Szczerbanik	Horan	
Edmond	Vaughan	Johnson	
Elder	Warburton	Lester	
Fenlon	Warner	Lingard	
Foley	Welford	Littleproud	
Gibbs	Woodgate	McCauley	
Goss W. K.		Perrett	
Hamill		Randell	
Hayward	*Tellers:*	Rowell	*Tellers:*
Hollis	Prest	Santoro	Neal
Livingstone	Pitt	Slack	Quinn

Resolved in the affirmative.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Honourable members, all future divisions will be of two minutes' duration.

Clause 5—

Mr COOMBER (10.57 p.m.): I would like to clear up some problems that I have with this clause. I do not have any worries with clause 5 (1A), which states—

> "In preparing the planning study, the local authority concerned must have regard to relevant State planning policies."

That issue is now decided and I understand it. The town plan currently being produced on the Gold Coast certainly has involved a planning study in which most homes, businesses and land uses have been identified. However, I am concerned with clause 5 (1B), which states—

> "The planning study must include a statement about the extent to which the local authority had regard to State planning policies."

I do not understand exactly what the Minister means by "had regard" and to what extent that regard has been considered. The clause is loose and vague and is open to degrees of "extent". Does the Minister mean that the local authority has to consider each and every planning policy? Does it have to consider every word in the planning policy and how it impacts on the local authority, or does the local authority just have to pay scant regard to those policies in determining its strategic plan? That clause is very loose and should be tightened up so that the local authorities know exactly what it means and can conform with the legislation.

Mr BURNS: The way I read the legislation, the local authority must take the State planning policy into consideration and must show where it has taken it into consideration. I do not believe that a lot of State planning policies will be produced in a hurry; however, there will be some. The first planning policy I see coming from the RPAG process relates to prime agricultural land and the second one relates to rural residential land, which both reflect upon each other. At this stage, the only other one that is in process relates to aerodromes, which is causing problems with many local authorities which have found that they own aerodromes that have been handed back to

them by the Federal Government. People who have been allowed to live near those aerodromes by council zoning are causing trouble. A planning study informs people why the plan has been established and what is expected to happen. If the council expects the population to grow and development to take place in certain directions, the plan should contain reasons for that planning. The planning study sets out in writing what the plan is about.

A planning study into prime agricultural land should acknowledge that the council has taken into consideration the State planning policy and, having done that, it is still determined to produce a plan because it believes that the need for growth outweighs the need to retain the land in a particular zone. The council should say that it has had regard to certain aspects and that it has decided on the way to go. I have just been handed a note which states that the local authority determines whether or not the policy is applicable and the reasons why it is not applicable. It allows the Minister to see the local perspective. The planning study might state that the council has looked at the prime agricultural land policy and it believes that it cannot apply in a particular case. It sets out the council's consideration of the Government's policy and gives the Minister a reason why he should accept a town plan or a decision to override a State planning policy.

I do not believe that State planning policies will remain in concrete and that councils cannot override them or present a good case as to why that should not be done. Councils will need to spell out in their studies why they have had regard to it and have not just gone ahead willy-nilly and said, "Go jump in the lake, I'm going to do it this way." If that is woolly and loose, I will ask my departmental staff to have a look at it to see if we can tighten it up. That is what I expect to receive in the study in regard to the policy.

Clause 5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 12, as read, agreed to.

Clause 13—

Mr COOMBER (11.02 p.m.): I have taken clause 13 as the example, but my comments apply equally to clauses 10, 11 and 12. The clause mentions sufficient planning grounds to justify approving an application despite the conflict between the strategic plan and State planning policies. Clause 13 also contains a reference to a town planning consent. We are not talking about a rezoning; we are talking about a town planning consent. Where one has an existing zone under those zones, by consent, an applicant is able to go ahead with a certain development. Mr Randell, the member for Mirani, has been asking the Minister about compensation. I would suggest to the Minister that in the case of an existing plan, where by consent an applicant has rights, those rights may well be removed or overridden by State planning policies.

I would also suggest to the Minister that under these clauses the State Government may, in fact, be able to direct development to zones within the State where, for example, certain industries may be allowed to be located. I am somewhat concerned about that. I suggest that if a strategic plan was undertaken for Beaudesert, and an application was before the local council and now the State Government and the Environment Department for a gelatine factory in that area, the Minister may well find that the Government would be refusing that sort of industry at Beaudesert. That is a problem because the Government has the powers now, through these policies, to direct where industry can go and where certain types of development can be located. That would cause local authorities some concern in regard to their planning powers.

I require some clarification as to the consent mechanism in council where, under certain tables within zones, a consent can be obtained for a project which is not as of right for that area, but there are some rights being attached under the town plan for those uses. With the Government's State planning policies it may well be removing those rights and that landowner may well be due for some form of compensation.

Mr BURNS: I cannot understand why we talk about compensation for consent, because consent applications get knocked back every day of the week now and people do not get compensation.

Mr Coomber: Council approves.

Mr BURNS: Does the honourable member mean if I knock it back? At that stage I still have that right. Take Noosa north shore, for example. The Government has the right, and retains the right under the current legislation, to override a council decision on these matters. It is a matter for the person concerned to take it to court. Not too many of them do. Someone would have to pursue a case for compensation in the normal way. That is what happens if a consent application is knocked back. Councils do it every day; Governments do, too. Unfortunately, in the process, I receive a whole lot of recommendations from my department. The recommendation does not always support what the council has done. That is one of the reasons why I would like to see some policies up front—so that the council would know what is Government policy before it gets to me. Clause 13 states—

> "The local authority must refuse to approve the application if—
>
> the application conflicts with any relevant strategic plan or development control plan; and
>
> there are not sufficient planning grounds to justify approving the application despite the conflict."

My view is that once a council makes a decision on a strategic plan, it must have good planning reasons as to why it wants to change its plan. Everybody in the community goes through the process of debate, consultation, the objection period—the whole of the development of the plan. Then a council may decide willy-nilly by eight votes to two at the planning meeting that it is going to override that plan. I believe that it has to have some good reasons for overriding the strategic plan, otherwise it is just a waste of time going through that process. If councils are just going to decide on an application put before them that they will depart from the strategic plan, then it is all a waste of time. A person will not obtain compensation for a planning application that is not approved by either a local authority or the Minister. Compensation is paid only when a provision in the planning scheme is changed which injuriously affects existing development rights. If the existing development rights are not taken away, there is no reason for an entitlement to compensation.

Mr COOMBER: To illustrate the final point I would like to make, I cite the example of the Davis Gelatine plant.

Mr Burns: I hope I don't have to make a decision on that.

Mr COOMBER: I hope the Minister does not, too. I hope that the company can satisfy the environmental concerns. However, if the council has a strategic plan and that type of industry was proposed for a certain area, and if consent was both needed and given by council but it was against the State planning policy and the Government refused the application, as I read this legislation the Minister, the Government, the council and the applicant have to abide by the strategic plan. Moreover, the Planning and Environment Court has to uphold the provisions of the strategic plan. In such a case, is the Minister not at odds with his State planning policies in relation to the council, the Planning and Environment Court and the applicant?

Mr BURNS: From time to time, the Government will find itself in a position where it will be at odds with the Planning and Environment Court and with councils, as it has been in the past on a number of occasions. I recall Harbour Town and the Noosa north shore development proposal and other proposals where there was no agreement between the councils and the Government. When that stage was reached, someone had to make a decision. However, my view is that when we work the strategic planning process through—although in the case of Davis Gelatine it is a bit late—we will work with State Government policies. If the area comprises prime agricultural land, we will have laid down conditions and we should not have to face these problems down the track. In the early stages, problems will have to be faced because the situation is similar

to a place that has never had a town plan before. When the town plan is introduced, people are upset and claim in some way that they have some type of injury unless they are given a perfect dream run in relation to their block of land. I think that tonight we are looking for the most difficult case and, as I said, I hope the Davis Gelatine case does not come up. My view is that the Government will have to stand by its policy, although there will be times when a council is able to convince me that for various reasons it is not wise to stick to the prime agricultural land policy, which is the only one that has been developed at this stage. That has been stated in the clause on the planning study and the Government will have due regard to it. If a council can put a good case forward, I am sure that officers of my department will come to me and say that the Government should stand by the council. However, if the council does not present a good case and my departmental officers say that the proposal is against the State planning policy and that there are no good planning reasons for the decision made by the council, then I will accept the department's advice.

Clause 13, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Schedule—

Mr BURNS (11.12 p.m.): I move the following amendments—

"At page 14, omit lines 3 to 11 and insert—

'1. Section 1.4 (1) (definitions "access", "economic impact assessment" and "major shopping development")—

omit.

'2. Section 1.4 (1)—

insert—

' "access" means the practical means of entry for persons and vehicles onto an allotment from a constructed road which abuts the allotment or, if permitted by a local authority under section 5.12, access by means of an easement, but does not include an access restriction strip;

"local planning policy" means a planning policy made under section 1A.4;

"State planning policy" means a planning policy made under section 1A.1;'.' ";

"At page 19, line 18, after clause 30, insert—

'30A. Section 2.18 (2) (e)—

omit, insert—

'(e) in respect of 3 or more allotments, by—

(i) zoning or rezoning land other than for the purposes of a development control plan; or

(ii) amending a regulatory map; or

(iii) amending a development control plan map; or

(f) in respect of any number of allotments, by zoning or rezoning land for the purposes of a development control plan.'.

