

**TUESDAY, 31 AUGUST 1993**

The House met at 10 a.m.

**ABSENCE OF MR SPEAKER**

The Clerk informed the House that Mr Speaker was currently attending the 39th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference in Cyprus.

The Chairman of Committees (Mr H. Palaszczuk, Inala) read prayers and took the chair as Deputy Speaker.

**PRINTING COMMITTEE**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Palaszczuk): Honourable members, I lay upon the table of the House the Printing Committee report on the review of the parliamentary papers series.

Ordered to be printed.

**ELECTORAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMISSION****Report**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that today I received from the Chairman of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission the report on appeals from administrative decisions.

Ordered to be printed.

**PETITIONS**

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

**Kindergarten Funding**

From **Mr Fenlon** (76 signatories) praying that sufficient funds be provided in the 1993-94 Budget to enable State Education Department subsidies (SEDS) to continue to provide adequate funding for community kindergartens and that extra funding be also provided for the Creche and Kindergarten Association.

A similar petition was received from **Mr McGrady** (42 signatories).

**Nursing; Health Services**

From **Mr Beattie** (470 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will reject attempts in the 1993-94 Budget to tamper with the nursing career structure and ensure

that prioritisation of health by the Commonwealth Government is not hindered by the actions of the Queensland Government.

**Education Funding**

From **Mr Springborg** (417 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will not cut educational funding which would result in the lowering of the quality of education.

**Education Funding**

From **Mrs McCauley** (280 signatories) praying that there be no cuts to education spending in the 1993-94 Budget.

**Closure of Railway Lines**

From **Mr Hobbs** (2 250 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will reverse the decision to close railway lines in central and south-west Queensland.

**Eagle Junction-Pinkenba Railway Services**

From **Mr Santoro** (316 signatories) praying that the Minister for Transport will not continue with the proposed termination of passenger rail services along the Eagle Junction-Pinkenba railway line.

**Education Funding**

From **Mr Slack** (505 signatories) praying that the status quo be maintained in current school situations and that overall funding to education be maintained or increased as needs demand.

Petitions received.

**STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS**

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

Associations Incorporation Act—

Associations Incorporation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1993, No. 331

Carriage of Goods by Land (Carriers' Liabilities) Repeal Act—

Proclamation-provisions of the Act not in force commence 1 October 1993, No. 323

Collections Act—

Collections Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1993, No. 330

Corporations (Queensland) Act—

Corporations (Queensland) Rules  
Amendment Order (No. 1) 1993, No. 326

Credit Act—  
Credit (Continuing Credit Contracts-Fees  
and Charges) Amendment Order (No. 1)  
1993, No. 329

Fishing Industry Organisation and Marketing  
Act—  
Fishing Industry Organisation and  
Marketing Amendment Regulation (No. 5)  
1993, No. 324

Health Services Act—  
Health Services (Transfer of Officers)  
Regulation (No. 2) 1993, No. 333

Juvenile Justice Act—  
Juvenile Justice Regulation 1993,  
No. 314. This instrument replaces  
previous instrument No. 314 tabled on 24  
August 1993.

Land Act—  
Land (Toowoomba Sports Ground Trust)  
By-law 1993, No. 332

Mineral Resources Act—  
Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation  
(No. 11) 1993, No. 334

Queensland Building Services Authority Act—  
Queensland Building Services Authority  
Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1993,  
No. 325

Regulatory Reform Act—  
Regulatory Reform Amendment  
Regulation (No. 1) 1993, No. 335

Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act—  
Proclamation—amendments 3 and 6 to 9  
of the *Collections Act 1966* commence  
1 September 1993, No. 328

Supreme Court Act—  
Corporations (Queensland) Rules  
Amendment Order (No. 1) 1993, No. 326  
Supreme Court Rules Amendment Order  
(No. 6) 1993, No. 327.

## PAPERS

The following papers were laid upon the  
table of the House—

- (a) The Treasurer (Mr De Lacy)—  
Reports for 1991-92—  
Registrar of Commercial Acts on the  
administration of the Friendly  
Societies Act 1991 and the Building  
Societies Act 1985  
Registrar of Co-operative and Other  
Societies on the administration of  
the Co-operative and Other  
Societies Act 1967

Registrar of Co-operative Housing  
Societies on the administration of  
the Co-operative Housing Societies  
Act 1958

- (b) Minister for Health (Mr Hayward)—  
Women's Health Policy Queensland—  
Document Four 1993.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Indy Car Grand Prix

**Hon. R. J. GIBBS** (Bundamba— Minister  
for Tourism, Sport and Racing) (10.06 a.m.),  
by leave: I am pleased to be able to end  
speculation on future of the Gold Coast Indy  
Car Grand Prix by announcing that the State  
Government will support next year's event.  
Our support for the Indy concept has always  
been on the basis of a medium to long-term  
investment in an event which is far more than  
just a car race. It is unquestionably a cost-  
effective promotional tool for Queensland in  
the world's largest outbound tourist markets,  
with North America obviously prime among  
them.

Queensland taxpayers have a substantial  
investment in the event, and each year their  
return has climbed. There is no doubt,  
however, that expenditure levels of previous  
years cannot be maintained indefinitely and  
that Indy must find its feet. I believe that a  
ground swell of momentum is gathering  
behind Indy now that the hard work has been  
by and large completed. Major factors, such  
as the existence of an underwriter for ticket  
sales and considerable commercial  
sponsorship, are already in place for next  
year. Indeed, other State Governments have  
indicated their interest in staging the event if  
Queensland wanted to withdraw.

I will detail some of the findings of a  
Government statistician's office report into the  
economic effects of the Indy Car event. I must  
emphasise that these figures are essentially  
conservative. They are based on effects on  
gross State product and do not measure  
output. They do not include the economic  
input of Queenslanders, who make up the  
bulk of the crowd. They do not include  
potential medium to long-term benefits such  
as increased tourism which will flow from the  
event's international television exposure.

For example, the Queensland Tourist and  
Travel Corporation's Los Angeles office  
reported that, after a Queensland commercial  
aired during US network coverage of last  
year's race, it received more than twice the  
number of inquiries in the ensuing month.  
More than 1 000 journalists from 15 countries

were accredited to cover the 1993 event. It was telecast in 90 countries. The race was picked up last year by the American ABC network, which reaches virtually every household in that country. We could never afford to give Queensland so prominent a spot on the world's stage through traditional means.

As well as its advertising value, the 1993 Indy Car Grand Prix generated an additional \$14.4m in gross State product—a 42 per cent increase on the previous year. It added 120 000 visitor nights to the Coast's economy. Interstate and international travellers spent 45 000 visitor nights in hotels and motels and a further 24 000 in rented houses and flats, making Indy the second busiest week in the Coast's calendar. Commercial occupancy rates ran at 71 per cent—10 per cent up on the previous year. More than 10 000 visitor nights outside the Gold Coast were spent in Queensland by people who came to see the Indy.

The Queensland Government has recognised the Indy week as an investment in the State's fastest-growing industry and will support next year's event. Our \$5m contribution will be administered by the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, which has the expertise and enthusiasm to capitalise on the money and effort so far expended in establishing the Indy. There is nothing I have seen from the private bidders which has done anything but reinforce this view. I believe that our support—and changes to management structures that I will announce later today—will send the private sector the signals for which it has been looking, and it will end the vacuum of uncertainty in which potential investors have been unsettled by rumour and speculation.

I am calling on the leaders of the two parties opposite to throw their weight behind the event. The last thing it needs is for the State's political leaders to be bogged down in a fanciful debate over whether Jim Kennedy's appointment to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation was the result of some imaginary conspiracy involving the Indy. I can assure honourable members that it was not. Jim Kennedy is genuinely proud to serve Queensland, and his acumen was of tremendous benefit to the State and to members opposite when they were in Government.

The reason I make this call is that I have been contacted by investors who have indicated that the only impediment to their sponsorship is the threat of being involved in a

political dogfight. It is time that the leaders of the Nationals and the Liberals got behind what I believe is an event with a great future that will help to enrich our State's tourist future.

## QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

### 1. Mabo

Mr BORBIDGE asked the Minister for Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs—

“With reference to the recent welcome but belated agreement between this Government and the Commonwealth to validate Comalco's Weipa leases in response to the Wik-Mabo claim—

Will she now give this agreement her unequivocal support and does she intend to take a prominent role in convincing Aboriginal Queenslanders of the need to override the Wik claim on the grounds of economic development and jobs?”

**Ms WARNER:** I support the non-discriminatory legislation which has been made necessary by the Mabo decision relating to native title. I intend to take a prominent role in the protection of indigenous rights in Queensland. My Government will do everything in its power to protect the civil rights of all Queenslanders. For the information of members opposite, that includes indigenous people and other minority groups who have been so cruelly suppressed by the former Government of which the member for Surfers Paradise was a representative and which he now leads in Opposition.

### 2. Legal Obligations of Public Officials

Mr SANTORO asked the Minister for Justice, Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts—

“Does a legal obligation exist on a public official who may be on secondment to a public sector union for a set period (eg elected president) and who may still be receiving part or full remuneration from the public purse and accumulating service for the purposes of final calculation of his/her State service superannuation payout, to report "official misconduct" to a proper authority as per obligations under the Criminal Justice Act 1989 which he/she may become aware of in dealing with 'a unit of public administration'?”

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

Leave granted.

The Criminal Justice Act 1989 does not impose any general obligations on members of the public or on public officials to report conduct that is perceived as, or may be, official misconduct.

Section 2.28 of the Act does impose a duty on—

the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, ie, the Ombudsman;

on the Principal Officer in a unit of Public Administration (apart from the Commissioner of Police; and

on any person who constitutes a corporate entity which is a unit of Public Administration

to refer to the Complaints Section of the Official Misconduct Division of the Criminal Justice Commission all matters which those persons suspect involve, or may involve official misconduct.

Section 2.28 also imposes a specific duty on the Commissioner of Police to refer to the Complaints Section all complaints of or matters involving suspected misconduct by members of the Police Service, whether such complaints and matters arise within or from outside the Police Service.

So far as police are concerned, s. 7.2 of the Police Service Administration Act 1990 requires any officer or staff member of the Police Service to report to the Commissioner and to the Complaints Section of the Official Misconduct Division, any conduct of an officer wherever and whenever occurring, and whether the officer whose conduct is in question is on or off duty at the time the conduct occurs.

Regulation 7 of the Public Service Management and Employment Regulation 1988 requires any supervisor of an officer of the public service who becomes aware of any action which might make the officer liable to disciplinary action under the Public Service Management and Employment Act to ensure that the chief executive is made aware of the circumstances.

Unless the public official referred to in the Honourable Member's question falls within one of the categories which I have mentioned, he or she is under no legal obligation to report suspected official misconduct of which he or she may become aware when dealing with a unit of public administration.

### 3. Primary Industries Department, Strategic Policy Unit

Mr PERRETT asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

“With reference to the Strategic Policy Unit within his department—

- (1) What is the authorised establishment for that unit, including classification and salary levels?
- (2) What is the actual staff commitment to the unit and its associated activities?
- (3) What is the actual full year real cost of the unit, including staff on-costs, travel, office accommodation, motor vehicles and telephone costs?

**Mr CASEY:** (1) The Strategic Policy Unit plays a critical role in the Department of Primary Industries through its functions of planning, policy and performance assessment across the breadth of departmental activities. Creation of the unit was recommended by the Public Sector Management Commission, and its staffing establishment of 30 persons accords with the recommendations of the commission. Classification levels range from SES Level 3 for the director to AO2 for administrative assistance. The salary levels accord with this classification range.

(2) The present actual staff commitment is 28 persons.

(3) The actual full-year cost of the unit in 1992-93 was \$1.903m.

### 4. Prisoner Training

Mr CONNOR asked the Minister for Consumer Affairs and Corrective Services—

“Is the Corrective Services Commission claiming funding from the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (known as DEET) for the training of serving prisoners?”

**Mr MILLINER:** The Queensland Corrective Services Commission does not claim funds from the Department of Employment, Education and Training—DEET. If Commonwealth funds are available through DEET for prisoner training, the Queensland Corrective Services Commission will be quite happy to apply for them. This is one way that the State and the Queensland Corrective Services Commission can make the available dollars go further.

Some funds were provided by DEET under the Aboriginal deaths in custody provisions some years ago—1989-91—to train Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders. Unfortunately, that allocation was a one-off and available only for a limited period. These

funds, which had to be expended by July 1992, were utilised to provide prerelease training for ATSI inmates in southern Queensland. The manager of that project reported to a joint DEET, QCSC and ATSI community management committee.

DEET funds are made available to community groups to assist released prisoners and prisoners near release to improve their chances of obtaining employment. ACRO—A Community Safety and Research Organisation Incorporated—receives DEET funds to run the Wacol Job Club, which assists unemployed people to improve their employment opportunities. A significant focus for this activity is the prerelease prisoner population at the nearby correctional centres. For DEET funds to be made available to any organisation, they have to be applied for, meet the guidelines set by DEET for the program and be subject to appropriate reporting and auditing requirements.

#### 5. Cairns Central State School

Mr QUINN asked the Minister for Education—

“With reference to an additional \$5.5m allocated in the Federal Budget for the development of the Cairns Campus of the James Cook University—

Will the sale of the Cairns Central State School still proceed and, if so, for what reason?”

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

Leave granted.

The Commonwealth Government has indicated its willingness to fund an election promise made by the Prime Minister in Cairns on 2 March 1993 to finance a second stage of development of the new Cairns campus of James Cook University.

It is expected that capital funding of the order of \$5.5 million will be provided late in the 1990s depending on enrolment growth at the new campus the first stage of which is due for completion in mid-1995.

I am advised that the bulk of the additional \$5.5 million now offered by the Commonwealth will not become available before 1997, and the associated building could not be completed before 1998—much too late for the start of the Smithfield campus.

In all, the capital development of the Smithfield campus will cost in the region of \$100 million, over the next 15-20 years. Such development is necessarily funded in manageable stages, depending on demand and enrolment growth.

The State's \$6 million contribution announced in February 1993, derived from the sale of the Cairns Central Primary School, was made to accelerate the start of the development, and to ensure that the first stage will provide adequate accommodation for staff, students, and library and computing facilities. \$2 million of these funds have already been advanced by the State and the balance will be paid by July 1994. Planning is well underway, with a view to construction commencing in February or March 1994.

Without this State contribution, the first Commonwealth funding stage (\$9.5 million) would be substantially absorbed in providing essential infrastructure, resulting in inadequate accommodation from day one.

Since 1990, the Commonwealth and State governments together have supported a significant growth in regional opportunities in higher education in Queensland, and plans are in place to sustain the development of this program until the turn of the century. The State is conscious that funding of higher education is primarily a Commonwealth responsibility, but the Queensland Government recognises, in this instance, that this important higher education facility may not have proceeded without the funding from the State Government. Apart from providing much-needed educational facilities for Queensland students, it will also enhance the continued economic and social viability of regional communities.