'30B. Section 2.18 (3) (c)—

omit, insert—

'(c) in respect of 1 or 2 allotments, by—

(i) zoning or rezoning land other than for the purposes of a development control plan; or

(ii) amending a regulatory map;

having first considered the matters specified in section 2.19 (2);'.' ";

"At page 27, line 7, after clause 65, insert—

'65A. Section 4.8 (3) (h)—

omit 'Minister', insert 'chief executive'.' ";

"At page 29, line 8, after clause 73, insert—

'73A. Section 4.10 (3) (e)—

omit 'Minister', insert 'chief executive'.'."

The first amendment refers to access restrictions strips. When councils receive an application for development of a block of land, they can take a bond from the developer for the up-front costs for headwork charges and matters of that nature. Bonds are very expensive for developers and add to the costs of development of the land, and it is the type of process that the Government would like to avoid. I have discussed with the spokesmen from the opposition parties, Mr Coomber and Mr Randell, the fact that many councils take a very thin strip of land and place an access restriction on it. In other words, they will allow the whole planning document to go ahead, but there is a restriction on access, which means that not all the land can be sold. The councils will not remove the restriction on access until such time as all the headwork charges, etc., are paid for. That is a cheap way of making the developer pay his headworks charges before he sells the blocks. The Titles Office is saying that because the land has no access to it, the title cannot be registered. If the title is not registered, it is a chicken and egg situation for the developer. We looked at an administrative solution, but the Master of Titles said that that could not be done. Then we decided to amend the definition of "access" to exclude access restriction strips. We have decided to define "access" as carrying a specific meaning which does not include access restriction strips. This is a simple way of overcoming the problem and it will free up a whole lot of land. It will make matters easier and it should make the cost of developing cheaper for everyone in the long term.

The next amendment relates to the current requirement of placing advertising signs on each block of land affected by a development control plan. The current regulations provide that if a council is creating a new DCP, when a local authority wishes to zone or rezone more than one allotment, a sign must be placed on each allotment. If there are 250 allotments, that requirement is simply crazy. The Government is saying that one prominently placed sign is acceptable.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr BURNS: Yes, not 250 separate signs. This amendment should save a bit of money and a lot of embarrassment. The final two amendments relate to the term "Minister" being included instead of the term "chief executive" that members of the Opposition complained about. Two necessary changes were overlooked.

Amendments agreed to.

Mr COOMBER: I would like some clarification on three clauses. Clause 25 provides that an Order in Council can be published or notified in the *Government Gazette*. I would like the Minister's staff to note that I would like to be on that list to receive material as we used to receive it through the *Queensland Government Gazette*. Clause 52 mentions the length of time within which an application must be dealt with by a council. I suggest to the Minister that the clause says "40 days". It does not say "40 working days" or "40 calendar days". I ask for the Minister's guidance as to what is meant by that. If it is 40 working days, an application will take nearly eight weeks to clear a local authority.

The last clause that I would like to discuss is clause 130, which is an issue dear to my heart because it requires, with rezonings or subdivisions, a site investigation report, in other words, a soil survey. As the Minister would realise, the issue is dear to my heart. The problems that are being felt in Palm Beach could have been avoided if that sort of study had been carried out, submitted with the application and followed through by the

local authority. I do not need to say much more about the problems of subsidence. However, I do not understand why Governments and councils do not make that sort of investigation report mandatory on the applicant. It does not cost a lot of money. A report for a building block costs less than $200. In this day and age, people who buy blocks of land from subdividers after subdivision need to be able to rest assured that the product they buy is a quality product that will not cause problems further down the track when they build their homes. I suggest to the Minister that, in future revisions of the Act, he looks at making that sort of site investigation mandatory. It is an up-front cost that can be built into the cost of the block of land that is put onto the market. For the benefit of all, there is a major gain to the public of Queensland.

Mr BURNS: The first question was about the 40 days. It is 40 calendar days. Many councils meet once a month, so we had to get over the 30-day period. In relation to clause 130—I agree with the honourable member. It is a major problem. We are still trying to solve the problem of Palm Beach. When we lend money on houses, our department is making a number of demands for soil tests. In the long term, subsidence and bad slabs can create a tremendous amount of problems. I will take on board the suggestion of the honourable member and we will consider it when we next amend the Act.

Mr RANDELL: The Minister would be disappointed if I did not speak about my pet hate in the Bill.

Mr Burns: Which one is this?

Mr RANDELL: The whole Schedule. The clauses in the Schedule allow the Minister to duck his responsibilities. Clause 7 provides that a copy of a resolution to prepare a planning scheme is to be forwarded to the chief executive instead of to the Minister. Clause 27 provides that a consolidated planning scheme must be submitted to the chief executive instead of to the Minister. Clause 28 even omits the requirement that the chief executive must prepare a report for the Minister. In about 12 or 15 places at least—and it could be more—matters go to the chief executive instead of to the Minister.

At the outset, I emphasise that I have nothing against the Minister's chief executive. He could be the best man in the world. I think that the Minister is ducking his responsibilities. Could we see a situation in this House in which every Minister follows the suit of this Minister? The only reason that the Minister has provided for matters to go to the chief executive is the expense. Will the Minister for Health, the Minister for Primary Industries and the Minister for Transport all require matters to go to the chief executive because of the expense? I think that it is a cop-out. If the Minister has to deal with a difficult or contentious matter, he can just shunt it off to the chief executive.

Mr Burns can talk under wet concrete and he gives a good answer most of the time. However, I can imagine that a Minister following him could say, in response to a question asked in Parliament, "Hang on, I have to ask my chief executive because he is handling that." The buck stops with the Minister. I believe that the Minister is ducking his responsibilities. His job is to provide the checks and balances to make good government in this State and to make good local government in this State. I do not believe that the Bill and the clauses in the Schedule will do that. I take exception to the provision and I will oppose it at the appropriate time.

Mr BURNS: The most important thing to remember is that none of the rights or responsibilities of the Minister or of the Governor in Council have been removed by the provision. It is the mailbox provision. Instead of lodging the complaint with the Minister, people will now lodge it with the chief executive. Under the Bill, my rights and responsibilities as the Minister to make recommendations to the Governor in Council and the rights and responsibilities of the Governor in Council have not changed one iota. It is simply the mailbox provision, as I call it. It is stupid for 1 800 letters to pour in to be handled by one office, then to be handed on to another office to be processed and put on record and to have girls running duplicated filing systems because, somewhere along the line, it will make the Minister responsible. It makes me no more responsible to receive the letter, because I do not see it. I do not read it. It does not get

to me. It goes straight to the department, which prepares a response. Every week, the officers of my department come and sit with me, and we spend hours going through correspondence. They say, “Here is a letter about the Tinaroo Falls Dam. Here is a letter about the Albert DCP. Here is our recommendation on that.” We go through the process. If I do not accept the recommendations, I send them back. If I do accept them, the officers prepare an ECM to go to the Governor in Council. That is the process.

Mr RANDELL: Things must have changed since my time. If a letter came in that was contentious or that the Minister had to know about, the chief executive, or the director of local government at that time, would come along and talk to me about it. At present, when letters come in, the Minister does not even see them. He does not even know what is happening. They go to his chief executive. As the Minister said just a minute ago, he would not make any recommendation to the Governor in Council.

Mr Burns: I make it.

Mr RANDELL: Clause 36 omits the requirement for the Minister to cause an application to be considered by the chief executive, for the chief executive to prepare a report to the Minister, and for the Minister to consider that report and to make recommendations to the Governor in Council. That clause omits that requirement. So how can the Minister make a recommendation to the Governor in Council if that clause omits the requirement? According to what the Minister told us before, the only reason this is being done is to save money. It would involve nine letters a day for which the postage would cost approximately $3. The Minister is ducking his responsibility.

Mr BURNS: For three bucks a day, the honourable member wants to hold up the whole system, if it takes a day, a week or a month. He has this silly idea that the Minister must be responsible, read every letter and handle it himself. I am responsible. I accept the responsibility. The honourable member never hears me passing the buck on to my department in any way. I accept the decisions that the officers make and I stand by them. What happens is that the letter comes in and it now goes down to the department. Instead of it coming to me, why does it not go straight to the department? For some reason the honourable member thinks that there is some tricky problem in a letter going to the department instead of to me. It is a crazy situation if a letter cannot go directly to an officer who raises it at a weekly meeting and says, “Here are these difficult problems. This is the recommendation.” I say to the member again: it does not take away any of my responsibilities or the responsibilities of others. If the honourable member cannot understand that he should divide the Committee and get it over with.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the Schedule, as amended, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 46		NOES, 31	
Ardill	Livingstone	Beanland	Stephan
Barber	Mackenroth	Borbidge	Stoneman
Beattie	McElligott	Connor	Turner
Bird	McGrady	Coomber	Veivers
Braddy	Milliner	Cooper	Watson
Bredhauer	Nunn	Dunworth	
Briskey	Pearce	Elliott	
Burns	Power	FitzGerald	
Campbell	Robson	Gilmore	
Casey	Schwarten	Goss J. N.	
Clark	Smith	Harper	
Comben	Smyth	Hobbs	
Davies	Sullivan J. H.	Horan	
De Lacy	Sullivan T. B.	Johnson	
Dollin	Szczerbanik	Lester	
Eaton	Vaughan	Lingard	
Edmond	Warburton	Littleproud	
Elder	Warner	McCauley	
Fenlon	Welford	Perrett	
Foley	Woodgate	Randell	
Gibbs		Rowell	
Hamill	*Tellers:*	Santoro	*Tellers:*
Hayward	Prest	Slack	Neal
Hollis	Pitt	Springborg	Quinn

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill reported, with amendments.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Burns, by leave, read a third time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 20 May (see p. 5412).

Mr RANDELL (Mirani) (11.31 p.m.): The Opposition will not be opposing this Bill. I have had widespread consultation with local government, both officers and elected representatives, and there seems to be no real opposition in their ranks. I believe that at the Committee stage the Minister will move an amendment which he has discussed with me. I understand there have been no changes.

Mr Burns: No, it is only that 0.25 a year for six years that we spoke about.

Mr RANDELL: We are quite agreeable to that. I believe that in this nation there is real concern about huge increases in superannuation. It is really a wage increase which could trigger a further loss of employment opportunities or, in this case, could result in an increase in rates. The Opposition supports any reasonable levels of superannuation for workers in any field, provided it does not lead to a loss of jobs. This legislation implements a superannuation scheme in a proper and reasonable timetable, so as to lessen the impact on the finances of local authorities. As all honourable members are aware, local authorities are in a fairly precarious economic situation at the present time. Further imposts cannot be placed on local authorities. I compliment the Minister on this legislation, and thank him for the frank and open manner in which he has liaised with me, as Opposition spokesman, in explaining his intentions. It would be remiss of me if I did not recognise and place on record the Opposition's appreciation and thanks for the splendid work carried out by the late Chairman of the Local Government Superannuation

Board, John Wyatt. I believe the Minister acknowledged in his second-reading speech the work carried out by him. John Wyatt has laid the foundations for the future.

Mr COOMBER (Currumbin) (11.33 p.m.): The Liberal Party supports these amendments to the Local Government Superannuation Amendment Bill. In doing so, it takes the opportunity to place on record its thanks to the late chairman of the scheme, Mr John Wyatt. He worked very hard to improve benefits under this scheme.

The amendments to the legislation are simple and allow Aboriginal communities to contribute to the local government superannuation scheme. The Liberal Party does not have a problem with the amendment which allows workers or employees of Aboriginal councils to join and contribute to a superannuation fund. The Aboriginal councils to whom I have spoken function in a similar manner to traditional local authorities, and by that I mean that they do their best to represent their people. The second amendment to the Act gives authority to the Local Government Superannuation Board to manage other funds. My understanding is that this amendment would give the superannuation board the ability to tender for fund management of other institutions. The Liberal Party supports this private-enterprise approach, so long as the application of this authority remains within the bounds of Government—being Federal, State and local—and the statutory bodies associated with Government. The third amendment alters the Act to allow members to contribute to the scheme prior to the completion of 12 months' service with a local authority. This amendment is also supported by the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party does not see why, in the past, the employing local authority had to give approval for this to take place.

Sometimes one has to forget politics when talking about superannuation because, in most cases, the real issue is retirement of the workers of this State. It also involves being able to support oneself and one's family in retirement at a suitable standard of living. The fund management of the Local Government Superannuation Board appears to be above the industry norm. The investment performance is above average and the administration costs are below average. Some industry sources claim that the superannuation industry has become a shambles due to years of inconsistent and erratic Government policy and poor supervision. In some cases, too much money has been siphoned off in commissions from retirement savings to support the lifestyle of consultants, and too little information is given to policy holders about how their investments are developing. In this scheme, the board is comprised of an independent chairman, two local authority representatives and two union representatives. I suggest that the annual report is a testament to clear, good fund management.

I am aware that today the Minister plans to recommend increases in employer contributions of 1.5 per cent over a number of years. I believe that time period is six years. I am painfully aware that the local government superannuation scheme is not as lucrative as other State Government superannuation schemes, or other States' local government superannuation schemes. However, just like the proposed superannuation levy proposed by the Federal Government, this increase in levy is an additional payroll tax. This proposed levy, particularly in the private sector, will result in fewer jobs being created during any recovery from this recession, unless it is strictly offset against wage increases or productivity. The same argument must apply to Government superannuation schemes, where the superannuation package must be considered in coalition with the wage structure. In the long run, any employer superannuation package concerning local government must be funded by the ratepayers of the community.

It is time for restraint and a slowly, slowly approach to a national superannuation scheme and wage demands. There is never a good time to introduce a new tax, especially a payroll tax on employment. However, the fact remains that old age offers few financial options. Retirees are either self-funded or satisfy the financial requirements for the age pension. However, one of the most important things that Governments must do is ensure that the age pension does not become an intolerable burden on taxpayers. On average, Queenslanders are living longer and healthier lives. Many are willing and able to work beyond the present age of retirement. Compulsory retirement is a waste of a valuable human resource, and it reduces individual self-fulfilment. In common with

superannuation, deferment of retirement will reduce the burden of funding pensions. Governments must offer incentives to maintain people in the work force, such as a deferred pension plan for people who remain in the work force or existing pensioners who wish to return to the work force.

The annual report of the Local Government Superannuation Board showed a large investment on behalf of local government employees. Once again, I thank the Minister's department for briefing both Mr Randell and me on this Bill. Having spoken to the Minister, I am aware that the fund is certainly in a sound financial state. Unfortunately, this position possibly came about because of local government employees leaving councils—their employer—and, therefore, the superannuation scheme. It is those funds that are available for investment that allow the fund to continue.

If superannuation is the financial future for retirees, then this Government must protect those savings. People who have worked for most of their lives, in particular local government staff, must expect a certain standard of living for the rest of their lives. The taxation system must be reformed with personal taxation cuts of up to 30 per cent. There must be a savings value compensation and, because self-funded superannuants are not a drain on pension funds, the Government should extend the benefits of the pharmaceutical benefits fund, consider private health insurance rebates, and reduce the capital gains tax. The Liberal Party supports the amendments.

Hon. T. J. BURNS (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) (11.39 p.m.), in reply: I thank both the speakers from the opposition parties for their support for the Bill. Over the last couple of days, the Government has been changing its mind approximately every 10 minutes in relation to the superannuation guarantee levy because of the arguments that have been occurring in Federal Parliament and the negotiations between the Federal Government and the Australian Democrats on this issue. It was my intention to introduce a 3 per cent increase—six years at 0.5 per cent—with half of it to cover the SGL, and the other half to do what the Government is doing tonight in regard to workers. Unfortunately, in Canberra they are still making up their minds and the Government has to go ahead with the Bill. Depending on how the argument is resolved in Canberra, the Government may have to come back with an amendment to the legislation.

At this stage, I thank the two opposition speakers for their cooperation. It has been a difficult couple of days. We have been making up our minds, and we have been going backwards and forwards. I have had to keep going back and telling the opposition speakers a different story at regular intervals. I appreciate their words of commendation for John Wyatt. In many ways, he was a larrikin, but obviously he was a very good chairman of the board. The board has a good reputation and it has done very well in the management of the fund.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon. T. J. Burns (Lytton—Deputy Premier, Minister for Housing and Local Government) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clauses—

Mr BURNS (11.40 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"At page 7, after line 18, insert—

'Amendment of s.38 (Employee liable for half Local Authority's payment to Board)

'10A.(1) Section 38 (heading)—

omit, insert—

'Employee liable to local authority for amount of employee's contributions'.

'(2) Section 38 (1)—

omit, insert—

'(1) A permanent employee in relation to whom a local authority is required by section 36(1) to pay an annual contribution to the Board is liable to the local authority for—

(a) if an employee to whom section 38B applies does not make an election—5% of the employee's salary; or

(b) in any other case—6% of the employee's salary.'.

'Replacement of s.39 (Amount of contribution to Fund)

'10B. Section 39—

omit, insert—

'Contribution rates—general

'38A. Subject to section 39, the annual contribution payable to the Board by a local authority under 36(1) in relation to a permanent employee is—

(a) for the year starting on 1 July 1992—12.25% of the employee's salary;

(b) for the year starting on 1 July 1993—12.5% of the employee's salary;

(c) for the year starting on 1 July 1994—12.75% of the employee's salary;

(d) for the year starting on 1 July 1995—13% of the employee's salary;

(e) for the year starting on 1 July 1996—13.25% of the employee's salary;

(f) from 1 July 1997—13.5% of the employee's salary.

'Certain permanent employees may elect to contribute at higher rate

'38B.(1) If, before the commencement of this section, a permanent employee elected that the annual contribution payable to the Board in relation to the employee by a local authority under section 36(1) be 10% of the employee's salary, the employee may, by written notice given to the local authority within the prescribed time, elect that, from the year starting on 1 July 1992, the amount for which the employee is liable to the local authority under section 38(1) is 6% of the employee's salary.

'(2) Within 30 days after a local authority receives a notice of election, the local authority must give a copy of the notice to the Board.

'Contribution rates of permanent employees who have not elected under s.38B

'39. The annual contribution payable to the Board by a local authority under section 36(1) in relation to a permanent employee to whom section 38B applies and who has not made an election under section 38B is—

(a) for the year starting on 1 July 1992—10.25% of the employee's salary;

(b) for the year starting on 1 July 1993—10.5% of the employee's salary;

(c) for the year starting on 1 July 1994—10.75% of the employee's salary;

(d) for the year starting on 1 July 1995—11% of the employee's salary;

(e) for the year starting on 1 July 1996—11.25% of the employee's salary;

(f) from 1 July 1997—11.5% of the employee's salary.'.'."

Amendment agreed to.

New clauses 10A and 10B, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—

Mr BURNS (11.42 p.m.): I move the following amendments—

"At page 8, line 4, omit—

'section 39'

and insert—

'section 38A or 39' ";

"At page 8, line 8, omit—

'section 39'

and insert—

'section 38A or 39'."

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Burns, by leave, read a third time.