The State Government's funding for this valuable and valued higher education facility will be provided through the sale of the site of the Cairns Central State School. The students, teachers and resources currently attending this school will be relocated to nearby schools. The quality of education students currently receive will be maintained. And, in addition, Cairns and its students will benefit from the construction and opening of the Cairns campus of James Cook University in 1995.

There is therefore no plan to reconsider the sale of the Cairns Central Primary School.

#### 6. Teachers

Mr QUINN asked the Minister for Education—

“With reference to his indication to the House that no secondary teacher will lose his/her job because of the Government's education cutbacks—

- (1) How many teachers contracted until the end of the year are having their employment prematurely terminated now with as little as one week's notice?
- (2) Is this his definition of an internal adjustment?

- (3) What is the difference between this action and his claim that no teacher will be sacked?"

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

Leave granted.

- (1) The Department does not employ teachers under contract. Teachers are employed on a temporary basis under section 34 of the Public Sector Management and Employment Act 1988. Conditions of employment for temporary teachers includes the ability to cease employment on the provision of one weeks notice. This provision is notified to teachers at the time of their employment. Regional staffing officers advise that a small number of temporary engagements have been ceased ahead of the date initially scheduled, but teachers were still given one weeks notice according to the provisions of employment. These have arisen because of changes in sick leave approvals and to provide for enrolment variations. I am advised in the overwhelming majority of situations each temporary teacher fulfils the full period of the engagement as originally specified.

- (2) The Department of Education, as the largest employer in the State, regularly makes changes to its staffing arrangements to suit particular needs, such as student enrolments and needs.

To suggest that the Department should not have the ability to have flexibility, or make internal adjustments, in its staffing arrangements simply fails to recognise the dynamic nature of the schools and the Department of Education.

- (3) The cessation of temporary employment on the provision of the required notice in response to changed circumstances is not the "sacking" of an employee. The conditions under which the person was employed provide for cessation of employment. It is standard public service practice and does not relate to the employment of permanent officers.

By contrast, I draw honourable members attention to a report in Saturday's *Weekend Australian*.

I challenge members opposite to condemn the policies of their colleagues in Victoria which will see a \$145 million cut to education spending and the sacking of up 2400 teachers.

This policy of the Liberal and National parties was confirmed by the Victorian Premier and a senior Government backbencher on Saturday.

I quote from the *Weekend Australian* report:

"The Premier of Victoria, Mr Kennett, has refused to rule out sackings of teachers . . ."

It goes on to say:

". . . a senior government backbencher confirmed last night the coalition would 'naturally' impose compulsory retrenchments if the present targets were not achieved."

The senior backbencher, Mr Craig Bildstein said:

"Clearly, staffing reductions will be made which will affect all schools in the State."

The report indicates that when asked if he could guarantee teachers would not be sacked Education Minister, Mr Hayward, replied:

"Of course, I can not give that assurance . . . I think it is very foolish when you rule out anything."

Unlike my Victorian counterpart, I can absolutely rule out the sacking of teachers and any cuts to this State's education budget.

## 7. Sister-State Relationship with Central Java

Mrs EDMOND asked the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development—

"How successful has the establishment of a Sister-State relationship with the Indonesian Province of Central Java been?"

**Mr HAMILL:** By any measure, the sister-State relationship that Queensland enjoys with the Indonesian province of Central Java has been an outstanding success. The partnership has provided a framework for increased Government and business contact, which has in turn resulted in considerable export growth and a deeper level of cross-cultural understanding.

Since 1989, Queensland exports to Indonesia have more than doubled to reach \$173m. In the last year alone, cotton exports have doubled to \$28m. In just two years, Indonesia has moved from being Queensland's fifteenth to our tenth-largest trading partner. In addition to cotton, a number of joint ventures have been established and the marketing of technical consultancy services has increased. It is also estimated that in excess of \$3m has been earned in new payments from fee-paying Indonesian students in Queensland educational institutions, including our private colleges and TAFEs.

Cultural links between Queensland and Central Java have also been strengthened over the last three years. Our sister-State relationship has been instrumental in the further development of Indonesian language skills in our schools, and it is worth noting that Central Java is giving strong support to the Brisbane City Council through this year's Warana Festival with its theme of "Warana Celebrates Indonesia".

Queensland and Central Java have established a relationship of substance based on common interests, which will continue to strengthen and deliver mutual benefits into the future.

## 8. Women's Health

Mrs EDMOND asked the Minister for Health—

"What is he doing to improve the health status of women in Queensland, given that studies show that women are significantly disadvantaged in their personal well-being and hence in their health?"

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

Leave granted.

Last week, I was pleased to release the Queensland Women's Health Policy, a first for any Queensland Government. Queensland women now have a clear statement of health strategies to address their specific needs. No other government in this state has addressed women's health issues in as comprehensive and integrated way.

Women's health is an important issue for the whole Queensland community. This policy consolidates the direction already being taken by the Goss Government in expanding existing health services for women and developing new ones.

I am particularly pleased to see that so many - in fact, hundreds—of consumers and providers of health services throughout the State were involved in the development of this policy. During the consultation process, we took on board the vast range of concerns of different groups, associations and individual women from as far north as Weipa, and west to Longreach, and along the coastal strip of the State.

I know we are on the right track because the Policy has received support from the Queensland Women's Health Advisory Committee, the Brisbane Women's Health Centre, the Australian Pensioners and Superannuants League—to name just a few.

The policy provides a three year strategic plan with two of the most significant programs being the provision of funding for women's health centres and sexual assault services across the state. We will also continue to expand the Mobile Women's Health Program in rural and isolated areas; establish and maintain rape crisis/sexual assault support services; improve birthing options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; implement the Queensland Cervical Cancer Prevention Program; and implement women's health training programs for general practitioners, health workers and nurses.

One particular strategy worth noting in this year of the Indigenous Peoples is the commitment to establish an accredited specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Women's Health Worker Course. The Women's Health Policy is a credit to Queensland women, as it provides a blueprint for the future, guaranteeing a higher level of health care for all women.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### PSMC Report on Health System

**Mr BORBIDGE:** In directing a question to the Minister for Health, I refer to the crisis in Queensland's health system and to comments by AMA President, Dr Robert Hodge this morning in which he states that the Public Sector Management Commission has done "a complete investigation of the misallocation of funds in the Health Department and that report has been suppressed". I ask: why has the Minister failed to release this report? In view of widespread community concern over mismanagement in the health system, when will he do so?

**Mr HAYWARD:** From reading the article in today's *Courier-Mail*, which is headed "On state Budget eve" and which could be expressed as a fairly strong shroud-waving exercise by a number of doctors, I think the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the Health budget efficiency review. In the course of time, I will cover the detail of the *Courier-Mail* article.

In January 1983, the Cabinet Budget Review Committee, in consultation with me, commissioned a review to identify and analyse cost pressures in the Queensland health system. The idea of that was to develop strategies to address those pressures while maintaining the delivery of quality public health services to Queenslanders.

The Cabinet Budget Review Committee considered a summary of those recommendations on 30 June 1993. What has been misunderstood by the Leader of the Opposition, and certainly by the president elect of the AMA, is that this review report is a

Cabinet document and forms part of the deliberations of the Cabinet in relation to the formation of the State Budget.

**Mr Borbidge:** Ha, ha!

**Mr HAYWARD:** If the Leader of the Opposition were in Cabinet, he would understand what it is about. The review process commenced in February 1993. It was conducted by senior officers of the Public Sector Management Commission, Treasury, and the Office of the Cabinet. The review found scope for achieving greater efficiencies in the health system. However, it is important to understand that its focus was on finding those efficiencies in the non-clinical area. The clinical area must be maintained and must be improved. This process involves the freeing up of resources in the non-clinical area and directing more money into patient areas.

These efficiency measures are under consideration in the Budget preparations for this year. They were also taken into account in the Interim Budget Statement released in Cairns. They have focused principally on the reduction of management overheads and corporate overheads within Queensland Health. I am determined to attack those overheads, reduce the money that is spent in those areas, and use that money to increase the services and funding available in the clinical area. Quite simply, this is all about ensuring that we are able to provide more resources to enable operations to be carried out.

### Health Funding

**Mr BORBIDGE:** In directing a further question to the Minister for Health, I refer again to the crisis in Queensland's health system and to comments made in this morning's *Courier-Mail* by AMA President, Dr Robert Hodge, that—

“Over the last four years we have increased health spending by half a billion dollars, but we have nothing to show for it.

. . .

They have wasted millions and millions of dollars on bureaucracy and airy-fairy schemes. But it has not transferred into improving direct clinical care.”

I ask the Minister: is it the truth that the secret, suppressed PSMC report is a damning indictment of his Government's management of the health system? If not, will he now release it? What action has the Minister taken

to correct the misallocation of funds identified by the review of his department so that the additional health spending in this year's Budget results in improved service delivery?

**Mr HAYWARD:** The honourable member makes reference to comments made by Dr Robert Hodge, who said—

“Down the track, we've now spent half a billion dollars more, but in fact we're worse off.”

Finally, in a newspaper article in Queensland, the real position on health spending is stated. Opposition members, in conjunction with the Australian Medical Association, have been running around talking about an amount of over half a billion dollars. Now, there is an opportunity for those members opposite who can read to actually read what the exact Budget increase has been.

**Mr Borbidge:** They're the estimates, not what was spent.

**Mr HAYWARD:** No, it is not about estimates.

**Mr Borbidge** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! The Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr HAYWARD:** It is not a matter of estimates. The figures are there for everybody to see. When one relies on an article such as this—which I shall talk about in some detail—one does so at some risk. The second paragraph of that article states—

“Heart disease kills one in three Queenslanders every year . . .”

I am not sure what that means, but it indicates to me that, from the point of view of heart disease, 30 of the 89 MPs in this place are going to be in real trouble by the end of the year.

Another section of the article refers to “The Victim” and states “Heart attack while waiting”. This article paints the picture that the victim is in fact deceased. I point out to honourable members that the person who is the victim in the case referred to in this article is known to both me and my wife personally. One gets the impression from this article that Mrs Beyers is deceased. I assure honourable members that Mrs Beyers had her hair cut yesterday by my wife. The best that my wife Jan could say was that Mrs Beyers was at least fairly sheepish while she was getting her hair cut, but she certainly was not deceased.

There has been a very strong commitment by this Government to increase funding for health services in Queensland. In the area of cardiac surgery, that has meant an



increase in funding this year of 23.4 per cent over the amount provided last year. In relation to angioplasty surgery, the increase in funding is 17.11 per cent over the amount provided for the previous year.

**Mr Borbidge:** Release the report.

**Mr HAYWARD:** The Leader of the Opposition talks about releasing the report. He should refer to the Budget announcements that were made in Cairns. Very clearly, those announcements suggested certain measures, one of which refers to the QE II/PA Hospitals rationalisation. The second measure refers to the reduction in management overheads. It mentions duplication of central corporate service activities, and it refers to the nurses, career structure and the unnecessary bureaucracy within that structure. I have made the point very clearly that this Government will achieve savings in those non-clinical areas.

Certain measures were addressed in that Interim Budget Statement relating to finding efficiencies in hospital services, in areas such as cleaning, laundry and meals. The report is about finding savings in non-clinical areas so that we can free up those resources in order to supply more funding in the clinical areas. On the basis of that, and the statements made in the Interim Budget Statement, I look forward to the support of the Opposition Leader and other members opposite in implementing those non-clinical budget measures.

### Education Budget

**Mr PITT:** I ask the Premier: is he aware of weekend comments by the President of the Queensland Teachers Union that an additional \$36.5m would be needed for Education in this year's Budget? Can the Premier say whether or not this figure is a good benchmark against which to measure the appropriateness of the Education budget on Thursday?

**Mr W. K. GOSS:** Yes. I note that in recent days there has been another feature in the *Courier-Mail* wherein the President of the Teachers Union, Ms Kelly, was quoted as saying that the Government will have to provide an additional \$36.5m in the Budget to maintain school services at 1992-93 levels. This Government can say proudly that, each and every year, it has increased substantially the Education Department budget. We have placed on education and education spending the higher priority that was needed in this State. We have brought it from way below the national average to very close to the national

average. I predict that, this year, if not next year, we will be at the national level. That is a remarkable achievement in just three or four Budgets.

It becomes difficult to maintain those kinds of increases each and every year. It is a difficult task in these tough economic times simply to maintain current programs and services. I believe that all mature and reasonable Queenslanders would understand that. I hope that Ms Kelly would include herself in that group of Queenslanders. She has said that an additional \$36.5m would be required to maintain school services at last year's levels.

In response to the member's question as to whether or not that is a reasonable benchmark—I think it probably is a reasonable benchmark. Despite the difficulty of meeting that benchmark requirement of \$36.5m to maintain last year's programs and services in this Budget, I believe that the Government will at least be able to do that and at least meet Ms Kelly's benchmark in this Budget.

### Taiwanese Investment in Queensland

**Mr PITT:** In directing a question to the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development, I refer to an article in this morning's *Australian Financial Review* which reports on a proposed \$200m investment by the Taiwanese Sugar Corporation in Mackay, and I ask: can the Minister inform the House what trade and investment potential Taiwan offers Queensland?

**Mr HAMILL:** In May 1991, the Queensland Government, through the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation, took the initiative of opening a trade and investment office in Taipei. If ever we had to evaluate investments, that one would have to have been evaluated as a very beneficial investment for Queensland. In fact, last year, exports from Queensland to Taiwan totalled some \$446m. That total has been growing rapidly over recent years. We have also seen a significant flow of investment back here into Queensland from Taiwan. Indeed, south-east Queensland hosts a very vibrant expatriate Taiwanese community who are not only making their homes here in south-east Queensland but investing here, as well. Some \$3m worth of new investment has flowed to Queensland during this time.

One of the most exciting developments on the horizon is the \$250m bagasse plant that is proposed for the Mackay area. My

colleague the Minister for Primary Industries has also worked very hard on this project because it offers a real opportunity for very substantial investment in Queensland. This mill is, effectively, the relocation of a pulp mill from Taiwan to Queensland. If this project goes ahead, it will cement further the very strong relationship which is being developed between Taiwan and Queensland.

The export growth between Queensland and Taiwan is occurring not only in the industrial sector but also in the sale of consultancy work. Indeed, one Queensland firm has been successful recently in negotiating a \$13.5m contract for engineering services in Taiwan. As the member for Mulgrave would appreciate, there has been substantial growth as well in sugar exports from Queensland. From the time that we established our relationship through the Queensland office in Taipei, we saw the first sugar from Queensland sold on the Taiwanese market—a modest start in early 1992 of 25 000 tonnes. That grew to 79 000 tonnes last year, which was the entire Taiwanese import of raw sugar. Because of increasing urban growth, Taiwan is going to need more raw sugar over future years, and it is expected that, by 1997, Taiwan will be seeking the supply of 300 000 tonnes of raw sugar. I assure the House that Queensland stands ready to fill the whole of that contract.

### Hospital Waiting Lists

**Mrs SHELDON:** I direct my first question to the Minister for Health. On 2 March this year, the Minister was asked to confirm whether patients had died while on public hospital waiting lists. He said—

“The claim by the Opposition, which was apparently based on some information supplied to it by the AMA . . . is absolutely wrong.”

In light of that answer, I ask: does the Minister stand by that claim, and others that he has made, that Queenslanders awaiting cardiac surgery are not dying while on waiting lists?

**Mr HAYWARD:** The point that was made before about this issue relates to this particular *Courier-Mail* story today. The issue of whether or not a person is in need of cardiac surgery and the priority that their case is given at a particular hospital—in this case, the Prince Charles Hospital—is determined by the clinicians. On the basis of those priorities, those people are treated.

As I said on 2 March, if I recall correctly, if everybody in this Chamber could predict when someone is going to have a heart attack and, more particularly, if they could predict when someone is going to have a heart attack and die, then I am sure that we would not all be sitting here. If a member had the ability to determine that, he or she would have considerable opportunity to resolve many of the problems in the health system.

The strength of the health system is simply this: people are treated on the basis of their assessed medical priority, and that priority is not determined by me. If it was determined by me, how is it that I find myself reading a story about a lady who lives in Burpengary, whom I know personally, and whose husband is now saying that she had some difficulty accessing the public health system? If the priority was determined by me, obviously that would not happen. It is determined on the basis of clinical need. That should be understood by everybody in this place. I am sure that it is understood by most people.

On that basis, we are moving to address a number of issues. We have increased the number of angioplasties by 20 per cent this year over the previous year, which was 17 per cent over the year before that. We are moving to establish a cardiac unit in north Queensland. The effect of establishing a unit in north Queensland will be to redress many of the problems caused by the historic neglect of cardiac surgery. The article written by Dr Robert Hodge states—

“. . . Queensland has not caught up with Australia since the stringent Joh era.

‘For a long time Queensland’s incidence of interventions in cardiac surgery, including both surgery and angioplasties, has been below the national average,’ he said.”

We acknowledge that historic neglect in Queensland, but it is being addressed. It is also being addressed through the development of a primary health care policy, which provides a long-term strategy for people in the areas of illness prevention and health promotion. We are focusing very much on those issues. However, in answer to the honourable member’s first point—treatment is determined by medical specialists on the basis of clinical priority.

### Hospital Waiting Lists

**Mrs SHELDON:** I also direct my next question to the Minister for Health. In light of

his answer, I table a letter to the Chief Executive of the Princess Alexandra Hospital from Associate Professor and Director of Cardiology, Stan Woodhouse, stating that a patient at that hospital died on 2 May this year while awaiting vital surgery—which, if carried out, would have saved his life. I table also an internal memo detailing that up until 31 May this year five people had died while on waiting lists for cardiac surgery. In view of the Minister's incredible answer to my previous question, which did not refer to the *Courier-Mail* article but referred to people dying in Princess Alexandra Hospital, and in view of this letter and memo in which a doctor states that those people died while on his waiting list—which proves that he has misled this House—I ask: will he now resign as Health Minister?

**Mr HAYWARD:** The short answer is, "No."

### Mabo

**Mr LIVINGSTONE:** I ask the Premier: has he seen comments by Townsville academic Henry Reynolds about the position of certain State Premiers, including himself, in relation to the Mabo issue? Can the Premier inform the House of the Government's response to these comments?

**Mr W. J. GOSS:** The debate in relation to the High Court's Mabo decision is a complex one and, at times, a heated one. It is not assisted by extreme comments and inaccurate comments, whether they come from some of the more extreme sections of the mining community or whether they come from people such as Professor Reynolds. His claims are untrue. The suggestion that he makes of some other Premiers and me conducting an anti-Mabo campaign is not true. Indeed, if he was a bit more honest, Professor Reynolds would acknowledge that the legislation passed by the Queensland Parliament two years ago would have given Mr Mabo and those other plaintiffs their land as claimed on an uncontested basis.

That is the difference between this Government and previous Governments of this State when it comes to the treatment of Aboriginal and Islander people. Queensland has a long and sorry history in terms of the rights of Aboriginal and Islander people, both under the previous Government and under Labor Governments prior to that. It is not something of which we should be particularly proud. It is something that, hopefully, we can address over time. But it is untrue to say that this Government is anti-Mabo. We passed legislation. We contacted the representatives

of Mabo and pointed out that they could have the land uncontested under the general Queensland legislation. They were interested in pursuing their test case and their rights in the court.

There is another point that needs to be made about Professor Reynolds. His scathing criticism arises out of the particular circumstances of the Weipa situation and the request by the Queensland Government for the Federal Government to validate mining leases which had been in operation for about 35 years. But did Professor Reynolds level the same criticism at the Federal Government when it proposed the same course of action in respect of every title issued since 1975—hundreds of thousands of titles? No, Professor Reynolds and his wife, the senator, did not level that criticism at the Federal Government at that time. Did Professor Reynolds level that criticism against the Federal Government when the Federal Government did exactly the same thing in respect of the McArthur River project in the Northern Territory? No, Professor Reynolds did not. Do the professor and the senator now level the same criticism at the Prime Minister and the Federal Government in respect of the general decision taken by Federal Cabinet to validate all titles back to 1788? No, they do not.

This raises the question: why has there been this convenient selection of the facts? Why has there been this convenient analysis of this situation by this particular academic and his subsequent public comment? I think Professor Reynolds' silence on those other issues compared with his outspoken comments in relation to this Government and this particular case speaks for itself.

### Animals Protection Legislation

**Mr LIVINGSTONE:** In directing a question to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning, I refer to statements appearing in the Sunday press that the Government was likely to withdraw funding from the RSPCA and that the society's inspectors would not have protection from prosecution. I ask: can he advise the House of the Government's position on these two points?

**Mr MACKENROTH:** Last week, I stated that the Government supports the RSPCA and supports the work that it does. In the four years that we have been in office, our Government has increased funding to the RSPCA by some 1 000 per cent. There has been no threat to the RSPCA that funding will be withdrawn. I can place on record today that, irrespective of what is said by the

RSPCA, our Government will continue to fund that organisation in the way that it has been funding it. The type of funding that our Government has made available to the RSPCA will continue to be made available, so the statement appearing in Sunday's press that we are likely to withdraw the funding is completely untrue.

In relation to statements that are being made about inspectors and suggestions that there will be no protection for them under the new legislation—that is incorrect. In the draft legislation that the RSPCA has received, clause 78 gives protection from liability to authorised officers, who are the RSPCA inspectors. I ask the RSPCA to read that particular clause. I understand that today the RSPCA has delivered a letter to, perhaps, all members of Parliament. I will go through the letter, which states in part that all members would be aware that I, Terry Mackenroth, have "drawn up a new draft Animals Protection Bill". The letter confirmed that the RSPCA had received the Bill, and then goes on to state that the Bill "merely confirms what we have known for more than a year."

The letter states that it was me who drew up the Bill, but I have not even been the Minister for a year yet. That is the first point. The letter goes on to state—

"The Minister's idea of consultation has been to inform the Society of what he intended to do regardless of any other advice, opinion or view and to expect the Society to toe his line."

I would like to state quite clearly the situation. When I became the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning, which includes responsibility for animal welfare, Cabinet had already agreed to draw up legislation, so the legislation was in the process of being written by Parliamentary Counsel when I was appointed. I received that legislation three, four, or maybe five weeks ago. That was the first input I had, because the legislation was being drawn up, and I waited until it had been drawn up.

Before the legislation was provided to the RSPCA, Mr Terry Wright started to criticise it, and that was before even I had seen a copy of it. As soon as I received a copy of it, I asked the RSPCA president to come to see me, which he did—as did Mr Wright. At that meeting, I informed them that I would provide them with a draft copy of the Bill. The only thing that I said would be non-negotiable—I repeat "the only thing that I said would be non-negotiable"—would be the section relating to the obtaining of warrants to search

properties. I explained to them that if it was necessary in an emergency situation for officers to go onto a property, they would not need a warrant. At that time, I provided them with the relevant sections and explained that to them. In the letter that I sent to the society with the draft Bill, I stated—

"You should note that the Government is in the process of formulating its final position."

At the end of the letter I stated—

"The Government is keen to reach a final position on this matter . . ."

I asked them to provide me with their comments, yet now they are saying that I am not prepared to listen.

I have asked them to tell me what they want, but Mr Wright, in running his campaign, has gone throughout the State and to the Sunday papers saying that we are going to take away the society's money, which we are not. Last night, the director-general of my department contacted the president of the RSPCA. I requested the RSPCA to get its whole State Council together so that I can talk to them and tell them what the truth is in relation to our proposed legislation.

#### **Mr P. Coyne**

**Mr LINGARD:** In directing a question to the Minister for Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, I point out that when the CJC made the first inquiry regarding her \$27,000 payment to Peter Coyne, her department advised the CJC that she was able to make payments up to \$50,000, and the CJC in its first report concluded that the payment was lawful. Now the CJC in its second statement has advised that her departmental advice was wrong and that her payment of \$27,000 was unauthorised. I ask: has she taken action against the people of her department who gave the CJC incorrect information?

**Ms WARNER:** I believe that that course of action would be entirely inappropriate. This question has been examined by the Criminal Justice Commission, which has concluded that there is no reasonable basis for any suspicion of official misconduct on the part of any person in relation to the payment to Mr Coyne.

#### **Mr P. Coyne**

**Mr LINGARD:** In directing my second question to the Minister for Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs, I point out that the Crown Solicitor has now advised that the \$27,000 she paid to Peter Coyne is recoverable by the Crown. Now we have the position where the CJC says that her department gave the CJC the wrong information. The Auditor-General agrees that a breach of the Audit Act has occurred. The Crown Solicitor says that the money is recoverable by the Crown. The CJC says that the payment was not lawful, and that is the second statement, not the first report. Now, to cover it all up, she and her department have made a retrospective decision to write off the money as a loss. I also point out that three Ministers went to gaol for less than \$27,000 and members of her Government's front bench have been forced to resign. I ask: why does she not resign?

**Ms WARNER:** I simply refer the honourable member to the answer I gave him before, that the CJC has concluded—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! The Minister shall be heard in silence.

**Ms WARNER:** The CJC, in its wisdom, has concluded—

**Mr Lingard** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Beaudesert has asked a question. I warn the member for Beaudesert.

**Ms WARNER:** The CJC has finally concluded that there is no reasonable basis—

**Mr Lingard** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Beaudesert under Standing Order 123A.

**Ms WARNER:** —for any suspicion of official misconduct on the part of any person in relation to the payment to Mr Coyne.

**Mr Stoneman** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

#### **Government Assistance to Business**

**Mr PYKE:** I ask the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I have not heard the question from the member for Mount Ommaney. The member for Burdekin will cease interjecting. He has been a nuisance all morning.

**Mr PYKE:** I ask the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development: how is the Queensland Government assisting

businesses to access Government information?

**Mr ELDER:** I thank the member for the question. This month, a new initiative called GOBIS, which is the Government Business Information Service, was launched by me. GOBIS will assist the Queensland Business Licence Information Centre to provide complementary information on Government assistance programs. Through QBLIC, we are able to provide business with licensing information within 21 hours. The new program known as GOBIS will provide a single entry point for business into the Government which will enable business to obtain access to all relevant State and Federal Government assistance measures. We will be able to provide the relevant information within 20 minutes and, within 24 hours, a hard copy of that particular information. This will provide business with a fast, efficient and, in particular, free service. It will provide all information that is relevant to business needs and that is relevant to business assistance programs.

At the moment, there are over 1 000 assistance measures in the program. On a daily basis, it is reviewed, and the system itself will be updated on a regular monthly basis to include new programs. The Government has recognised the need for the business community to be able to access business information services through a single entry point. It is an initiative of this Government, and members opposite should support it because, for far too long, businesses have needed to go through a number of departments to access that information. Businesses can now make one call and, after that call, can be directed to the relevant department and, more particularly, the relevant officer responsible for discharging that particular duty. That will save businesses enormous amounts of time. Most importantly, it will save businesses money, and that is the bottom line. As I said, it will complement the Queensland Business Licence Information Centre, which, since it kicked off three years ago, has taken more than 29 000 calls and sent out more than 17 000 sets of licence information this year. Again, a problem was recognised and an initiative was undertaken by this Government, which has been very supportive of the business community.

#### **Wiltshire Report on Queensland School Curriculum**

**Mr PYKE:** I thank the Minister for his very welcome answer. I ask the Minister for Education: will he advise the House what has

been the community response to the interim Wiltshire report on the Queensland school curriculum?

**Mr COMBEN:** The community response has been one of considerable excitement, and it has been very substantial. The responses to the interim report have been coming in from across the State, and I acknowledge the contributions made by the electors of Mount Ommaney and the responses that have been forwarded to me.

When one looks at the issues that have been raised in the interim report—core curriculum, an extra year's schooling, early childhood intervention, vocational academic education, inclusion, and the width of the curriculum—it was inevitable that this most broad-spanning review of the curriculum ever undertaken in Australia would elicit considerable support, excitement, some criticism, but certainly debate. That will always be accepted within the education community.

No decisions have been made. No recommendations have been made. The interim report merely points to certain issues and says that they should be looked at in the final report. I take this opportunity to invite members to suggest to their constituents that there be further participation, that there be responses and that the voices of teachers, parents and students be heard when the Government receives the final report in November.

#### Misleading of Public Officials

**Mr J. N. GOSS:** In directing a question to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, I refer him to section 2.23 of the Criminal Justice Act 1989, and I ask: is it an offence to mislead a public official in carrying out his or her public duties?

**Mr W. K. Goss:** Is this free legal advice?

**Mr WELLS:** Honourable members opposite seem to be cashing in on their position as members of Parliament to get free legal advice from the Government. It is an unusual way of going about it. I realise the hostility that honourable members opposite have to the legal profession. However, it never occurred to me that they would go to such extraordinary lengths to bring about a recession in the legal industry in this State.

Honourable members opposite are so mean and so miserable that day after day they stand up in this House and ask me a question that seeks an opinion on an arcane matter of law. The answer is: perhaps, depending on the circumstances. However, if

the honourable member is interested in pursuing that matter, I invite him to make it his next question and put it on notice, and I will give him a formal legal answer from the legal advisers of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General tomorrow.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Before I call the member for Aspley, I suggest that the House come to some semblance of order. The member for Aspley may ask his second question.

**Mr J. N. GOSS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, can I place that on notice?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Mr J. N. GOSS:** The second question—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I took it that the Attorney asked that the member for Aspley put that question on notice as his second question.

**Mr J. N. GOSS:** No. The Attorney said that he would give an answer to the first question tomorrow.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! All right, the member for Aspley may ask his second question.

**Mr J. N. GOSS:** I will place my second question on notice.

#### Safety in Coalmines

**Mrs WOODGATE:** I ask the Minister for Minerals and Energy: will he advise the House of the situation regarding safety in Queensland coalmines?