GAMING MACHINE AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 21 May 1992 (see p. 5498).

Mr SLACK (Burnett) (11.44 p.m.): This Bill is the only Bill that I can recall that has been introduced into the House with a completely unsatisfactory explanation of its purpose. The Treasurer's second-reading speech was significant for its political rhetoric and superficial, flippant approach to legislation.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr SLACK: I am being nice. On perusing the speech, one would have thought that it was a speech delivered off the cuff; but, no, when I checked against the original that was contained within the Bill, it was word for word from his speech writers. It is nothing but political propaganda pumped out of the Treasurer's office. It is not a question of whether the Treasurer read it and approved of its contents before delivering it; rather, it is the nature of its contents. One can only assume that the Treasurer commissioned its writing. Almost 80 per cent of the speech is nothing but political diatribe, which shows the Treasurer's sensitivity to criticism. It shows that the criticism has got under his skin, irritating him to the extent that he had to retaliate. He chose to do it in the most inappropriate way—in the introduction of legislation.

The Opposition believes that such abuse of the process of introducing a Bill into the House is unprecedented in this Parliament. Such an abuse of the second-reading speech process by a Minister of the Crown introducing legislation must diminish that Minister's standing. In parliamentary terms, it was unprofessional. I am not aware of any Treasurer in the past 32 years who would have belittled his department with such a speech when introducing legislation. Indeed, former Labor Treasurers such as V. Gair, E. Walsh, J. Larcombe and E. Hanlon would be ashamed of the Labor Treasurer. Not

only is the Minister's second-reading speech unworthy of the office of Treasurer, it is unworthy of the department from which it originated, that is, Treasury.

Standing Order 241 (b) states that the member who has presented the Bill should proceed to give an explanation of the Bill. The strict adherence to this Standing Order should be mandatory, because it is my understanding that the explanation delivered in a second-reading speech can form the basis of a judgment in a court. Therefore, its contents should be an unambiguous, precise, accurate explanation of the content and the intention of the Bill before the House. For that reason, if for no other reason, a Minister who embarks on the course taken by the Treasurer should be condemned by every member of the House. A mere seven sentences were devoted to the Bill, and the rest was vitriol.

When the Gaming Machine Bill was introduced in March 1991, the Opposition opposed it. It has not changed its policy stance on the matter of poker machines. But the amendments introduced an aspect which it wholeheartedly supports—a policy initiative which the National Party in Government developed and had inserted into the Liquor Act. Of course, this relates to clause 5, a new section, which ensures that licensees and patrons of gaming machine establishments operate under the same evidence-of-age requirements for obtaining a liquor licence and gaming machines. This relates to the proof-of-age card. It is interesting to note that the Labor Party caucus in Opposition opposed this measure when it was introduced in 1985 by the National Party Government. At that time, the Opposition opposed the amendment. The then shadow Minister for Justice, Mr Goss, said—

"Legislation is not needed to combat underage drinking."

The Opposition welcomes the Labor Party caucus decision not only to retain the policy in the Liquor Act but also to have it mirrored in the Gaming Machine Act. It shows a more mature approach to the problem of under-age drinking, but if there is a concern it is whether the Government is fair dinkum in its commitment towards policing it.

In January this year, my colleague Mick Veivers, the member for Southport, pointed out that the Licensing Commission inspectors had been told not to work overtime. Those inspectors were working 9 to 5, which is ridiculous, because many establishments frequented by under-age drinkers do not open until after 8 p.m. At the time of the overtime ban being in place, the Minister for Tourism was heralding tough measures in the wake of the infamous "schoolies" week. A survey of 800 teenagers aged from 15 to 17, which was undertaken by the Federal Government, shows that 69 per cent of those teenagers agreed that the lack of liquor law enforcement helped them in the drinking of too much alcohol. It found also that drinking too much alcohol was the single greatest problem facing their peers—ahead of unemployment, exams and smoking. The research found that teenage alcohol abuse is a social problem with enormous momentum which must be countered by long-term strategies. Under-age drinking is a real problem, and not one for which the Government can legislate and forget.

This Goss Labor Government is good at window dressing and good at making itself look good, but it falls short on the delivery of services. Everywhere throughout this State electors are complaining about the lack of services and the cutback in services by this Labor Government. The overtime ban on Licensing Commission inspectors is just one example. It seems to me that the Goss Labor Government has been spooked by the disastrous economic legacies of the Cain, Kirner, Bannon, Wran, Unsworth, Burke—do not forget Burke—Dowding and Lawrence Labor Governments and is cutting back on the delivery of services to pay for its social justice programs and to balance its Budget. It knows that Queenslanders expect a balanced Budget and do not want to get into debt. Access Economics and the Institute of Public Affairs have warned that the Queensland Government's approach in just two Budgets may see it squander the inheritance that it was left from conservative stewardship. It is relatively easy to introduce laws, but making them work is of critical importance.

Amongst other matters, this Bill prohibits minors from being employed in any capacity in relation to gaming machines, and bans minors from playing gaming machines.

This is consistent with age-related matters contained in the Liquor Act. As far as the Treasurer is concerned, it appears that gambling will lead Queensland's recovery. We have been told that in one month alone—March—$20m was pumped through the poker machines, $45m was expected in May, $1 billion for the year, and so on. Other figures show that it could be even $2 billion. The mind boggles! The Goss Labor Government is probably well pleased with the figures, with an average taking per machine per day initially of up to $1,000 and, on last reports, it was running at about $800 to $900. The Treasurer is on record as saying that there are currently 5 000 poker machines in place, with another 3 000 to come on line shortly.

This Labor Government has said that it predicted that, as a result of the poker machine business, approximately 2 000 jobs would be created within the first 12 months. Some clubs are claiming that one new job is being created for every three machines. One particular club in Brisbane has said that, since the introduction of poker machines, its membership has doubled to 4 500 members, staff has more than doubled, and bar trade has trebled. The club itself had spent some $700,000 on refurbishing to prepare for pokies. I am told that most clubs can recount similar experiences—massive increases in membership, more jobs created and greater turnover.

This new employment boom certainly has not shown up as yet in the labour force statistics. As the Treasurer would be well aware, the May 1991 unemployment rate shot up from 9.7 per cent to 10.4 per cent. In that month, 153 300 people were unemployed in the State, representing an increase of 9 500 on the number of unemployed in April. That was 58 500, or 61.7 per cent, more than the number in December 1989, when there were no poker machines. It is noted that the Goss Labor Government likes to attribute interstate migration to unemployment. That is something which the Labor Party and the Labor Party caucus lampooned when in Opposition. It was a myth. In fact, in 1986, the Leader of the Opposition produced an economic report that had as its lead story "Migration Myth is Exploded". It said that Queensland's high unemployment rate could no longer be blamed on the number of people moving here from other States. How times have changed! Now the Labor Party and the Labor Party caucus have seized on the State's population growth rate and internal migration to explain the figures. But it is quite clear that the so-called gambling-led recovery—the newest focus being poker machines—has not dented the unemployment rate.

The youth unemployment rate rose 1.3 percentage points, from 25.1 per cent in May to 26.4 per cent in April. The rate is 7.9 percentage points higher than it was in December 1989. I do not dispute the current figure that there is one new job for every three poker machines, but what I do query is that there is a new job—and I emphasise "new". It is my understanding that it is a redistributed job—a job which has been lost from other sectors of the hospitality industry, in particular restaurants, the fast-food business and small business. Let me make it quite clear that, although the introduction of poker machines may create another job in one segment of the hospitality industry, jobs are being lost in others. There is no new money going into poker machines, just money that would have gone to other areas of entertainment. The only real winner is the Treasury coffers.

Gambling is now big business in Queensland, handsomely boosted by this Government. Last year, the TAB had a record turnover of $1 billion. As well, $178m was collected from the two casinos, $519m from lotto, the casket and the pools, and $446m from bookmakers. Gambling now ranks as a major industry along with tourism, mining and primary industries. As the old saying goes, all that glitters is not gold—and that applies to poker machines. Welfare agencies will be quick to tell any honourable member that there is indeed a flip side to gambling and poker machines. There is the hidden side, which, of course, is domestic violence and family abuse, which largely goes undetected. Then there are the family budgetary problems stemming from the hope of the jackpot to pay the bills and put the dinner on the table. St Vincent de Paul is launching an investigation into the social cost of poker machines and is doing its own study. Just after the introduction of poker machines, Lifeline said it had detected a very slight indication only of social problems since the machines came on line. Experience in New South Wales indicates that there probably will be a discernible problem in months to

come. Other losers as a result of the new social life resulting from the introduction of poker machines are small business and the social side of neighbourhoods. Bigger clubs can put smaller establishments such as cabarets and small restaurants out of business because they cannot offer more entertainment value.

The Goss Labor Government, however, believes it has been most righteous about any problems that may emerge from gambling the pay packet through poker machines or squandering the family grocery budget through Footy TAB, PubTAB or whatever. It says that it will be pouring money made from poker machines back into helping those with gambling and family problems. The House will recall that 4 per cent of the takings of a machine is returned to the Government. Three per cent of the Government's share is a gaming tax paid to build roads, hospitals and schools and the remaining 1 per cent will be a special sport and recreation levy to finance community sporting projects. Various Ministers have had their hands out for the money. If the Minister for Sport has his way, the lion's share of the money will go to sporting stars struggling to finance training programs, junior sport, a sports academy and scholarships. It is disappointing that the Minister with the $4 billion super Ministry—Transport—has not put his hand out for more road funding. Our roads are old and deteriorating. It will be most interesting to see where the 4 per cent actually goes and if indeed any money goes to welfare groups such as the Salvation Army to assist in helping people with gambling-related problems.

We are aware that publicans in hotels with poker machines will have to pay a percentage of their profits towards a charitable and rehabilitation levy to rehabilitate gamblers and to finance community charity groups. As we debate this Bill, people aged from 18 to 80 either are lined up waiting to play a machine or are actually crunching money through the slots. Some will win; the majority will lose. The club and the Government will take their rake-off, and others whose businesses have declined or employees who have lost their jobs will ask why and may well contemplate the benefit of the redistribution of money in the shifting sands of the hospitality industry. Certainly the Government will receive more money to dole out when it sees fit, but the question is whether the people of Queensland will be better off. The losers certainly are not better off, and there are plenty of them. I have made the point that the Minister's second-reading speech was an absolute disgrace. At the time, the Opposition claimed that it was an abuse of the privilege of this House. Because the Bill adopts the provisions of the Liquor Act that cover under-age drinking and the playing of poker machines, the Opposition supports it.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.58 p.m.): The Liberal Party will be supporting the Gaming Machine Amendment Bill 1992. It recognises that the most significant amendment contained in the Bill relates to the adoption of all the provisions of the Liquor Act that cover minors and acknowledges that that is an appropriate adoption into the Gaming Machine Act 1991. I have some sympathy for the point made earlier by the member for Burnett about the Treasurer's second-reading speech.

Mr De Lacy: Don't you give me the wet lettuce.

Dr WATSON: At a time when the courts are looking to the speeches of members of Parliament, particularly the second-reading speeches of Ministers, to help them to understand the Bills passed by the House and to interpret those Bills, it is appropriate for the Government's philosophy and the technical aspects of the Bill to be explained in the second-reading speech. Whether or not a Minister uses his second-reading speech for political purposes is up to him, but it is most unfortunate that the Treasurer spent little time reflecting upon the Government's philosophy or intentions. As I indicated, the Liberal Party is pleased to support this amendment Bill.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South) (12 midnight): Because I received an honourable mention by the Minister in his vindictive second-reading speech, I rise to speak to the Bill. On that day, there was quite a lot of drama in the Parliament. A motion of no confidence in the Speaker was moved by the Opposition Leader. It seemed strange to me that a Minister would go to such lengths of agro and venom in his second-reading speech and take the rules right to the wire on a day when there had been such drama in

the House. I think it was a disgraceful exhibition which probably did not do much for the reputation of the Minister or this House. The Minister made many promises throughout the period leading up to the installation of poker machines. In my case, what pricked him was the fact that I kept reminding him that he had made promises and that the managers of clubs hoping to install poker machines were getting extremely upset. They were organising staff and working off overdrafts. There would be a prediction that the machines would be available by a certain month, but they were not. There would be another prediction that they would be available later on, and so it went on for about 12 months.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: It went on for 22 years.

Mr HORAN: We are talking about here and now and we are talking about the Minister and his competence in making predictions. The problem was that the staff were being prepared; young people were being trained for the job. They were waiting and did not know whether to take jobs in the clubs or move on to other jobs. The Minister has criticised me for having the hypocrisy, as he said, to issue a press release to the *Toowoomba Chronicle* in which I criticised him for the loss of jobs that could have occurred. I will tell the Minister right now that there were two or three clubs that approached me and their concern was that this went on for some 12 months with four or five predictions by the Minister. If he had any sort of brain at all he would have said, "We're not sure. Everything has got to be fixed up. We want it right and we are not going to make any predictions until we know." He kept on saying that it would be August or that it would be September and leading people right down the garden path. The Minister wants to talk about hypocrites. He said in his second-reading speech that in some way or other I was hypocritical because I had the good manners to accept an invitation from the Toowoomba South Bowls Club, which had installed five poker machines, to go and put the first coin in. Once again, this seems to have hurt the Minister severely to the extent that he devoted a number of paragraphs in his second-reading speech to calling me some sort of a hypocrite or a new found poker machine player.

Mr De Lacy: You take life too seriously.

Mr HORAN: I think the Minister is the one who takes life too seriously. He only has to look through his second-reading speech to find out who takes life too seriously. I was quite happy to accept that invitation by the Toowoomba South Bowls Club—at least I get invitations. The clubs appreciate the work that I have done for them and, in this particular case, I had assisted the club in obtaining information from the Machine Gaming Division and having some discussions with it. They were not sure as to whether they should put machines in or not. I gave the club advice, and it then made its decision. I think that what upset the Minister was the fact that I criticised him, and quite correctly, for the incorrect predictions that he continued to make and then accepted an invitation from some of my constituents to open their poker machines for them. I will say that, during my speech, I mentioned that the Government had gone through a considerable amount of controversy over putting in poker machines, but I did give some recognition to the Government for the fact that it had put them in. I am a bit sorry that I did that now after reading the Minister's second-reading speech.

To get back to hypocrites, which was what was mentioned in the Minister's second-reading speech, I well remember standing on the footpath of Margaret Street in Toowoomba and seeing the Treasurer standing on the steps of the new QIDC building making a grandiose speech. All he seemed to refer to was the wonderful state of the finances of this State, the AAA rating and so on. I know that everyone in the crowd was probably thinking that the only reason the State has that rating is because of the fiscal responsibility of the conservative Government over the previous 32 years, but we did not call him a hypocrite. He is there; he has the job now. The pressure is on him to maintain that balanced Budget. Yesterday in the *Courier-Mail* there was a very curious front page story about the Premiers Conference. Tucked away towards the end of that story was a report that the Premier had been able to obtain an amount of $29.5m from a top-up fund. He had made the comment that that would help and that the Budget would

still be well over $30m in deficit. I thought that was a very strange quote. It would appear that the Budget deficit was going to be something like $60m or $70m——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hollis): Order! I have been very tolerant, but the member is straying from the amendment.

Mr HORAN: I appreciate that, Mr Deputy Speaker. At the moment, I am following the hypocrisy line that was mentioned in the second-reading speech. I think that the rumours that have been around town—and they are strong rumours about the Budget deficit—just might be confirmed by that article in the *Courier-Mail*.

I will not speak any more about vindictiveness. I think that it has been canvassed sufficiently tonight. I just wanted to make the comment that there are quite a number of clubs in my electorate that have installed poker machines. They are quite appreciative of them and they are going particularly well. The City Golf Club, which was one of the first clubs to install them, is exceedingly happy with how it is going. It has sold 2 400 social memberships, which has been a big boost to its finances. The Toowoomba Golf Club is installing them; the Toowoomba Club already has them installed. The Toowoomba South Bowls Club, where I had my photo taken opening their five machines, is going along nicely. Right next door, the machines of the Darling Downs Rugby Club—I do not know whether I am allowed to say it—suffered a malfunction just prior to their opening. I was to open their machines half an hour after I opened the machines at the Toowoomba South Bowls Club but, unfortunately, the machines would not work. I do not know whether that was the fault of the Minister's "malfunctionless" system or whether it was that of the much maligned Telecom. The fact that they would not work for some four hours was a great embarrassment to the club. However, the good news for the club is that they have since worked. They came on line about half past three or 4 o'clock that afternoon, instead of midday. They have since worked and the club is happy with the way things are going. One of the main points in this Bill is the bringing back of the proof of age to a status similar to that which applies in hotels. I certainly think that the fact that it is going to keep under-aged people—children under the age of 18—from playing the machines or from frequenting the licensed premises and drinking alcohol is a good thing. That is certainly a good move.

I wish to comment on the arrangements regarding poker machines and the composition of the turnover as it applies to hotels in particular. There has been a great deal of talk about the employment that will be generated by clubs, and there is no doubt that some of the clubs are generating increased employment. A fair assessment of the club situation would reveal that a limited amount of increased employment has developed, and that is a good thing if it benefits youth. However, many other clubs are small clubs which will make do with their present staff whenever possible and which will have their own staff trained to be licensed club managers. While clubs are going through a honeymoon period, there is no doubt that they will have a great impact upon hotels which have been given limited poker machine facilities. In a way, hotels have had to meet the new type of competition presented by clubs with virtually one hand tied behind their backs. I know that some hotels in Toowoomba are not what they used to be and that some publicans are doing it very tough these days. I know of publicans who get out of bed at 5 a.m. to cook breakfasts for their guests and clean the pub. They and their wives work most of the shifts throughout the day. They work until about 11 p.m. and then clean up, lock up, and either go home or stay on the premises. It is not an easy life, and it is a very difficult business.

Although hotels are trying to compete with clubs, the clubs are receiving 11 per cent on gross turnover whereas the hotels are receiving only 5 per cent. It makes one wonder why these arrangements have been put in place. In addition, hotels can have a maximum of 10 machines only whereas clubs have an unlimited number of machines, depending on their licence and their liquor turnover. Moreover, hotels are being charged a larger amount for the rental of poker machines than are clubs. Players in both the clubs and hotels receive an 85 per cent payback from poker machines. From the club and hotel machines, the Government derives a tax levy of 3 per cent. There is a sports levy of 1 per cent for clubs, but 2.5 per cent is taken from the hotel machines. Charities and

rehabilitation groups receive no payback from the club machines, but they receive 4.5 per cent from the hotel machines. In the end result, the earnings derived by the clubs amount to 11 per cent, whereas the hotel earnings are 5 per cent. Added to that is the disadvantage that hotels bear compared with clubs in terms of taxation payments. When all those factors are taken into account, it can be seen that hotels are faced with an unfair situation if they wish to endeavour to compete with clubs which are providing a strong challenge. Clubs are going to be in a position to provide cheaper meals than hotels, which means that the hotel industry will be doing it even tougher in the near future. There is a great risk that some hotels could close or lose staff. When this Government talks about building up job numbers, I think it is important to give hotels a fair go to enable them to compete with the club industry. I believe it is worth while looking at hotels in the light of the fact that very often they are the club of the working person who does not want to belong to any particular club, abide by dress rules of a club, or take out membership of a club. Anybody can walk into a hotel, irrespective of whether that person is a bona fide traveller or has paid a fee. Entrance to a hotel is free, and people can partake of their pleasure at those places.