**Mr McGRADY:** It is a great matter of pride and satisfaction to me that I can report a steady improvement in safety performances in Queensland coalmines. The latest figures from the Queensland coalmining industry show that, in the last financial year, there was an overall drop in injury frequency rates of 11.1 per cent. The injury frequency rates in open-cut mines dropped by 5.8 per cent from the year before. The injury frequency rate in underground mines dropped by a massive 29.1 per cent, and that certainly is a very good achievement. That means that there were 32 accidents in open-cut mines and 68 in underground mines per million man-hours worked. Unfortunately, last year there was one fatality in an open-cut mine; nevertheless, Australia—and, indeed, Queensland—has one of the best mine safety records in the world. We are also Australia's leading coal producer.

I know that all honourable members would agree with me that safety is a vital issue in any industry. Queensland miners and the Government place great emphasis on safety. Good safety practices are an integral part of the operating procedures in our mines. That is reflected in the low accident frequency rates being recorded.

### Rainfall

**Mrs WOODGATE:** I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: can he report to the House on the impact of recent rains in Queensland?

**Mr CASEY:** The lifesaving rains that we have had in Queensland in recent days have been of tremendous benefit to Queensland's primary industries sector and to the townships of rural and country Queensland. The moderate to heavy rainfall was received right across the central and western districts. However, only scattered falls were reported across the Darling Downs and Maranoa. The heaviest rainfalls recorded for the period 27 to 30 August 1993 occurred at the following centres: Tambo, 75mm; Windorah, 75mm; Winton, 75mm; Emerald, 60 to 100mm; Alpha, 75mm; Pine Hills, 140mm; Jericho, 70mm; Quilpie, 55mm; and even right out in Bedourie, they got 40 to 70mm.

**An honourable member:** How much did Bedourie get?

**Mr CASEY:** Forty to 70mm out there in tiny Bedourie in the Channel Country.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. I am having terrible difficulty in hearing what the Minister is saying. I am interested in the rain results from out west.

**Mr CASEY:** Most of that rain fell on the areas with lighter soil and in the Central Highlands and will be very, very beneficial. If the unseasonal warm conditions continue, the rain will generate grazing herbage for stock and will allow producers a short-term reprieve from drought feeding. That is very, very important both to the producers and to the State. On the heavier soil types, little response is expected due to the severely depleted soil reserves.

I know that members opposite are not greatly interested in the rainfall figures, but the people of Queensland, particularly the primary producers of this State, are interested. They are also interested in the fact that, although the rain will not stop the drought, it has provided considerable relief. The Goss Government will still stick by the drought-affected primary producers of this State.

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

### MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST Queensland Health

**Mrs SHELDON** (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (11 a.m.): I rise to speak on the deceit of this Government and the blatant cover-up by the Treasurer over the state of the Queensland economy and, in particular, the result of this mismanagement on the Department of Health. Those are strong words—"deceit" and "cover-up"—but even they fail to adequately portray the unbelievable lengths to which this State Government has gone this year to hide the truth from the people of Queensland over the state of the public health system.

In this week of the State Budget, I highlight the Health Department as endemic of the crisis facing almost every department in this Queensland Labor Government. The financial mismanagement of Mr De Lacy and the other Ministers of this Government is reaching staggering proportions. Government members are possibly a little quiet—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I am in charge of the Chamber. The member will return to the contents of her speech. Members are coming and going from this Chamber because we have just completed question time.

**Mrs SHELDON:** The financial mismanagement of Mr De Lacy and the other Ministers of this Government is reaching staggering proportions. All we have heard over the past week, through a series of orchestrated leaks by State Government Ministers, is the good news about all the little gifts Labor is going to give Queenslanders on Thursday. What we have not heard about from this Government is the disgraceful condition of the Health Department, the massive cutbacks to the Education Department and the savage slash-and-burn policy within Queensland Transport. Health, education and transport are the basics; the services on which the people of Queensland depend and which the State Government has an obligation to provide. They are the very basics which State conservative Governments provided for 30 years. But, today, we saw how those basics have been abandoned by this State Labor Government. Today, we saw a graphic example of how the financial mismanagement of Treasurer Keith De Lacy and Health Minister Ken Hayward does not just cause Queensland families financial

heartache but also causes them severe emotional heartache.

Today, I tabled a letter leaked from the Health Minister's department which details a case of which not just the Health Minister but also the entire State Labor Government should be ashamed. That letter detailed the case of a man who died in a public hospital when he should have lived. It detailed the case of a man who had every reason to believe that when he went into the Princess Alexandra Hospital he would get the best care possible under the much-vaunted Queensland health system. Instead, he died tragically and without need. He died because the run-down, mismanaged Queensland public hospital system is no longer capable of saving those patients who can and should be saved.

That gentleman was admitted to the Princess Alexandra Hospital on 22 April this year suffering a high-risk heart condition. Because of the parlous state of the public hospital system, the surgeons at the Princess Alexandra Hospital recommended that this man be transferred to a private hospital. Unfortunately, his family could not afford it and he was kept within the public hospital system, which is meant to offer every Queensland the best public health in Australia. The family decided to rely upon the Queensland public hospital system, which once served this State so well.

Because of the Easter holidays, during which this State Labor Government virtually shut down Queensland hospitals because it could not afford to keep them open, an urgent angiography could not be carried out for seven days until 29 April. This gentleman and his family had to wait seven days for a procedure which was urgent when he arrived. In fact, he was not even able to remain in the cardiology unit at the hospital, because of the pressure on bed space.

When an angiogram was carried out, it was discovered that his condition was ideal for an operation which would have saved his life. Unfortunately, after being seen by surgeons on 30 April, the hospital was unable to conduct the operation for 10 days because the State Government had severely restricted the number of operations which surgeons can carry out in the public system. That is not a needs-based restriction but a financial restriction by the bunch of no-hoper mismanagers of the Queensland economy opposite, which is certainly headed by Mr Hayward.

The doctors were once again forced to move this man—who subsequently

died—back into the ward, because of the pressure on the number of beds in the cardiac care unit. That is where he died—on the waiting list for a relatively standard but essential operation which would have saved his life. He died on the waiting list which the Queensland Health Minister, Ken Hayward, brushed away so clumsily only last week when I asked a question about the cut in the number of angioplasties from 438 last year to 400 this year. He died on the waiting list about which, on 2 March this year, that same Health Minister said—

“We are not to blame for the deaths in Queensland hospitals.”

Tell that to that man's family! In fact, Mr Hayward told this House—

“The claim by the Opposition”—

of patients dying on waiting lists—

“which was apparently based on some information supplied to it by the Australian Medical Association . . . is absolutely wrong. The Prince Charles Hospital is aware of two people who have died during the past few months awaiting cardiac surgery. The important point to think about is that they did not necessarily die because they were awaiting cardiac surgery.”

That is a nonsense, and those are the words of the Minister. I inform the Minister that the man whose case I have documented did die in hospital awaiting cardiac surgery. The Minister cannot worm his way out of this through deceit and cover-up. He cannot duck, weave and pretend that this did not happen. This is a documented case—and I fear it is only one of many—in which a patient who went to a Queensland public hospital for vital surgery died because the Health Minister's department and this State Government cannot make the health system work.

**Mr Fenlon** interjected.

**Mrs SHELDON:** All Labor members have betrayed this man and his family, like so many other Queensland families. The Health Minister is a disgrace. He has put his own political hide and the protection of his precious Labor State Government above the well being of Queenslanders. That is the basic fact. The Minister for Health has misled the people of Queensland over the disgraceful state of Queensland Health, and this man paid the ultimate price. How many other Queenslanders have trusted this Government and this Minister with their lives, only to be let down in the worst possible way? It is the fault of Premier Wayne Goss, because he has put



incompetents such as Mr Hayward and Mr De Lacy in charge of these portfolios when it is obviously too much for them.

Before Mr Hayward starts blaming the AMA, doctors in general or martians for the chronic problems in Queensland's health system, let us look at some facts. Doctors and specialists are leaving Queensland Health in droves, because the system is collapsing and their consciences will no longer allow them to work in conditions which are so poor for the patient. Only last week, on 25 August, the Director of the Brisbane South Regional Health Authority, Dr John Golledge, the former medical superintendent at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, resigned. Only in the last few weeks, Associate Professor Stan Woodhouse quit as the Director of Cardiology at the Princess Alexandra Hospital because—

“The basic quality of care I am now able to offer is so poor. I am not prepared to have that on my conscience any longer.”

I now table a letter sent by that doctor to his patients saying that he was resigning because he could not provide the service and his own ethics demanded that he resign because Mr Hayward would not supply the money to provide those services.

Associate Professor Woodhouse is also the author of the letter which was leaked to my office from Queensland Health and which I tabled earlier today. I feel sorry for him, Dr Golledge and every other health worker who wants to do the best for Queenslanders but instead is being forced out of the system. How many other doctors and specialists are going to leave the crumbling Queensland health system?

What about the Rockhampton Base Hospital, which I said last week has no director of anaesthetics and no director of intensive care? What about the mental health centre on the Sunshine Coast, which cannot attract suitable psychiatrists because they do not want to work for a Government which creates booming bureaucracies but cuts the provision of vital health services at the coalface? The State Labor Government has severely downgraded the QEII Hospital, regardless of what the Minister says. The gynaecology unit has been moved from the training hospital at Princess Alexandra to what the Government now calls the community hospital at QEII.

Gynaecology is an essential part of women's health. Women's health? Government members would not be interested in it! Gynaecology is an essential part of women's health and it must be

constantly upgraded and should remain a part of a teaching hospital where proper research is possible. What about the Maryborough Base Hospital, where pregnant women, who should be in maternity wards, are sitting in waiting lounges because of a lack of beds? Government members do not care about pregnant women.

On Thursday, the Treasurer will be crowing about balanced Budgets, surpluses and other wonderful words which do not mean a thing to the average Queenslanders. They are just words. What Queenslanders need is action from this State Government. As I have detailed today, the result of financial mismanagement by the De Lacys and Haywards of this world can be the unnecessary death of patients on waiting lists. There is more to Budgets than balance sheets. We are talking about the effects on the people of Queensland.

I turn now to the distribution of hospital funding grants to the States by the Federal Government for this financial year. Mr De Lacy and Mr Hayward have stated that there is an increase from \$668m to \$797m—or \$129m more—in the hospital funding grants for Queensland as a result of the new Medicare agreement. Yet the Commonwealth Budget figures from Budget Paper No. 3 titled *Commonwealth Financial Relations With Other Levels of Government 1993-94* show that funding for Queensland has increased from \$668m to \$805m—a jump of \$137m. The Federal grants for hospitals, which this Government has cried so much about over the past few weeks, has actually jumped 20.53 per cent over last year. This proves that Mr De Lacy has been crying crocodile tears and again misleading us in an attempt to once again mislead Queenslanders.

Since 1991, health spending by the State Government has increased by half a billion dollars—or, to be exact, \$517m—yet the waiting lists have blown out.

Time expired.

### Young Nationals

**Mr NUNN** (Hervey Bay) (11.10 a.m.): I rise on a matter of great public importance which concerns the misery and gloom which has descended upon the National Party in this State and the effect that that is having on good government in Queensland. The findings in the report by the honourable W. J. Carter, QC, on his inquiry into the selection of the jury for the trial of Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen has destroyed the National Party in Queensland by tearing away the last of the credibility that was left to it after the revelations

of corruption, cronyism and political patronage contained in the Fitzgerald report.

Honourable members would know that, after the 1989 Queensland election and the demise of the National Party Government, there was a perception in the minds of Queenslanders that a spiritual cleansing of the National Party had somehow, against the odds, occurred and from then on all would be well. It was argued that the hard times which had befallen this once great party—and it did have the capacity to be great under its early leaders such as Nicklin and Pizzey—were the fault of the Old Guard of the party, the hard men such as Sparkes, Bjelke-Petersen, Hinze, Austin and Lane. There are still some Old Guard faces on the Opposition benches, but their ranks are thinning. These were the men who had been the overseers of the fall of the Nationals from the dizzy heights of absolute power to the depths of degradation, and when they were gone, so, too, would be the canker from the heart of this once great party.

They would be replaced by the elite of the National Party youth corps. They were already being trained to be the cleanest, the purest and the smartest leaders this great State had ever seen. They were the executive of the Young Nationals and they alone were fit to carry this Holy Grail—names such as Cousins, Pitt, Sirl, Nioa, Stoneman, Katter and Shaw, and the Senate candidate, Justin Choveaux. These names were up above the thoroughbred boxes and all they needed was a chance to strut their stuff in the grand parade. They cried, "Let us show Queensland the new face of the National Party. We can carry the Holy Grail or the pumpkin scones or the poisoned chalice. It doesn't make any difference to us. We are ready."

They got their chance, all right. Some of those names have had a run before Carter, QC, at the inquiry into the selection of the jury for the Joh trial. One of them—Mark Pitt—was trusted to run the election campaign for Tony Nioa, the National Party candidate for the seat of Hervey Bay in 1991. He was his trusted confidante.

The head of the inquiry, Mr Bill Carter, QC, said he had persistently been lied to under oath. The dictionary which I keep in my office defines "perjury" as a noun, meaning "false testimony, or the crime of violating one's oath". Mr Carter therefore, it follows, accuses some, if not all, of the National Party witnesses of perjury or lying under oath. Apparently no charges are to be laid, but the Leader of the Opposition has undertaken to discipline them. They are to stand aside. They

are to stand aside and be resurrected—be rewarded with National Party preselection—at a future election.

I wish now to quote from the *Courier-Mail* of 27 August with regard to Mrs Morrison, the founder of the Friends of Joh. The article stated—

"Mrs Morrison, described by William Carter, QC, in his Joh jury inquiry report as a 'totally unreliable witness whose evidence is really worthless', said Shaw was a 'nice young bloke' who belonged in politics.

'I'd like to see him stand for a conservative seat in five or six years time,' she said.

Asked if Shaw—who she said was 'very political'—could become the next Joh, Mrs Morrison said: 'I'd love to see it.'

The article continued—

"Mrs Morrison warned National Party moves to expel Shaw—who could not be contacted yesterday—or other Young Nationals adversely named in Mr Carter's report would prompt resignations from the party."

So we have on the one hand the Friends of Joh crying that mass action against the young liars is too harsh and, on the other hand, Mr Borbidge threatening harsh action against them. History shows who won that little battle. Mrs Morrison and the faceless Friends of Joh cleaned up the Leader of the Opposition and his gang of limp wrists and set the scene for the return of the philosophy of corruption, cronyism and political patronage, which was the downfall of this once great party. It set the scene for the return of people such as those we had never seen before—"Top Level Ted" Lyons, Skase, Gore, Oskar, Wyllie Fancher, and Horvath and his car—all wishing to manipulate this Government.

The tragedy is that Queensland now has virtually no Opposition. If the Westminster system of Government is to work, it must have a strong Opposition. That type of Opposition is not available from the ranks of the Young Nationals, who have been branded by Carter, QC, as lying, evasive and manipulative. So expert are they at their trade that they have managed to manipulate the jury system and they have beaten the law. By definition, they stand accused of perjury, but no charges are to be laid. Kavanagh, in his column, got it right when he pointed out that to obtain the verdict they wanted in the Joh trial for perjury, the Young Nationals were themselves prepared to lie under oath.