Another aspect of unfair competition is the monthly rental that is charged. For each machine, clubs pay $240, whereas hotels pay $270. When clubs install more than 10 machines, they receive a further discount which brings the rental down to $210. I believe that it is worth while for the Minister to look at the situation applying to clubs. Hotels should be given more consideration to enable them to cope with the very strong competition that is coming from the clubs. I also wish to mention the concept of a superclub in Toowoomba. Four clubs—All Whites, Newtown, Souths and Valleys—got together and decided that it would be uneconomical to have four clubs spread throughout the town competing for business. They decided that it would be uneconomical for each club to try to provide the facilities expected to be found in a leagues club, so they got together with the Toowoomba Turf Club and came up with the concept of a superclub. The concept has moved to the stage of the turf club holding a special meeting at which a proposal was put forward for approval. An amendment was moved to the proposal owing to a minor hiccup brought to light by the trustees of the Clifford Park racecourse, but it appears that there is every chance of the concept going ahead. In many ways, the concept is exciting because it will amalgamate the four leagues clubs with the turf club and make use of the excellent facilities located in the turf club grounds. There is plenty of parking space available and the venue is strategically located in the midst of the western suburbs of Toowoomba. The proposal has the potential to develop into a superclub. I believe that in every town there will be clubs that are large and successful, but there will also be clubs that wish to retain their individual atmosphere and just have a few poker machines to assist with fundraising and general maintenance of the club.

The only other comment I wish to make is that clubs will have to be careful. There will be a honeymoon period, and we all know that extra money has not been printed just because poker machines have been introduced. The increased turnover that is going through the clubs is very substantial in some cases, but it has had to come from somewhere, such as someone's piggy bank or wages that would otherwise have been spent in some other business in the town, namely, restaurants, children's stores or service stations. Owing to more money circulating, there will be a slight increase in employment, but that will not provide the massive bonanza that is hoped for. I think the real benefit of poker machines will be in the provision of a club lifestyle which will suit many people over the age of 21 years who, at times, have felt that the only places they could go to were the local disco or nightclub, and they did not wish to go to either place. It would help clubs to provide a civilised club life in the town. That is all I have to say on the Bill. Once again, I want to reinforce what I felt about the Minister's second-reading speech. It was a disgrace. I am proud that the clubs are happy to ask me along to open their poker machines. I wish the clubs in Toowoomba South well with their machines.

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (12.16 a.m.), in reply: I thank the three Opposition spokesmen for their support for the legislation. As I pointed out in my

second-reading speech, the legislation is basically to bring the gaming machine legislation into line with the amendments to the Liquor Act, particularly those aspects of the Liquor Act relating to minors. I note that all three Opposition spokesmen referred to my second-reading speech. I make no apology for the speech that I made. I thought that it was about time that I placed on record what has happened in this whole poker machine debate. The reason that I referred to hypocrisy on behalf of members of the National Party was not only the fact that for 32 years they opposed the introduction of poker machines and that, if the National Party were in power, we would not have poker machines but also the fact that, when the Labor Government decided to introduce poker machines and was elected with a mandate to introduce poker machines, the National Party left no stone unturned in opposing their introduction.

The present Leader of the Opposition—who I understand is soon to return to being Deputy Leader of the Opposition, or something less—made all of the wildest allegations that it was possible to make, allegations without one shred of evidence. He kept throwing a spanner in the spokes, making it very difficult for the Government to introduce poker machines. He kept causing the Government to put back the date and to go over a lot of things that it would not have had to go over. National Party members did everything in their power to prevent the introduction of poker machines.

Mr Schwarten: Now, every function where they are opened, they are there.

Mr De LACY: They are all in there having their photographs taken. I accept that. However, to put out press releases accusing the Government and me of delaying the implementation of poker machines is just too much for words. It was a bit more than I could stand. In this game, I always say, "He who laughs last laughs longest." It was about time that all of those things were put on record. I make no apology for putting them on record, because it was about time that they were.

Mr SLACK: I rise to a point of order. My point of order concerns the abuse of the second-reading speech in this House.

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

Mr De LACY: The honourable member may call it an abuse of the House. Some people may call it an abuse of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, or the Leader of the Opposition. I do not care what people call it, but I used the opportunity to place on record what I felt about the whole issue. It is important that it was put on record. Time after time, Mr Borbidge raced out to the media saying that I was giving the matter to the CJC, or that I was giving it to the Trade Practices Commission. That was always the story. Of course, the CJC investigated the matter and found that there was no substance to the allegation.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr De LACY: Page 27. It was important that the matter was put on the record in *Hansard*, and that is what I did. The member for Toowoomba South made a couple of other points about hotels. He cannot have it both ways. He either supports the club industry or he supports the hotels. The fundamental difference between hotels and clubs is that hotels are operated by private people. The Government was never going to introduce poker machines in this State for the benefit of private individuals. It introduced poker machines for the benefit of the licensed club industry. However, the QHA put to the Government that it would be to the significant disadvantage of hotels. The QHA said that hotels needed to be able to compete, or to provide facilities similar to those provided by the licensed clubs. So the Government compromised and said that hotels could have a limited number of machines but that they would not have the same access to the profit stream as the licensed clubs have. That is the reason why hotels get 5 per cent and the licensed clubs get 11 per cent.

The QHA understood that that was the situation. Hotels will make some money at 5 per cent, but poker machines are not there for private individuals to make profits. Most people in the community believe that hotels should not have poker machines. Ninety-five per cent of people in Queensland believe that hotels should not have poker machines. All of my mail says that. People say, "Why do hotels have poker machines?

They are private individuals. Should we be licensing gambling so that private people can get rich?" I must go to great lengths to explain that hotels are getting poker machines on a different basis, that there is not much possibility that they will make big money out of poker machines, but that is just the way in which the Government introduced them. The honourable member referred to what the hotels pay. He is right. They pay $270. However, he was not right in what he said about the lease rental regime for clubs. It is $210 up to 10 machines, $240 between 10 and 20 machines, and $270 if clubs have more than 20 machines. With those few words of defence, I once again thank all the members of the House for supporting the legislation.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Clauses 1 to 21 and Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr De Lacy, by leave, read a third time.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. P. J. BRADDY (Rockhampton—Leader of the House) (12.25 a.m.): I move—

"That the House do now adjourn."

Stickmakers Pty Ltd

Mrs McCAULEY (Callide) (12.25 a.m.): Tonight, I wish to detail a story that shows very clearly where this Labor Government stands on issues which concern country Queensland and issues which need some consultation—something that Mr Goss and his team seem to find very difficult. This Government cares little for small rural communities and even less for consultation, as this story will show. Last week, the Government proudly announced the fact that an $8m factory to export chopsticks and paddle-pop sticks was to be built in Gladstone. This factory will use hoop pine from the Kalpowar forest near Monto, some 500 hectares of which has been sold to Stickmakers Pty Ltd of Albury in New South Wales. This is a welcome asset to Queensland, a value-adding industry which will create some 90 jobs, mainly for women. My complaint is that in the handling of this whole matter of the sale of the forest and the encouragement of this company to relocate to Queensland, the Labor Government did not at any time have the courtesy to let the Monto Shire Council or the Bundaberg office of the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development—DBIRD—know what was going on.

It is very difficult to compete in a race if one does not know there is a race on. That is the complaint from the Monto Shire Council. Maybe it would not have been able to persuade Stickmakers to relocate to Monto, but it would have liked to try. It would have liked the opportunity to talk to the principals and offer a deal, a deal which may have tempted the company to come to Monto and which would have gone a long way towards helping the 200 registered unemployed in that town. As shire chairman, Kevin Hockey, said, "No opportunity was given to the council to put forward a case." This is totally contrary to all the hype and philosophy on which DBIRD was founded. In fact, one of the major goals of the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development is stated as being "to promote and support sustainable economic growth in regional areas". Last year, when DBIRD held a series of meetings in the region to help local authorities and organisations develop more industries, one of the industries identified in the Monto area was the likely processing of the Kalpowar plantation.

In a letter to me dated 22 October last year, the Minister said that the regional economic development program "has been developed in close consultation with regional development organisations, local authorities and related agencies around Queensland". His press release on the same topic stated—

> "The aim of the new program is to help regions help themselves by providing greater assistance for economically viable, regionally-generated projects."

What a fine aim. What lofty sounding ideals to help regional areas. What a shame it is simply empty rhetoric. This Government did not even have the courtesy to advise the Monto Shire Council that a hoop pine plantation which had been growing in the area for the past 60 years was sold and would form the basis of a commercial operation which will see some 1.5 billion ice-cream sticks and 600 million chopsticks per year being manufactured by the year 1996. The hoop pine is apparently ideal for this purpose because it is odourless and tasteless. There are some 3 500 hectares of this timber in the Kalpowar forest.

Perhaps the Monto area would not have been successful in wooing the New South Wales company to its town, but we will never know now, will we? The firm did look at Monto and other towns before settling on Gladstone, where its impact will not be very dramatic. However, Monto should have been in the running and been given the chance to promote its community and its infrastructure. As Mr Hockey said, it would be easier to transport the finished product rather than the logs. The lack of communication and coordination by this Government shows its contempt for country Queensland and the people who live there. In this Labor Government's scheme of things, we simply do not count. But, fortunately for us, we can count, and we will count on polling day when we will show this Government what we think of its total disregard for the people of the bush.

Grocery Prices

Mr McELLIGOTT (Thuringowa) (12.29 a.m.): In recent weeks, a survey conducted by the Government Statistician's Office told those of us who live outside Brisbane what we have known for years, that is, that shoppers in north and north-west Queensland are paying much more for groceries than are Brisbane consumers. The extremes were 43 per cent more on Thursday Island, 33 per cent more at Weipa and 20.4 per cent more at Mount Isa. The *Courier-Mail* report of 2 June revealed that a survey by the National Prices Network in May found that across the State grocery prices increased by an average of 5.4 per cent in the previous six months, despite a consumer price index growth of less than 1 per cent since September last year and no movement at all in the CPI in the three months to March this year. Tonight, I wish to highlight one of the ways in which this deplorable situation arises.

My source is the operator of a small corner store in a small town near Townsville. Corner store operators are in the hands of the large suppliers such as Coca Cola, Arnotts, Cadbury-Schweppes, Unilever and AUF. These suppliers make life very difficult for the small retailer by price increases that cannot be justified, which do not translate to more profit for the retailer and which are obviously not to the benefit of the customer. Let me cite some examples. Five years ago, a carton of Coca Cola could be purchased wholesale for around $10. It now costs $16—an increase of 60 per cent. However, in the same period, the retail price has increased by only 25 per cent. It might be argued that the shopkeeper should have lifted the price by 60 per cent, but such increases clearly and demonstrably lead to buyer resistance and loss of sales, as well as customer dissatisfaction. Another large company has just increased the price of some of its products for the second time in six months. It must be remembered that there has been negligible movement in the CPI in that period. Indeed, one product increased from 70 cents to 80 cents, and finally to a dollar. That is an increase of 44 per cent in less than 12 months. How can that possibly be justified? Yet another supplier increased prices early this year because of a supposed increase in the cost of freight. My advice is that that freight increase would have meant an increase of 0.8 per cent, whereas the wholesale price increased by 6.2 per cent. The same company has now advised of a

further rise of 5 per cent, which means that there has been an 11.2 per cent increase in four months.

This is clearly not good enough. Consumers in this State are being ripped off—not by their local shopkeeper, but by huge conglomerates with monopoly control over the various grocery lines. The old right-wing theory of regulation by market forces is simply not working, and it will not work where monopoly control exists. Whilst the consumer has the ability to transfer his or her business to the large supermarkets—which appear to have the clout to negotiate with those suppliers—what does this do for the corner store? In this era of deregulation, it seems that the small operators cannot survive. Inevitably, there will be the closure of corner stores and small retailers generally. The opportunities for family businesses will be further reduced, if not eliminated. Of course, the employment opportunities that those small businesses provide will also be gone.

The message to the Government is probably best summed up in the words of my shopkeeper friend. He said—

> "Labor has always had a view to look after the people who are in some way suppressed. Let me now say that small businesses are being suppressed badly by large companies who do not give a stuff."

In my view, an appropriate response would be for this Parliament to establish an all-party committee to look at the vast discrepancy in the price of essential commodities between Brisbane and the bush, and the role played by large companies in forcing up the price of those commodities to the detriment of consumers and small retailers.

Mr D. Reimer and Mr T. Walker

Mr DUNWORTH (Sherwood) (12.33 a.m.): I rise to speak on a very tragic accident that occurred in the Gulf of Carpentaria some time between 17 May and 21 May this year. I am raising this issue because I have been approached by the distraught families of Daryll Reimer and Terriss Walker and their sad and angry fellow officers of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

There are many questions that must be raised. Firstly, I will deal briefly with the circumstances that led to this tragedy. On 17 May, Daryll Reimer and Terriss Walker left Burketown at night to make an open sea crossing to Sweer's Island—a distance of approximately 65 kilometres—in an open five metre Clark Abalone tinnie. This craft was totally inadequate and limited in size by financial restrictions imposed by the bureaucrats in Ann Street, who limited the amount to be spent on the purchase of the boat to about $3,000. This craft was modified with a centre console after it was purchased, and the craft had to be capable of being towed behind a Ford Falcon station wagon across very difficult terrain from Townsville to Burketown. The safety of officers in the National Parks and Wildlife Service was jeopardised by a totally inadequate five metre craft—a craft that was to carry 180 litres of fuel, 60 litres of water, camping gear, turtle trapping gear, food for 10 days, radios and two fully grown men across the treacherous gulf waters, wherein, because of its shallowness, waves of between two and four metres are common.

The boat was not subject to survey, as it would have been if it was used by a commercial operator instead of a Government department. The Department of Transport has indicated that this craft would not have passed survey for 300 kilometre open sea trips.

Mr Ardill: What open sea trip?

Mr DUNWORTH: Tell it to the people involved. The Minister said that the boat had done the trip before—and so it had—but reservations had been expressed about the adequacy of the craft after the first trip. However, nothing was done by the department. The craft was inadequate, and the department knew it. The same Minister who spent $22,000 on freeing a beached whale at Peregian cannot find the money to ensure the safety of his officers. The Minister could have a case to answer for the apparently negligent treatment of his department's employees. The Department of

Employment, Training and Industrial Relations' Division of Workplace Health and Safety must investigate the Minister's department's operational procedures and equipment.

After Daryll Reimer and Terriss Walker set out on their journey on the night of Sunday, 17 May no further contact was made with these men. It was only when the skipper of the barge, Captain Roberts, found the submerged tinnie with only the bow above the waters on Thursday, 21 May that a search was started. At about 9 p.m. the same night, the crew of the yacht Applejack sighted a flare in the vicinity of where the submerged boat was found. One can only assume that these two men were in the ocean for up to three days before the Department of Environment and Heritage knew that Mr Reimer and Mr Walker were missing. It seems incredible that the Department of Environment and Heritage does not have even the most basic safety program of a regular radio contact when officers of the department are in dangerous situations. The department has tried to avoid the blame by blaming the missing officers for not ensuring their own safety. Again, this slothful attitude of the Minister and his department to the maritime safety of his officers must be investigated by the Department of Transport and maritime authorities.

The final issue I wish to deal with is the callous attitude that the Minister has displayed toward this tragedy by leaving the continuing ground search of the gulf islands in the vicinity of the accident to the family and friends of the missing men and to fellow officers of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, who have committed $20,000 of their own funds to the search. Now that these personal resources have been depleted, cake stalls and donations have funded the continuing search. I am aware that the Minister has relented and that yesterday, on radio, he said that he would ensure that all costs incurred in the private search would be reimbursed out of the department's funds.

The Minister should reconsider his priorities. At the same time as he sends his officers to sea to risk their lives in inadequate and unsafe craft, he is grandstanding and flying all and sundry into Lawn Hill for photo opportunities, and purchasing the Orchid Beach resort for $5m to either knock down or hand over to Aboriginal groups. If the Minister continues to starve the National Parks and Wildlife Service of funds for resources, equipment and craft, he will ensure that its officers will become an endangered species. I suggest that official recognition of the dedicated service that Daryll Reimer and Terriss Walker gave to the department will not bring these men back, but it would assist their families, friends and fellow officers to reconcile their grief.

Juvenile Crime

Dr CLARK (Barron River) (12.38 a.m.): This week, legislation will be introduced in Parliament that will reform the juvenile justice system in accordance with the community expectation that the punishment fit the crime. For some time there has existed a public perception that the justice system deals too leniently with juveniles. The Minister for Family Services has indicated that in future young people will be held more accountable for their behaviour and that the court will have access to a wider range of sentencing options, including community service work, probation supervision orders, and fines.

Although the reform of the juvenile justice system has been long overdue, it is my belief that the public debate has focused too much on how young people should be punished rather than how juvenile crime could be prevented. Thus, the old adage that prevention is better than cure is as true for juvenile crime as it is for so many other problems. The prevention of juvenile crime requires an understanding of the causes of juvenile crime. The CJC report on juvenile crime referred to the Youth Justice Coalition which stated—

> ". . . juvenile crime can be accounted for as a consequence of social change, urbanisation, poverty, difficulties in integration, exclusion from the mainstream, lack of opportunities, gender, increased temptation of but lack of access to disposable goods, economic crises and growing up. It is clear that there are strong links between social disadvantage, deprivation and particular sorts of crime and its control . . . More specifically, it has clear connections with unemployment,

homelessness, school alienation, family breakdown, drug abuse, boredom and inactivity, low morale and a poor self image, inadequate community, family and support services, etc."

In the light of such a complex array of social and psychological factors, the Liberal Party's answer to crime prevention, namely putting young offenders in gaol for a day, is revealed for what it is—a simplistic, politically opportunistic response. Even worse, it has actually been discredited because it does not work, as was demonstrated so clearly by the member for Yeronga earlier today. Professionals who work with young people in the legal and welfare field have roundly condemned the Liberal Party's answer to juvenile crime.