On Wednesday, I will leave Queensland to attend the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference which will be held in Cyprus. I am the Queensland parliamentary delegate to the conference, and material supplied to me indicates that Mr Warren Truss, who is the Federal National Party member for Wide Bay, is a delegate to the same conference. I intend to discuss with Mr Truss the need for the Federal body of the National Party to intervene in the affairs of the Queensland branch of the National Party. Clearly, the Queensland Nationals are not prepared to cleanse themselves. They have neither the wit nor the will to do so. I will be calling on Mr Truss, in the interests not only of the National Party but of all Queenslanders, to ask his Federal colleagues to do the job for them.

Although the sins of those who have lied before the inquiry are great, sadly, there is to be no contrition and no penance, only arrogant defiance, intermingled with a retreat to the Spring Hill bunker where they sulk and blame and lie to each other, and they hurt. They hurt not because the hiding delivered to them by the report was handed out by their political enemies, not because it was handed out at the ballot box by the people of Queensland, but because it was handed out by the princelings of their own party—the born to rule, bred to deceive Young Nationals.

Recently, I heard the Leader of the Opposition pose a question in this place. I was so impressed by the obvious sincerity and the old world charm which underlined that question that I beg to use it here today. With apologies to the late Charles Laughton, I simply ask: in relation to the Young Nationals, were they lying then, or are they lying now, or are they not chronic and habitual liars?

### Medusa Tape

**Mr GRICE** (Broadwater) (11.20 a.m.): At the weekend, I called for a royal commission into matters raised in the so-called Medusa tape published in transcript form by the *Sunday Mail*. In a media release, I referred to the essence of that tape's revelations as a secret deal to stop investigations into former top policeman, John Huey, and to end the careers of two prominent detectives. I said then that the tape revealed details of a plan to retire two detectives who had investigated Huey in return for the ending of Supreme Court proceedings involving the Criminal Justice Commission.

I am now more determined than ever to see this matter through to a proper

conclusion. I am determined that the Government will account to the people of Queensland for every aspect of this sorry story that the *Sunday Mail* had the courage to run at the weekend. I use the word "courage" advisedly. The Goss Government punishes media people who dare question it or any of its people. Just ask Pamela Bornhorst about that. I hope that the *Sunday Mail* can stand the pressure. Next Sunday's edition will tell the story on that.

The Brisbane media took a chance at last and showed Queenslanders reality under the honest, open and accountable Labor Government of Wayne Goss. That reality, of course, is not very pretty. Medusa is a story of a Government putting intolerable pressure on two policemen who charged a Labor favourite, John Huey. I do not know much about Huey, but I do know that some extraordinary things happened—things which disturb me as a citizen and as a member of this Parliament.

A lot of people went berserk when detectives Gordon Harris and John Reynolds wanted to charge Huey. The Director of Prosecutions—answerable, ultimately, to the Attorney-General—took the action away from Reynolds and Harris, put it on hold and then dropped it. The policemen were hounded by the Criminal Justice Commission and the Police Service. They were demoted, transferred and put back into uniform. When they tried to defend themselves, the ante went up. Harris was faced with a massive bill of costs if a case in the Supreme Court went wrong. Both were driven beyond desperation—discriminated against professionally, and reviled by the honest, open, accountable Government of Wayne Goss and its sycophantic camp followers.

Eventually, the only way out was out—literally. Their union was forced to come to an arrangement with the CJC to forget about Harris and Reynolds—to get off their backs—so long as the Supreme Court case did not go ahead. The Police Union did what it could for its members. Given the antics of others, it had no choice. I reckon that the Police Union did the right thing in all the circumstances. It is the others who have played a dirty game.

With agreement from the CJC Chairman, the Police Commissioner and the Police Minister, Harris and Reynolds resigned from the Police Service, and the Supreme Court action was called off. The careers of two apparently good, honest coppers were in ruins, but Huey was in the clear—and so were his protectors. The Government and the CJC were off the hook on a document that the

Opposition in Parliament has chased long and hard, and Harris and Reynolds had chased just as hard, along with many lawyers.

For the time being, the Government can hang onto the so-called Royce Miller report which the court was about to order released. That is the one that the Attorney-General and the Government want us to think makes Huey the good guy and Harris and Reynolds the bad guys. The whole thing is cloaked in secrecy. The participants in the meeting which tied up the loose ends had to sign a secrecy contract—to protect the Government and the CJC from community outrage. The CJC can deny doing a deal, but people can read what the Medusa transcript says in repeated references to discussions between lawyers—respected solicitors and an eminent Queen's Counsel—and Mr Rob O'Regan.

There is only one Mr Rob O'Regan, and he is the Chairman of the CJC. Of course, Rob O'Regan was involved. I reckon that "prevarication" is a nice word for what his man said yesterday on the Henshaw program. Is it not possible for anyone to be frank and forthright in this new Queensland? Do we have to lie or almost lie by using clever words and changing the question around? I thought that Queensland went through the Fitzgerald agony to get rid of the sort of thing that Medusa reveals. Apparently not.

**Mr Beattie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! The member for Brisbane Central is not making this speech. He will desist from interjecting further.

**Mr GRICE:** So long as the honest, open, accountable Government of Wayne Goss is pulling down the shutters, it is apparently okay. "Fitzgerald reform" is a sure-fire election catchcry—use it to get into Government, use it to put on a show, use the rhetoric and then discard the substance. The worm will turn; it always does. There will be a royal commission sooner or later, and that document and a whole lot of other things will find the full glare of publicity. If the Goss Government lacks the bottle to do the decent thing for a change, then I will campaign for a royal commission under the next coalition Government. Justice will be done in time.

Some questions for a royal commission to answer spring to mind—some good questions. For a start: what is so special about Huey that other careers must be sacrificed to protect him? What favours did he do for the Labor Government? Did he perhaps deceive the Fitzgerald inquiry, for which he performed a pivotal investigative role? Whose careers

might have flourished in the post-Fitzgerald era because of something Huey said or did? Does that include political careers? What is in the Royce Miller report to justify desperate, secret deals to keep that report under wraps? Huey is obviously very valuable to this Goss Government.

I ask members to listen to what is contained in the Medusa transcript. The speakers are the Police Union President, John O'Gorman, and Queen's Counsel Ken Fleming—known around town as honest men of integrity. O'Gorman said—

"For some reason Huey has got to be propped up as a shining light . . . The fact is that everyone had said there was nothing wrong with Huey so now they're stuck with it—everybody that opens their mouth about Huey is gunna find themselves in more trouble than they can handle."

Fleming replied—

"And that's what this is all about."

"Everybody" means those who gave Huey the clearances—the CJC, the ruling elite of the Police Service in 1990 and, of course, the new Government—the honest, open, accountable Government of Wayne Goss; the Government which included at least one Minister who claimed to have proof that Huey was bent.

When I call for a royal commission into this matter so obviously related to John Huey, I find myself on the same side as the leader of the Socialist Left faction, the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing. In 1982, the ABC's *Nationwide* program ran a story by Spencer Jolly, who is now a senior reporter in the press gallery here. The star turn was the member for Wolston, with very harsh things to say about John Huey and another policeman, Callil Farrah. Here is what the now Minister in the Goss Government had to say—

"I believe that there should be an immediate inquiry and prosecution of both of those police officers. I believe that every case that they have been involved in since this evidence was brought to light should be re-investigated because it disturbs me greatly to think that there is the possibility—a very distinct possibility—that if perjury has been committed in one case that it may have been committed in others and that there could be people who are behind bars at the present time who perhaps shouldn't be in that particular position."

He went on to say—this is the current Goss Labor Minister—

"I've called for a judicial inquiry and I believe a judicial inquiry or a royal commission is most certainly warranted."

"A judicial inquiry or a royal commission"—I am told that those words flowed easily from the lips of Labor members in Opposition. These days, they run a mile from any sort of inquiry, unless it has something to do with somebody in the National Party. They have even gone into a secret deal to stop a Supreme Court hearing. A Police Commissioner and a Police Minister at the very least—maybe even a Premier—are part of a secret deal to prevent a hearing which could have been embarrassing.

I can find no statement by the member for Wolston reconciling his lust for Huey's blood back in 1982 with the fact that he has been part of the Goss Labor Cabinet which has been so supportive of Huey in these past few years. On 13 March 1991, the Minister was asked to produce material that he referred to in that *Nationwide* story, including transcripts of tapes. The Minister was also asked what action he had taken, on assuming office, to ensure that his concerns about Huey were brought to the attention of the Attorney-General. Guess what? The question was ruled out of order! The Minister could duck.

Following this debate, Government business will be dealt with. I challenge the Minister to stand up during that time and tell the House why Huey was a perjurer, putting the wrong people in gaol in 1982, but was a model CIB chief in 1990. Was the Minister just doing a bucket job in 1982, or was he failing in his duty as a public official in 1990? He cannot have it both ways. I look forward to the full and frank disclosures—if the Premier's minders will let him.

Life is tough in the wrong faction. The Goss Labor Government has shown how hard it will work to destroy critics or opponents with every sort of smear and innuendo. Well, here I am. They do not worry me, because they cannot accuse me of having old scores to settle or old axes to grind. I was not here five years ago, or even two years ago.

Time expired.

#### **Aluminium Industries in Gladstone**

**Mr BENNETT** (Gladstone) (11.30 a.m.): I wish to speak on a matter of importance to this Government and a matter in which the Opposition is not interested, that is, jobs for Queenslanders and, particularly, jobs for the people of Gladstone. In light of the Premier's statements in this Chamber regarding the Federal and State Governments cooperating

to seek the validation of Comalco's bauxite leases at Weipa, I wish to inform the House why validation is so important to the aluminium industries in Gladstone.

As honourable members may be aware already, if Comalco decides to go ahead with the Boyne smelter project, it will represent an investment of some \$1.7 billion, split up between the purchase of the Gladstone Power Station and the building of the third potline at the Boyne smelter. At the moment, a due diligence study is being carried out to establish the commercial viability of the project, both in terms of operating the Gladstone Power Station by a consortium of companies and the health of the aluminium industry. The economic impact of the third potline was released in a draft impact assessment study in May 1993. The study outlines the economic and social benefits and detriments of the project.

With the patchy recovery of the Australian economy, I would like to point out the economic benefits of the project and why the Goss Government was adamant that confidence in the Boyne smelter project in the financial markets would not drop because of the lack of security over the title at Weipa. The initial economic impact of the project will be felt through the construction phase which, on the 1993 figures, should account for some \$930m spread over three years, with 17.6 per cent being spent in 1994, 62.2 per cent spent in 1995 and 20.2 per cent in 1996.

**Mr Pearce:** Providing jobs for Gladstone.

**Mr BENNETT:** The honourable member for Fitzroy is right. What we are about is jobs for the people of Gladstone and jobs for other Queenslanders. One never hears the Opposition supporting that. When one looks at those figures from the draft assessment study in dollar terms, one finds that the capital is spent at the rate of \$164m in 1994, \$578.6m in 1995 and \$187.4 in 1996. This produces flow-on output effects in Queensland of \$45.5m in 1994, \$158m in 1995 and \$51.5m in 1996, giving a total direct and indirect output impact of \$209.5m in 1994, \$736.6m in 1995 and \$238.9m in 1996.

The non-metallic minerals products, transport and communications, finance and business services, mining, and metals and metal products sectors are mainly affected, in addition to other manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade. The direct contribution to gross State product amounted to \$50.6m in 1994, \$185.4m in 1995 and \$59.1m in 1996. The subsequent flow-on is estimated to be

\$18.7m, \$65.1m and \$21.2m, giving a total impact on gross State product in 1994, 1995 and 1996 of \$69.3m, \$250.5m and \$80.3m respectively. Again, non-metallic mineral products, mining, transport and communications, wholesale and retail trade and metals and metal products are the sectors that are mainly affected. This is the most important part of the project and, I believe, affects the wages bills of ordinary Queenslanders.

In 1994, the direct wages bill to a work force of 542 amounts to \$21.6m in Queensland. This will induce an additional \$5.3m in wages and salaries to 178 additional people, giving a total wages payment of \$26.9m to 720 people associated with the construction activity. In 1995, this total impact increases to \$92.1m paid to 2 465 people, while in the last year of the construction phase the total wages bill is \$20.2m to 538 employees. I must point out that the draft impact assessment states that the income and employment impacts need to be treated with some caution because there are assumptions made in its calculations which are necessary in any assessment.

The main interest of the Gladstone/Calliope region is the economic benefit of the operational phase impacts. The Boyne smelter expansion project is expected to start operation during the last six months of 1996. The start-up production level will be approximately one-third of full production capacity, which begins in 1997. The impacts analysed here refer only to the Boyne smelter third potline expansion, and exclude the effects of the existing plant and power station. It covers both the start-up year and the typical full production year. The resultant economic impacts should remain roughly the same during full production, although they will obviously vary marginally from year to year as the production process goes through different phases and the economy develops over time.

The start-up gross operating expenditure in 1996 is \$97m in 1993 dollar terms. This expenditure will result in an additional \$95.1m in Queensland, giving a total output impact of \$192.1m. In the following year, the gross operating expenditure increases to \$382.2m, with a subsequent output flow-on of \$353.7m, resulting in a total output of \$735.9m. In 1996, the direct contribution to gross State product is \$24.1m. This is associated with an additional \$38.7m in flow-on effects, or a total impact of \$62.8m. And in the following full production year, direct contribution to gross State product is \$137m which, combined with the flow-on effects of \$144.4m, gives a total

impact of \$281.4m. In both cases, the dominant flow-ons occur in the metals and metal products and electricity sectors, which refer to the main purchases of alumina from the existing QAL refinery operation and electricity from the Gladstone Power Station. Mining, transport and communications, and wholesale and retail trade are also affected significantly.

During the start-up year, direct wages and salaries of \$9m in Queensland is paid to a work force of 196. This is associated with additional wage payments of \$7.7m to 234 employees, giving a total wage impact of \$16.7m and 430 people. In 1997, the direct wage and salary bill increases to \$17.5m to 384 employees, giving rise to an additional \$14.2m in wage flow-ons and 429 full-time equivalent positions. The total direct and indirect impact in a full production year, therefore, amounts to \$31.7m in wages and salaries paid to 813 people in the State. Metals and metal products and electricity are the main sectors affected by the flow-ons. Mining, transport, trade and finance and business services are also affected significantly.

From those figures, we can see in real dollar terms and job numbers why the Goss Government pursued the line of wanting Comalco's bauxite mining leases validated—so that we as a Government can do all that is possible to assist in getting this project off the ground. All honourable members would be aware of the devastation that unemployment brings to the social and economic wellbeing of families in our community.

I support this project, and I support fully the Premier's stand in relation to it. At the very core of Labor philosophy is protection, and the best way that we can protect the unemployed is to set an environment in which industry and business can be established to provide jobs. In the end, this project, if it is to succeed, is a commercial decision by CRA Comalco and its sister consortium companies, and the Goss Government has done the hard work to give the project every chance of success.

I point out that while the viability or otherwise of the project is being ascertained, a due diligence process is also being carried out at the Gladstone Power Station. I would like to mention the great role that is being played at that power station by union delegates such as Dick Williams, the assistant secretary of the EPU; Lloyd Casey, who is an ASU official; local delegates such as John Clapham and Frank Scheers of the operating staff, with whom I had the pleasure of working prior to

coming to Parliament; and other delegates such as Chris Belz, Brian Clarke and Wayne Horn, who are undertaking a very difficult process in establishing award and enterprise base conditions for the changeover. This process is arduous and difficult, but these gentlemen are putting in the long hours to make sure that the wages and conditions of the power station workers are taken into account.

In conclusion, the people of Gladstone support Wayne Goss in his stand. Wayne Goss also has the full support of the local ALP branch in Gladstone, the promotion and development bureau, the relevant councils, the Chamber of Commerce and union groups. In fact, the union groups have contacted me and have told me that they are very supportive of the Premier in his stand in validating Comalco's leases. I commend the Premier for it. I would also like to point out that the people of Gladstone believe in national reconciliation with the Aboriginal people and in the Wik people's claim for legitimate rights to compensation.

#### Industrial Relations

**Mr SANTORO** (Clayfield—Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.40 a.m.): Today, I draw to the attention of the House the abysmal state of the Goss Labor Government's industrial relations policy and its policy formulation processes under the administration of Matt Foley as Minister for Industrial Relations. This criticism should not be swept aside as party-political point scoring, for it is common knowledge to most people involved in the industrial relations field. It is a matter of public record and disappointment that someone who appeared to have so much potential has delivered so little in the portfolio to which he was appointed 12 months ago. It is the general view that this is attributable to the Minister's lack of enthusiasm for, and disinterest in, the field of industrial relations. As an Industrial Relations Minister, he thinks that he is better suited to being the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Unfortunately for Queensland, his performance in the industrial relations portfolio has been verging on the point of incompetence. On his record, the Minister must attract a capital "F" for failure in progressing industrial relations. Matt "Failure" Foley, as Minister for Industrial Relations, has failed—

to allow many non-unionists to engage in enterprise bargaining. Under the Foley legislation, non-union workplaces are effectively prevented from doing so. It is

appropriate to remember at this stage that approximately 60 per cent of the work force are non-unionists;

to involve and lead Queensland in the current industrial relations debate on issues such as enterprise bargaining by non-unionists and minimum industrial standards. Queenslanders have been virtually disfranchised on these issues because Foley has left these matters for Canberra to decide;

to introduce enterprise bargaining in the Queensland public service despite one of his first announcements being some "framework" for this—a framework which has never seen the light of day and which I have described as a "plane with no wings".

The Minister cannot even introduce enterprise bargaining in his own department!

**A Government member** interjected.

**Mr SANTORO:** I repeat: 12 months after he took over, the Minister cannot even introduce enterprise bargaining in his own department.

**Mr Robertson:** He answered that question last week.

**Mr SANTORO:** I will take that interjection. The Minister answered it, but not at all adequately. In fact, Minister Foley has added no real value to the progress of industrial relations reform, other than to replicate initiatives of his Canberra Labor counterparts. Everyone in the industrial relations field has noticed that the Minister has expressed few opinions on the key issues. The question must be asked: why is this so? The answer is that the Minister does have a broad strategy, but he cannot espouse it for fear of upsetting the Premier.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SANTORO:** I will explain. Through his lack of interest and vigour, the Minister has been content to adopt a policy of letting the industrial relations agenda be set in Canberra and simply rubber-stamping whatever Canberra decides. There is a record of this. In the current review of wage-fixing principles, the Minister announced that the Queensland Government's submission was similar to the joint submission of the Federal Government and the ACTU. This was contained in a media release dated 4 June 1993.

**Mr Foley:** Mr Santoro, what about section 105, which makes provision for enterprise bargaining and enterprise awards?

**Mr SANTORO:** I will take the Minister's interjection at a point that is convenient. I will come to section 105. The Minister should just sit and listen to my speech. The Minister made that announcement despite the fact that most other State Governments are to argue to the contrary and despite the ever-widening rift between the Commonwealth Government and the ACTU. In announcing Parliament's passage of the 1992 amendments to the Industrial Relations Act, the Minister was honest enough—I will give him credit for that—to admit that "the new laws will parallel Commonwealth provisions for enterprise bargaining". That was contained in a media release dated 27 November 1992. I predict a similar announcement by the Minister on the outcome of the current Brereton/ACTU discussions—whatever it may be and irrespective of whether or not most Queenslanders would agree to it.

**Mr Foley:** Don't you support consistency?

**Mr SANTORO:** I support a certain amount of consistency, but the point is that the Minister does not know what the consistency will be. All that he does is keep quiet. He will wait and see what happens, and then he will endorse it. In fact, the Minister has been careful to not endorse the Brereton proposals or to disagree with them in any way, thereby maximising his capacity to agree to whatever the Commonwealth eventually agrees to. This tactic seems blatantly obvious, considering that Brereton's position has been changing almost weekly.

This "all the way with LBJ" approach is making a mockery of the State industrial relations system, and is an insult to the intelligence of everyone involved with it. What value is added by the State's Industrial Relations Minister if, in respect of matters which are a State responsibility, he simply rubber-stamps whatever the Commonwealth decides upon? What will come next? Why does not the Minister just carry a mobile phone so that he can ring Canberra to find out what his policy position is on any industrial relations issue with which he is confronted?

These key issues would be one thing on which Queenslanders should express their views, not have them ridden over roughshod by the Minister in accordance with the directions he receives from the unions or their stooges within the public sector. But all that Queenslanders can expect under "Failure" Foley's administration is to have to sit back and wait for Labor in Canberra to decide on issues and then have those decisions imposed in carbon copy form in Queensland.

Why has not Minister Foley admitted that he has adopted an "all the way with Canberra" strategy? The answer is that not only would this offend free-thinking Queenslanders, but also it could place him in conflict with the Premier. Everyone knows that Premier Goss has some type of personal feud with the Prime Minister and tends to disagree with almost anything that the Prime Minister subscribes to. Therefore, the Foley approach is totally at odds with that of his own leader, who seems either oblivious to how Queensland industrial relations is being shanghaied by Canberra or even more disinterested in industrial relations than is his Minister.

**Mr Foley:** Why don't you take an interjection? You aren't game to take interjections because you can't handle them. You haven't got an answer to the key questions.

**Mr SANTORO:** What I am interested in doing is placing on the record what the Opposition wants to say. The Opposition is not prepared to allow the Foley failure policy to continue any longer. He has had long enough to come to grips with his portfolio, even though he may never have wanted it. If he is not willing to express to Queenslanders a Government position on key industrial relations issues that are being debated in the community, we will make certain that he does. There is one place from which he will not be able to telephone Canberra, and that is from this House during question time.

I turn now to the issues. One of them is the failure of the Goss Labor Government to promote effectively enterprise bargaining in the Queensland industrial relations system, and particularly within Queensland workplaces. Prior to the election of the Goss Government, enterprise bargaining was starting to flourish, to the mutual benefit of local industry and its employees. Workers at Power Brewing and Metway were demonstrably better off than employees at similar workplaces. Despite Minister Foley's rhetoric, which would have one believe that the Goss Government supports enterprise bargaining, he is responsible for introducing one of the biggest obstacles to workplace reform. This was his November 1992 legislation, which effectively outlawed enterprise bargaining in non-union workplaces. Under his legislation, individual employees or groups of them have been effectively prohibited from directly making enterprise agreements. These can be struck only between employers and unions. Also, the



Foley legislation ensures that a union must have at least 1 000 members before it can be registered.

It is ironic that, only a few months after the Goss Government introduced this restrictive legislation, the Prime Minister announced his intention to open up enterprise bargaining to non-union workplaces. Could this be a reason why the Minister is so quiet about commenting on the Federal proposals? Is he embarrassed by his giant mistake? If enterprise bargaining in non-union workplaces is eventually introduced federally, how will the Minister attempt to explain his giant backflip when he replicates it in Queensland? His actions will be akin to taking Queensland forward to the past!

The tragedy is that the Goss Government's legislation is effectively excluding non-union workplaces, particularly small businesses, from one of the main tools that will allow Queensland to improve productivity and its international competitiveness. The major losers are the people and industry of Queensland. Another issue of concern is Brereton's proposal to impose uniform minimum industrial standards on the States under Federal legislation based on its external affairs powers. The Minister has held discussions with his Federal counterpart on the issue. However, Queenslanders are none the wiser about the impact that Mr Foley had on the issue, or about what is to be the outcome so far as Queenslanders are concerned. What assurances do Queenslanders have that they have not been sold out to interests based on external affairs policies? This is not good enough, and Queenslanders deserve better.

As far as the public sector is concerned, it is universally accepted that Minister Foley cannot deliver. Most public servants and the public service unions know that the Minister has no power.

**Mr Foley:** Do you support Brereton's stand on secondary boycotts and the ILO?

**Mr SANTORO:** I do not support Brereton's stand. What I support is an external affairs policy not interfering with the policies of the State, and the Minister has made no statement on that. As I was saying, most public servants and the public service unions know that the Minister has no power. That lies with the PSMC, which always rolls the Minister's department when it comes to public

sector reform. While DEVETIR appears to attempt to make some noises about the benefits of workplace reforms, these are effectively stifled by the dead hand of the PSMC with its servicewide, one size fits all mentality. As I said before, the Minister has not even managed to introduce enterprise agreements within his own department. If Queensland is to become more productive and competitive, what is needed is a vigorous program—

**Mr Foley:** The electricity supply industry and Queensland Rail—look at what is happening there.

**Mr SANTORO:** I am talking about the Minister's department. Queensland needs a vigorous program of industrial relations reforms that meet the needs of Queensland's industries and workplaces. For this to occur, the State needs a Minister for Industrial Relations who takes a pro-active approach and ascertains the real needs of Queenslanders.

Time expired.

#### **Townsville Railway Workshops**

**Mr DAVIES** (Mundingburra) (11.50 a.m.):  
Mr Deputy Speaker—

**Mr Bennett:** We'll get a bit of sense for a change.

**Mr DAVIES:** I take the honourable member's interjection. Of recent times, there has been significant discussion in Townsville about the Government's decision to close the Townsville railway workshops and relocate them to Stuart. Accusations have been made of lack of consultation, and today I want to correct the public record.

The Government has ensured that the communication process undertaken by Queensland Rail in the review of the workshops group has been extensive and designed to facilitate as much input from the work force and its union representatives as possible. I intend to itemise all of the consultative meetings undertaken by Queensland Rail with Townsville railway workshops representatives during the two months of consultation. I also intend to detail the single bargaining unit meetings that have been undertaken with the chief executive and State representatives of the unions, facilitating discussion and feedback on the workshops group draft strategic plan.

They are as follows: the first of the Townsville railway workshops consultative

meetings was held on 19 April. It was a regional consultative meeting with Vince O'Rourke and Terry Fisher representing Queensland Rail. On 23 April, there was a presentation to staff employees, and 150 people were in attendance. That again was done by Terry Fisher. On 30 April, there was a mass meeting and a presentation by Vince O'Rourke and Terry Fisher. More than 450 workers were in attendance at that meeting. On 7 May, the local consultative committee—LCC—workshop strategy issues were considered. The meeting was chaired by Terry Fisher.

On 11 May, an LCC meeting was held in Brisbane, and all of the workshops unions were included. That was chaired by the TLC. On 29 May, the LCC workshops strategy issues were again considered. On 26 May, work management discussions with individual LCC members concerning the workshops strategy were held. On 2 June, an LCC discussion was held with members concerning the workshops strategy. On 9 June, the LCC agenda included the workshops strategy. On 16 June, the LCC agenda included the workshops strategy, and again that was chaired by Terry Fisher.

The schedule of SBU meetings is as follows: on 19 April, there was a presentation of the workshops strategy to the senior union officials by QR management. Terry Fisher attended that. On 6 May, it was an agenda point at the SBU meeting. Terry Fisher again attended. On 11 May, SBU officials met the union and officials of the LCC in Brisbane. Terry Fisher chaired that meeting. As a result of that 11 May meeting, Jacana Consulting was engaged by the unions to validate the workshops strategy. On 21 May, an agenda point at the SBU included that a formal request was made by Jacana for information, and action was taken by QR.

On 27 May, Queensland Rail provided the finance report. On 31 May, Queensland Rail provided an investment plan. On 1 June, Queensland Rail provided a fleet age profile. On 3 June, an agenda point at the SBU also included a discussion from Terry Fisher.

In relation to the union involvement in the workshops process—the union response included the following—

“The recent union submission covering Workshops unionists statewide contained some important issues. In particular it states that unions find the capital investment of Option 3 attractive

and recognise the need for the proposed fundamental changes in Queensland Rail Workshops. Despite this the joint unions consider the extensive downsizing as socially and economically undesirable.

The Townsville workforce/union input to the strategy, acknowledge the content of the strategy and the impact of the options, but do not seek to propose any fundamental alternatives.”

The extent of the union input was as follows—

“In response to the consultation phase of several months for the draft Workshops Strategy a total of eight responses were received from workforce groups, individuals and unions.

Two submissions were received from Townsville comprising:

Townsville Workshops Committee (Group)

J Lewis (Individual).

A summary of these submissions are as follows:

Townsville Workshops Committee

This submission presents Option 5 involving the retention of a workshop in Townsville.

This report outlines a number of reasons supporting this option and these fall into two broad categories:

The perceived operational need for a workshop in the Northern Division, and

The likely social impact of closing the existing workshop.

J Lewis

This submission develops the Option 5 concept of three centres of excellence at Redbank/Rockhampton/Townsville.

The total staff numbers and level of investment would be similar to Option 3, two centres of excellence at Redbank and Rockhampton.

These submissions proposing the retention of the Townsville Workshops provided a number of social and operational reasons. However, previous work undertaken by Queensland Rail has shown that three centres of excellence requires significantly more capital investment than the option of establishing two centres of excellence. Further the Rockhampton Workshop, from a commercial view, will absorb all

future work demands currently undertaken at Townsville.”

According to Queensland Rail—

“The retention of the Townsville Workshops would fail to meet the following objectives:

Maximising the utilisation of investment

Consideration of reduced”—

overheads—

“as seen by Workshops customers

Integration with Rollingstock Maintenance business strategies of the wagon one-spot facility at Stuart.

Union acceptance (or at least failure to dispute) data and projected figures

As mentioned above the recent union submission incorporating Workshops unionists statewide stated that the unions find the capital investment of Option 3 attractive and recognise the need for the proposed fundamental changes in Queensland Rail Workshops, despite serious reservations on resultant extensive downsizing.

There is no other instances where unions have openly accepted or disputed the data and projected figures within the Draft Workshops Strategy document.”