In contrast, the Goss Government's approach to juvenile crime prevention will provide a whole of Government community based response in targeted high crime areas that will address causes of juvenile crime. Groups of young people aged 10 to 16 years who are at risk of offending will be targeted for a range of programs. It is recognised that the challenge of preventing juvenile offending will require the combined resources of all relevant Government departments, and will need to be coordinated, planned, designed and implemented in partnership with local community groups and youth organisations. To give this effect, seven departments—Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs; Police; Education; Housing and Local Government; Health; Employment, Vocational Education, Training and Industrial Relations; and Tourism, Sport and Racing—have proposed a number of programs to divert young people away from crime through increased access to appropriate recreation, education and employment opportunities, improved housing, and health programs.

In Cairns, the community has begun to respond to the need to develop juvenile crime prevention strategies. Currently, I am chairperson of the Cairns Juvenile Crime Prevention Task Force, which was formed last November at a workshop organised by the community in response to concern about the increase in juvenile crime in the region. The task force comprises members of key Government departments, youth welfare organisations, local authorities, business people, and parents. It has acted as a catalyst, coordinator and source of information for a number of community based prevention programs. To date, the majority of programs have focused on creating a wider range of recreational opportunities for young people, including community art programs and under-age no alcohol discos. In one particular case at Holloways Beach north of Cairns, the program organisers estimate that juvenile offending has decreased by 90 per cent. In view of the link between unemployment and crime, the task force is now developing a program that can increase employment opportunities for young first-time offenders who have been cautioned by the police. Last year, the title of the juvenile workshop was Reconnecting our Kids. It is the task force's belief that juvenile crime levels will only decrease when that goal to reconnect kids with their families, with their schools, and with their community can be achieved—a more difficult but undoubtedly more effective strategy than putting youngsters in gaol for a day.

Finally, during the next financial year funding will be provided to implement the Government's juvenile crime prevention strategy. This money will be well spent because experience overseas and in other States of Australia and, indeed, in Queensland, demonstrates that juvenile crime can be reduced by appropriate community based programs that respond to the needs of young people and their families. The task force in Cairns hopes to access Government funding to increase its effectiveness and so make Cairns a safer place in which to live and to provide its young people with prosocial alternatives to crime.

Law and Order

Hon. N. J. TURNER (Nicklin) (12.43 a.m.): The main problem confronting Queensland today is the level of crime and the obvious breakdown of law and order which has been presided over by this inept—or perhaps I should say vapid—ALP Government for two and a half years. Is it little wonder that many people, particularly the elderly, are afraid, even in their own homes? During the last two and a half years, time

and again the security of Queensland's prisons and the ability of this Government to keep inmates inside gaols has come into question. Since this Government came to power, Queensland's correctional institutions have had a revolving door policy with close to 100 escapes. We have seen a number of mass escapes, prisoners absconding while being escorted to various institutions, and prisoners who have failed to return from weekend leave.

The latest instance involved the escape of the notorious prisoner, Harold McSweeny, who was serving a sentence of 30 years' imprisonment for armed robbery and attempted murder. He escaped while attending the Brisbane District Court and was shot and killed on a Brisbane City Council bus. This man had a long history of crime. He first went to gaol at 18 years of age. In March last year, with three other inmates, he escaped from Boggo Road gaol by smashing down the front gates of the maximum security prison with a garbage truck. While on the run, he went on an armed robbery spree. Two months later, when he was recaptured, he was involved in a gunfight. He wounded a police officer, and was later convicted of attempted murder. In December of that year, he again tried to escape. On the day that he was killed, Harold McSweeny was due to plead guilty in the Brisbane District Court to a charge of stealing $240,000 during the hold-up of a security van last year. Some serious questions need to be answered. With such a history of crime, why was McSweeny escorted to the court without handcuffs? How was he able to escape from a Supreme Court holding cell? Why was that door unlocked? How was he able to get hold of a replica pistol that he later held to the head of a bus driver? Although I understand that an investigation is currently being undertaken into the incident, it should not have been possible for McSweeny, with such a criminal history, to do any of these things. I am not suggesting incompetence on the part of prison officers who were attending McSweeny, nor am I blaming them. However, I am suggesting that there must be an alarming level of incompetence and negligence on the part of the administration that allowed McSweeny to escape. There has obviously been some breach of the code of conduct for transportation of prisoners to allow him to make his bid for freedom.

It is somewhat ironic that this is the very same administration that insisted on shackling former National Party Minister Don Lane whilst visiting his doctor outside gaol. It seems inconceivable to me to speak of those two men in the same breath: Don Lane, a man who served the State of Queensland well for years; and Harold McSweeny, a hardened criminal in gaol for attempted murder and violent crime. But while McSweeny was able to make good his escape without handcuffs and with the doors wide open, Don Lane—a no-risk prisoner—was unnecessarily humiliated by being put in irons. This Government obviously does not know how to handle real criminals. Its record on prisons and crime is appalling.

A recent Criminal Justice Commission survey indicated that 280 000 Queensland households experienced a property offence in just one 12-month period. Over 360 000 people suffered a personal offence, and at least 60 000 suffered some form of violent or sexual assault. There is a general concern in our community that not enough is being done to protect decent, honest citizens in this State. Crime is running rampant. Prisoners are escaping at an unprecedented rate. It is time for firm action and a real commitment to the safety of all Queenslanders. The Government must get serious about keeping the prison population inside where it belongs.

Recently, the Government said that it was going to get tough by moving to increase the penalty for escaping from a maximum of three years to seven years under the Criminal Code. But the facts show that prisoners who do escape are not being sentenced to the full extent of existing law, anyway. Most of the escapees from secure custody receive sentences ranging from a mere three months to nine months. There have been no real deterrents, and it shows. The Government needs to take a good, hard look at itself and step up security. It needs to keep prisoners in gaol, not allow them to walk out through the doors, where they can embark on another crime wave. This Government needs to come up with some solution to a serious problem before another prisoner escapes, and it runs the risk of innocent people being killed or maimed. The

Minister for Justice and Corrective Services should also come clean and answer some of the questions that I have raised.

Time expired.

Three-cornered Electoral Contests

Mr ELDER (Manly) (12.48 a.m.): For some time, the Liberals have been talking about their independence from the Nationals. They have been talking about the three-cornered contests that they will run against the National Party, and about the real choice that they will offer the people of Queensland. In public, the nine members who sit behind me in this House are sold by Paul Everingham——

Mr J. H. Sullivan: How many?

Mr ELDER: Are there only a couple of them here this evening?

Mr J. H. Sullivan: Only one.

Mr ELDER: There is only one Liberal member in the House this evening. I will at least acknowledge his presence. The Liberals have been saying proudly that they are independent and ready to take on the Nationals from Cape York to Coolangatta; ready to fight three-cornered contests against the Labor and National Parties. The single biggest test of the Liberals' independence from the National Party is their pledge to run against the Nationals in three-cornered contests. That is what they will be judged on. That is why the coalition agreement which they signed provides that each party should have a right to run its own candidates in the seats of its choosing. Joan Sheldon made the solemn pledge to the people of Queensland that it will be entirely in the hands of the voters who will be the major conservative party after the next State election.

Mr J. H. Sullivan: It is pretty frightening.

Mr ELDER: It is frightening, indeed. In public, the Liberals say that it is very clear and that they are committed to three-cornered contests. Paul Everingham has gone so far as to say that the Liberals will fight for every seat in south-east Queensland. When he was put on wood, he said, "We will fight for every seat in Queensland." He has upped the ante. But behind the closed doors of the Liberal Party and National Party bunkers is a completely different agenda. Behind those doors is an electoral aim by this spineless Liberal Party to prop up the Nationals.

Mr Springborg: Jim the humiliator.

Mr ELDER: It is humiliating for them. The Liberals have perpetrated this three-cornered contest fraud on the people of Queensland. They have built that lie on the fact that they are independent from the Nationals; that they have shaken off the past, and that they offer a real alternative to the people of Queensland. In reality, for many years the only electoral aim of the Liberal Party has been to take its historic place as the junior partner of a conservative coalition dominated by the Nationals—the same style with which Queenslanders were disgusted for many years, that is, the Joh style coalition.

The Liberal Party said that it would target 30 seats, and it did. It has now named those seats, which are all Labor seats. It has not targeted any National Party seats. Where are all the three-cornered contests? Where are the Liberals stepping forward to take on the Nationals across this State? The only Liberal member who actually believes in the rhetoric of his party is the member for Currumbin, who has deserted his own seat and is taking on Rob Borbidge. Apart from that member, not one Liberal member across this State is taking on a sitting National Party MLA. What is this independence about which the Liberal Party talks? What is its commitment to democracy? As usual, it has caved in and rolled over. The next election will be a repeat of the 1989 election. In the past few months, the Liberals have said, "We will take them on in the north." The only seats in the north which the Liberals have announced that they will run in are in Townsville. The only seats in Townsville are held by the Labor Party.

Mrs Woodgate: They can't find any candidates.

Mr ELDER: That is the other problem. Members could imagine the despair that the Liberals are going through trying to find candidates across the State. Quite simply, the Liberals have made a commitment that they will not preselect any member to run against a sitting National member across this State north of Noosa and west of Kenmore. It is the old story: when the going gets tough, the Liberals get going back to the western suburbs, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. They have already accepted that it is impossible for them to be the No. 1 partner; that they will always be the junior partner in a coalition. So they have perpetrated this independence lie on the people of Queensland. Joan Sheldon and the Liberals do not have the guts to stand up to the National Party. Time and time again, they have caved in on this commitment and have done this dirty little deal behind closed doors on three-cornered contests. Members will recall that, at the last election, 14 out of the 26 National Party members were elected on Liberal Party preferences. The Liberals will do the same at the next election. In 1992, a Liberal vote will be just another vote for the Nationals.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.54 a.m. (Wednesday).