In addition to those meetings, I can also advise that a constant communication process was maintained by Queensland Rail to ensure that all workshops employees had adequate access to the information available.

**Mr Johnson:** They never had union reps in Townsville.

**Mr DAVIES:** The honourable member was not listening to what I just said. Queensland Rail issued: briefing papers entitled “An Overview of the Future”; copies of the slide presentation and workshops group strategic plan to each local consultative committee, or LCC; a personal explanatory letter to the home address of each workshops employee; a broad outline of the proposed strategy through Queensland Rail’s weekly notice and updated information within the May issue of the chief executive’s newsletter.

As well as that, a workshops hotline was established to address any issues or any inquiries that may be forthcoming. It is important to emphasise that this is not a process that anyone—including me, Geoff Smith or Ken McElligott—wanted to see Queensland Rail and its employees go through. However, unfortunately, it reflects the reality of radical changes that are necessary in rail systems throughout the world at the moment and, unfortunately, it also reflects 32 years of maladministration of Queensland’s rail resources, rolling stock, facilities and employees.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DAVIES:** Members opposite do not like to hear that, but that is the political reality. It is an unfortunate fact that Queensland Rail’s network, organisational structure and work practices have not evolved very far beyond the steam train industry on which they were originally based. However, when one sees the quality of the members of the Opposition and of the previous Government, that is no surprise.

This industry required much greater numbers of staff and much more intensive levels of maintenance than does the current diesel and electric locomotive industry. At the same time, there has been a quantum leap in the technology and work practices utilised by the support industries within the rail network, including the workshops group.

I seek leave to have tabled and incorporated in *Hansard* the rolling stock forecast table as at 30 June 1993.

Leave granted.

## ROLLINGSTOCK FORECAST

AS AT 30 JUNE

	ACTUAL			FORECAST			DRAFT PLAN				
	87/88	88/89	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98
<b>WAGONS</b>											
Coal & Minerals	6020	6060	6004	6022	6040	5732	5826	5976	5976	6076	6176
Freight	12132	11099	10853	9376	8357	7144	6156	6016	5852	5860	5720
Service Stock	2859	3217	3328	3090	2652	2659	1917	1440	1080	1018	1018
<b>TOTAL WAGONS</b>	<b>21011</b>	<b>20376</b>	<b>20185</b>	<b>18488</b>	<b>17049</b>	<b>15535</b>	<b>13899</b>	<b>13432</b>	<b>12908</b>	<b>12954</b>	<b>12914</b>
<b>PASS. VEHICLES</b>											
Citytrain	416	416	420	418	418	361	332	353	353	369	353
Traveltrain	432	350	278	255	244	233	221	221	221	217	217
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>570</b>
<b>LOCOMOTIVES</b>											
Coal & Minerals	244	235	232	232	234	223	240	245	239	237	237
Freight	370	358	383	325	290	289	279	267	253	232	221
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>458</b>
Passenger	35	33	33	34	34	28	26	26	26	26	22
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>480</b>

**Mr DAVIES:** That table indicates that the numbers of coal and minerals wagons have and will remain approximately the same, while the numbers of all other wagons have fallen from 14 991 in 1987-88 to approximately 9 803 in 1992-93 and will fall further to 6 738 by the projected 1997-98 financial year.

Similarly, the level of coal and minerals locomotives is expected to remain approximately the same, while the other locomotives fall in number by approximately 40 per cent. That dramatic impact is due to changes in industry, technology, work practices and the utilisation of that rolling stock by Queensland Rail. Faced with that grim reality, the Government has sought to ensure that the organisation and its employees are provided with the greatest security possible in these difficult times.

Time expired.

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

**CAIRNS CASINO AGREEMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Debate resumed from 24 August (see p. 3815).

**Mrs SHELDON** (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (12 noon): Mr Deputy Speaker, I wonder where the Treasurer is?

**An Opposition member:** We see the drivers are here already.

**Mrs SHELDON:** Well said! The high-handed presumption with which the Treasurer treats the people of Queensland and Cairns in

particular shines through every part of his involvement in debate on the proposed Cairns Casino. The Treasurer likes to regard the casino as his pet project, but despite months and years of discussion, people in and around the Treasurer's own electorate are still in the dark about the proposed casino and its likely impact on their city.

I was not surprised to hear the Treasurer gloating in his second-reading speech as he crowed about the tax stream that will flow to the Government when the casino is in place. Of course, that is the Treasurer's main concern. To him, the Cairns Casino is not so much an important new facility for Queenslanders and visitors alike—particularly for the people in his own electorate—but a new source of tax revenue to help fill the Labor Government's empty pockets. Because of his obsession with the Government's stream of tax revenue—I should say "flood" of tax revenue—many important aspects of the casino remain a mystery to the people of Cairns.

**Mr Johnson:** Another part of the Treasurer's stealth.

**Mrs SHELDON:** That is exactly right; it is an agenda of stealth. It must have been wonderful for Government members to hear of the Treasurer bathing in a stream of new taxes. Sadly, they are about the only Queenslanders who heard something to their advantage in the Treasurer's comments.

At least two factors of the casino debate require explanation. So far, the Labor Government—some of whose members are the only Queenslanders with an idea of the Treasurer's real intentions—wants to keep us

all in the dark. Firstly, there is the spectre of a major development given the green light in one of our fastest-growing areas of development without due consideration having been given to the flow of traffic that will be created or diverted as a result. Secondly, we have a heritage-listed building that will be surrounded on three sides by a major new construction without any indication of the developer's proposed use for the old building, apart from a vague assurance that it will be restored. We know how well vague assurances are held through.

**Mr Bennett:** Ooh!

**Mrs SHELDON:** I realise that Government members are not really interested in heritage values. The people of Cairns and Queensland do not know where the Treasurer's casino plans begin and end. The Treasurer has full control of the project because, under this Act, he is the man in the driving seat.

**An Opposition member:** He doesn't know how to drive.

**Mrs SHELDON:** He certainly does not know how to drive, and that applies to his total portfolio. As a result, once again, we are faced with a decision-making process that is not open to public scrutiny. It will not serve as an expression of the community's wishes; nor will the result be in line with appropriate town-planning considerations. This process, which is laying the ground rules for the Cairns Casino, is no more appropriate than that evidenced by Labor's shameful involvement with the Brisbane Casino. I doubt that even the Treasurer would be short-sighted and arrogant enough to permit a repeat of that fiasco, in which the Labor Party was found to have a direct financial interest in one of the tendering companies. But, no, it does not stop the Treasurer from being short-sighted and arrogant.

In his second-reading speech, the Minister outlined the role in the development of the Cairns Casino to be taken by the Heritage Council. He stated—

“The Heritage Council will then process the application by—

public notification of the details of the proposed development;

seeking objections within 21 days;

consideration of any objections lodged; and

presentation of a recommendation to

the Treasurer, as Minister responsible.”

It is then up to the Treasurer to make a determination, which will be publicly notified, as to his acceptance or otherwise of the council's recommendation. The Minister went on to say—

“Anyone who took the trouble to inspect the material which was prepared for the Brisbane submission, as I did, could not in any way underestimate the quantity and quality of the work required to be undertaken as part of this process and the very considerable and often costly efforts made to ensure that the heritage values of the site are preserved.”

The Treasurer was right. These are important issues. I would expect him to take the trouble to inspect the material in relation to the Brisbane Casino; that is his job. I would also expect a responsible Treasurer to open his eyes in relation to the problems with the siting of the Cairns Casino. However, as usual, there is no sign of the Treasurer acting in a responsible way.

The Treasurer overruled the Queensland Heritage Council over the Brisbane Casino and stuck it in the Old Treasury Building, regardless of quite genuine opposition. It is one rule for the State Government and a different rule for every other Queensland. What was the point in this Government establishing the Heritage Council when it ignores its recommendations? The Government will preserve Queensland heritage only when it does not get in the way of its own agenda.

The people of Cairns have discovered that this State Government will not consult with them over the casino and will do whatever it wants. In this case, the Treasurer has bulldozed ahead with plans to have the Cairns Casino built in the small, central part of the city adjacent to The Esplanade within which six major five-star hotels already exist. Siting the Cairns Casino on the Customs House/Anzac Park heritage precinct flies in the face of public opinion, orderly economic development and the expressed wish of the Cairns City Council. The decision to locate on The Esplanade is a temporary win for stupidity over commonsense. The Treasurer is supposed to represent the Cairns electorate in this Parliament, yet he has refused repeated questions designed to introduce accountability to the tendering process for the Cairns Casino.

Polls were conducted on the views of the community about the Treasurer's proposed site. The result in one case—and honourable

members should listen to this—was 48 votes in favour and 464 votes against. I think that is a fairly compelling statistic; would the Treasurer not agree?

**Mr De Lacy** interjected.

**Mrs SHELDON:** There must be a lot up there. The result of that poll was 464 to 48. With public opinion polls overwhelmingly favouring the old railway station site, we all must wonder why the local member, Mr De Lacy, has jackbooted his way through to the heritage site. That was an accurate poll. It was an accurate sample of opposition by the people of Cairns to the Treasurer's favoured site and an accurate measure of the thickness of the Treasurer's skin when he decided to proceed, anyway. One has to ask: why?

The Treasurer's announcement in his second-reading speech that opposition to the Anzac Park/Customs House site had evaporated virtually overnight is really just too clever by half. People in Cairns remain uneasy about the Government's intentions. It is plain that opposition has calmed only because the range of information available to the public has been culled. Any information that is available has been well and truly rewritten by the PR merchants of the Treasurer.

The rapid rate at which Cairns has grown into one of the world's premier tourist destinations has created difficulties for town-planners. I would have thought us fortunate to be building such a tourism showpiece in the nineties surrounded by skilled and experienced planners and engineers, were it not for the cowboy antics of the Government and the intervention of the Treasurer. The major concern from the town planning viewpoint is the danger of compounding traffic problems and bringing the centre of the Cairns tourist precinct to a standstill.

**Mr De Lacy:** Which town-planner told you this?

**Mrs SHELDON:** Many of them—the ones to whom the Treasurer was not prepared to listen and still will not listen.

**Mr De Lacy:** It is only you saying that.

**Mrs SHELDON:** I do not profess to be a town-planner. These are the fears held by qualified town-planners to whom the Treasurer would not listen. So far, the Treasurer's plans to close off the end of The Esplanade and bring in hotel guests, casino patrons and up to 1 800 others at a proposed convention centre across the street are not backed by an adequate study of the likely impact on traffic. If the Treasurer has such an adequate study, I would be very happy to see it. I notice that he

has no answer to that challenge. The Treasurer obviously does not have such a study.

**Mr De Lacy:** It would be wasted on you.

**Mrs SHELDON:** It would be wasted on the Treasurer, because he would not even take it into consideration. I would have thought that a simple traffic study would be step one. Obviously, the Treasurer does not agree with that. However, in this case, glossy pictures and models are being circulated with no confirmation of whether the convention centre will proceed in Fogarty Park, and nothing more than a set of bald figures and statistics on Government plans for car parking.

The railway station site offers more space for casino development and car parking and would provide economic benefits to the whole of Cairns City—not just to the businesses congregated on the tourist strip along The Esplanade.

**Mr Johnson:** There would be no disruption.

**Mrs SHELDON:** My colleague is right—there would be no disruption to traffic; the CBD would be extended into that area; and it would be so much better for those areas—

**Mr De Lacy** interjected.

**Mrs SHELDON:** As the Treasurer is aware, I have visited Cairns often. I have inspected both sites. I have spoken to all of the people involved. None of them wants the proposal by the Treasurer.

The Government has not done its homework and, as a result, Cairns will cop the rough end of the pineapple. The Government has revealed that its favoured scheme will create 750 new parking places but that 100 others will be deleted in the process. Given the sheer numbers of patrons likely to be generated by the new hotel, casino and convention centre, it is not acceptable for the Government to be offering a mere 650 parking spots without an authoritative study providing an unqualified endorsement.

The Government is supporting a scheme that will provide a direct entry to the hotel's underground car park from Spence Street, but that is about the extent of innovation in design being offered to Cairns road users. In fact, the lack of traffic data provided by the Government makes it impossible to decide whether the hotel and casino will cause a problem by themselves, but the figures that are available appear totally inadequate when the proposed Fogarty Park convention centre is included. The Government has many

alternatives open to it in relation to siting the convention centre other than in Fogarty Park that do not entail relocating the entire hotel and casino as well. Treasurer De Lacy must take the Cairns Casino project back to the drawing board.

**Mr De Lacy:** Oh! Oh!

**Mrs SHELDON:** The Treasurer would not do that, because it might reveal some facts that he does not want the general public to know. As alternatives to using Fogarty Park as the convention centre, I urge the Government to reconsider the redevelopment of the civic centre, the railway site which was strongly favoured in the poll of which I spoke earlier, or the site of the waterfront oil storage tanks.

Considering the way in which the Government set about securing the Treasurer's preferred site for the casino, there is little likelihood that it will give serious thought to finding a more suitable site for the convention centre. Cairns people have been told by the Government that the proposed convention centre will cater mostly for people who will fly into Cairns and is not likely to require large numbers of extra parking spaces. That is not an acceptable argument. Designing a convention centre to keep the local riffraff out is something to which Basil Fawly might aspire, but it sits poorly with the Government of Queensland. Of course, we have the Basil Fawly of the Treasury sitting across the Chamber. Surely the onus is on the Government to try to encourage the use of such a convention centre by locals, even those so lowly paid that they might choose to arrive in their own cars. The casino will be a boon to far-north Queensland. Unless its planning is more carefully controlled, it could also be a traffic nightmare.

My second point of concern picks up on community unease over the lack of information provided about the intended use of the old Customs House in the design of the casino itself. The most pleasing aspects of the Government's proposals for the casino are the plans to renovate the old Customs House and enlarge Anzac Park. However, there is real concern that the historical value of Customs House must not be lost in the rush to have it as part of the new structure.

The heritage policy of the Queensland Liberals supports the preservation of the whole site as the basis for an historic precinct for the enjoyment of present and future generations. When one looks at the history of Anzac Park, which was dedicated as a memorial to those Cairns people and other Queenslanders who lost their lives during the

two major world wars and subsequently, one must come to the opinion that this area must not be allowed to be desecrated. The RSL certainly has major concerns about what will happen to that park.

A reconsideration of the railway site would spread economic activity right through the city from day one of construction, instead of letting that end of the city wither on the vine while the esplanade tourist strip gets all the shoppers, tourists—and congestion. Customs House is an important part of the history of Cairns. So far, there is no information about its new use, whether it is to be used as a reception area or some kind of display or, indeed, gaming space. Or is it going to be preserved, as it should be, as an integral part of the heritage of our State? In his second-reading speech, the Treasurer said—

“I am confident that, given the proposed development does nothing to the Cairns Customs House other than renovate it and use it for compatible purposes”—

whatever they may be—

“the heritage process will run more smoothly on this occasion.”

Why not smooth things out altogether and tell the public exactly what he intends for Customs House? Why are we told only that it will be put to a compatible use? I guess the answer is that he does not know what is going to happen to it. Whatever the use is, public access to the restored facility should be facilitated and efforts made to ensure that it is not overshadowed by the larger casino complex.

**A Government member:** You are lost.

**Mrs SHELDON:** Not at all. It is the Treasurer who is lost. In closing, I will hand the Labor Government a small bouquet because it has learned something from the mess it has made—

**Mr Beattie** interjected.

**Mrs SHELDON:** The honourable member would agree that I am always very pleasant and fair. I know that he does agree on that point. The Government has learned something from the mess it has made of its earlier forays into gambling. On this occasion, the reputation of the casino consortium appears to be first class, including several leading superannuation funds, the Australian Olympic Committee and the expertise of a major international casino operator. However, it would be very nice if we could have the actual facts and figures of the tender process made open, as I have asked the Treasurer on

numerous occasions, so that the public of Queensland would know that this was the best tender and that all funds are aboveboard—as no doubt they may well be. I do not see why we have to shroud these tendering processes in secrecy and why, when something so vital to the people of Cairns is occurring, these processes should not be made open. The Treasurer does not have to reveal any confidentiality; he should merely put the facts before the people so that they can see that the consortium that has gained the tender is the proper group which should have gained it.

Despite their head start, the Government and the Treasurer are determined to reinforce their pig-headed reputations with their high-handed attitude. They really should think long and hard before they leap back into combat with the people of Cairns. I feel that a little feedback and consultation on these issues would make things easier all round.

**Mr De Lacy:** They have spoken to their member.

**Mrs SHEDDON:** If they have spoken to their member, who is the Treasurer, they have been ignored. What about the protest on the esplanade of Cairns against his decisions? The Cairns City Council did not want the casino in that position. Every poll revealed that the people did not want it there. The only person who wanted it there was the Treasurer. I find that decision by a member representing that electorate quite incredible. He obviously does not care what his constituents want or think.

Because of the questions and the concern of the Cairns people surrounding the allocation of the site of this casino on its present site; because of the problems of congestion with traffic; because the tendering processes have not been made open; and because the real site selected should have been the railway site, as the people of Cairns wanted, members of the Opposition have no recourse other than to reject this Bill. We will not support it.

**Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (12.18 p.m.):** The Bill allows the casino industry in Queensland to be extended into the Cairns area. This is an advantage to the people of Cairns in that it provides a catalyst for the tourist industry in that region. It was unfortunate that the first casino in north Queensland went to Townsville. Since then, tourism in the Cairns district has proven to be a bonus to Queensland. It has attracted international tourists and has shown great growth, despite setbacks such as the pilots strike. However, the Townsville Casino has

kicked on and overcome all the problems and is on the threshold of further expansion.

As we know, casinos provide a catalyst to increasing revenue. They also provide a catalyst to increasing tourism—a point which the Opposition has not realised. The bonus of a casino in an area is that it promotes industry, jobs, tourism and the entire region.

Cairns is one of the fastest growing cities in Queensland. The casino will give it even more impetus. At present, it has a base population of approximately 100 000, with a catchment area of 200 000, which is a good population to sustain a casino. Casinos are a tourist attraction and engender good patronage from locals, who can extend their own lives by using such facilities as five star hotels. For example, many locals would not venture into any part of a hotel other than the foyer. They would not venture into the dining rooms or other areas.

A casino gives locals an opportunity to see what is going on in their own area, and it gives them a financial advantage in that they have the opportunity to supply services to it. If the figures on other casinos stand up in Cairns, a good 70 per cent of the casino's trade will be local. Of course, it is up to the consortium to make sure that it is able to generate reasonable income. One of the problems with the Townsville Casino is that it has failed to generate business from overseas high rollers. That means that the operator must provide a package of good facilities. The operator must have the knack and expertise to generate a higher income for that area and, eventually, for the people of Queensland.

I have spoken to the Treasurer of some of my reservations about the casino. One was the site. I believe that, if this process is ever gone through again, the Government should opt for only one site. The Government had the expertise to cull the sites. That is what should occur in the future. Only one site should have been chosen, and that should have been the site for which the tenders were called.

When Mrs Sheldon spoke earlier in the debate, she kept pointing at the Treasurer and saying that it was the Treasurer who made the decision. Obviously, the Treasurer and the Government set the process in train, but an assessment committee made the final decision. The assessment committee was appointed by the Government, and it made a recommendation. The Treasurer and the Government endorsed that recommendation.

**Mrs Sheldon** interjected.



**Mr D'ARCY:** The honourable member knows the membership of that assessment committee. It was well publicised, as were the guidelines. The assessment committee made the decision. In real terms, that was no different from the way in which the former National Party Government dealt with casino tenders. There is one point on which I could agree with Mrs Sheldon—I have discussed this matter with the Treasurer—and that is that I believe that the Government could have sold the result to the public a little better if the tendering process had been more open to the public. That was one personal criticism that I discussed with the Treasurer. I believe that that is another aspect we should consider in the future. It is important that the public have an input into anything that happens in their local area, or anywhere else in Queensland, for that matter. Information should be made available to them. As I said, the Government had the ability to cull the sites, and it should have done so. I believe that, in retrospect, even the Treasurer would agree with that statement. We do not need to draw attention—as the Opposition tends to do—to a site when it is not necessary.

The Bill authorises the Treasurer to enter into an agreement with the applicant, the Reef consortium, for the development of the Cairns Casino. At this stage, negotiations with the applicant are still continuing. This procedure is very similar to that which was adopted for the Brisbane casino. There are four main points. Firstly, the Treasurer enters into an agreement with the party for the development, subject to the approval of the agreement by the Governor in Council. While the Reef consortium is the preferred applicant at this time, the outcome is dependent upon finalisation of negotiations. Should the consortium not be able to complete any part of the agreement, we would then look at an alternative party. This agreement would have the force of law and would effectively override any inconsistent legislation.

As to clarification of the status of the project as a Crown project for the purposes of the Queensland Heritage Act—this is necessary to give the Heritage Council a clear definition as to the processes to be used in addressing the matter and to ensure that the final say with regard to approval of the project remains with the Government, and the Treasurer can retain the final power of determination of acceptability of the project.

Finally, as to overriding other Acts of Parliament, such as the Land Act and Liquor Act—this is essential because of the complex nature of a hotel/casino project. It is no

different from the decision that was reached relative to the Brisbane, Broadbeach and Broadwater Casinos. At the request of the Minister for Environment, the Bill also limits the scope of the Heritage Council review to those parts of the proposed sites that are listed under the Queensland Heritage Act to a specific date. In effect, this provision will prevent any listing of additional parts of the site at a time when the preferred applicant's submission to the Heritage Council is being processed.

As I have already pointed out, there will be tremendous advantages to Cairns to have the casino in operation as soon as possible. Once the applicant and the operator have their application approved by the Government, it is necessary for them to meet large financial commitments to get the building up and going. This takes some time, but it is in the interests of the people of Cairns and, indeed, the people of Queensland to have that casino operative as soon as possible. I am surprised that once the application has been granted to a particular consortium the Opposition would oppose this Bill. That process was not undertaken by the Treasurer himself; it was undertaken in accordance with the process set in train by the Government and the assessment committee. I commend the Minister for introducing the Bill to the House.

**Mr SLACK** (Burnett) (12.27 p.m.): I would like to address a couple of the points raised by the member for Woodridge, particularly in relation to the casino itself being supported or not supported by the Opposition. There is no question whatsoever that we support a casino in Cairns. We are not opposing a casino as such, but we are opposing the method which the Government used to select the site, and the Government's and the Treasurer's handling of the process. From what the member for Woodridge said, and from previous articles in the press, I detected that he also had some reservations about the Treasurer's handling of the selection of the site. For the member for Woodridge to put in print that he had those reservations indicates to me that he had very strong reservations but was not prepared to express them to another person within his own party, particularly the Treasurer.

I have raised the Government's handling of this issue. The same applied to the Government's handling of the casino building in Brisbane. The Government embarked on a deliberate process to bypass judicial review, which was sacrosanct to many of its members before the issue of the casino arose. The Government bypassed that review. Through

its November 1992 legislation, the Government also bypassed the Heritage Council's rules, to which normal developers must adhere. The Government put itself into a different category altogether. It said to the people of Queensland, "We have one rule for private developers and another rule for the Government, particularly in relation to casinos."

The point that I have always made, and which the Treasurer does not seem to be able to get through his thick head, is that the Burra Charter requirements were not properly adhered to in either case. I note that, in his second-reading speech and in answer to recent questions, the Treasurer has not referred to the Burra Charter. Its requirements were never properly adhered to, in that the proper investigation, studies and assessments were never done as to whether those sites—and in this particular case I am referring to the Customs House/Anzac Square site in Cairns—should have been included in the tendering process in the first place. Only now is the Treasurer having investigations, studies and assessments done as to what the Government will do with the site to make it conform to heritage requirements and to fit in with what the casino's requirements will be.

It is wrong for the Treasurer to say that the Anzac Park site will be doubled in size and preserved in its natural state. That gaming house will take up two-thirds of that site. Sure, the site will be expanded by the demolition of the port authority offices across the road, but they have no historic links whatsoever to the Anzac Park site itself which, incidentally, was the first surveyed site in Cairns in 1876, and upon which the City of Cairns was developed. It is wrong for the Treasurer to imply that that site will be doubled in size and that there will be significant changes to it. At the same time, he talks about the Customs House and says that there will be little change to it. He is not sure what is going to happen to it, nor is anybody else, because the assessment is yet to be done. Incidentally, the assessment is to be done, once again, by the developers. Sure, they will have private consultants, but one would have to question the authenticity and the impartiality of an assessment that is done by the developers themselves.

**Mrs Sheldon:** It would be a conflict of interest.

**Mr SLACK:** As the member for Caloundra pointed out so correctly, it certainly could be a conflict of interest. However, the fact remains that buildings will be built right up to the edge of the Customs House. So it will lose its impact

and heritage value. No doubt, other sites in Cairns, such as the railway site, were suitable for a casino, and were preferred by the Mayor of Cairns and the Cairns City Council. That railway site would have provided the same number of jobs, buildings and benefits to the economy of Cairns as will the chosen site. It would have been a much better and more accepted site, and the Government would not have had the fuss that it has created with the present site.

Most people can understand—obviously, the Treasurer cannot—the implications of using prime positions that are heritage listed for this type of purpose. If one site is under threat and used for this purpose, all sites are under threat, and they can be taken in exactly the same way. At the end of the day, or 20 years or 30 years down the track, heritage value sites, which are so important to our cultural history, will be developed into casinos or whatever may be the case, and they will be gone.

One can understand why heritage-minded people and the National Trust are against this approach that the Government has adopted. Through legislation, it is doing exactly the same as what it accused old Joh of doing with his bulldozers in respect of the Bellevue Hotel and Cloudland, which had no heritage significance compared with the heritage significance of the Customs House and Anzac Park in Cairns, or the Treasury Building, the Lands Administration Building, or Queen's Park in Brisbane. Cloudland had no heritage significance in comparison with those sites.

Through legislation, the Government is doing with bulldozers to much more important buildings exactly the same as it accused the previous National Party Government of doing. It is no wonder that the Opposition and the people who appreciate the heritage of this State object to what the Government is doing, and that there have been outcries against it. I ask the Treasurer: is there any truth in the rumour that Daikyo is now looking to become involved within the development itself, and to become one of the partners? Surely as Treasurer, he would know whether or not that is the case. I have heard the rumour that Daikyo could become one of the partners. Is there any truth in that rumour?

**Mr De Lacy:** The answer is, "No."

**Mr SLACK:** There is no likelihood of Daikyo becoming one of the partners within that casino group?

**Mr De Lacy:** They won't become one of the partners.

**Mr SLACK:** I thank the Treasurer for his answer, and I appreciate his forthrightness in giving it. I conclude by saying that the Opposition is not against a casino in Cairns. It recognises its potential for tourism, as does the member for Woodridge. However, the Opposition is very much against the methods that were used by this Government, particularly in relation to its approach to the heritage value of the site. There is no doubt that the developers in Cairns wanted that particular site because it is near hotels. From their point of view, it is a much better site in regard to patronage. However, that does not negate the fact that once this little heritage site, which is of tremendous value to the RSL, heritage-minded people or Aboriginal people, is used in this way, every heritage site will be under threat.

The Opposition puts before this House the Government's hypocritical approach to heritage values. The Government has done away with judicial review and council input. It has given itself the power. When it gets down to the nitty-gritty, there are very few avenues, if any, through which people can oppose these developments. They can oppose, but it is up to the Treasurer to make the ultimate decision. Put simply, it is a process by which Caesar judges Caesar. The Opposition condemns the Government for its hypocritical attitude. It does not believe that the proper processes were followed in relation to this site.

**Mr DAVIES** (Mundingburra) (12.36 p.m.): I do not mind going on record and saying that I am a supporter of casinos— not that I use them much—principally because I am a supporter of passive taxation. People should be able to make some decisions about whether they will play in casinos or play poker machines. By doing that, they are making a decision about how much taxation they will pay. As I said, from that point of view, I am a supporter of casinos. I sat here with amazement and listened to what we have all become used to. All of a sudden, the Liberal knockers from the other side of the House, as well as the National knockers, have become the born-again protectionists of Queensland's heritage.

**Mr Bredhauer:** They have the hide to talk about hypocrisy.

**Mr Bennett:** Will Vince Lester become a born-again greenie?

**Mr DAVIES:** I take both of those interjections. As the member for Cook says correctly, the Nationals have a hide. It is

absolutely astounding, when one realises that it is not so many years ago that the demolition experts went to the Bellevue and to Cloudland in the middle of the night while everyone was asleep. For anyone to say that either the Brisbane Casino process or the Cairns Casino process is equivalent to that just absolutely astounds me. I guess we have become used to that attitude in recent times. I have yet to hear a positive contribution from the Opposition in terms of things that promote development, particularly tourism development, in Queensland.

For years, the Opposition harangued us about the Gold Coast Indy. Whether one supports the Gold Coast Indy or not, ultimately, Opposition members were the ones who introduced the Gold Coast Indy to Queensland. This Labor Government passed the legislation, but it was the Opposition's idea—Fred Maybury and his gang. It is also interesting to consider the media in relation to the Brisbane Casino. Whilst the Deputy Leader of the Coalition, the member for Caloundra, was actively bagging the decision on the Brisbane Casino, and is now actively bagging the decision on the Cairns Casino, throughout Queensland, business was almost unanimously supporting the project. An interesting article in *Business Queensland* by Mathew Carr states—

“Tremendous economic benefits associated with a new casino in Brisbane's Treasury Building far outweigh heritage considerations, say city business leaders, many of whom concede their own business is likely to increase once the casino is built.”

The article names a number of people, one of whom is Godfrey Mantle who, because he believed in the Old Treasury building, went to the trouble of paying out of his own funds \$10,000 for a feasibility report, which he then submitted to the Queensland Government. The article refers to other people, such as Richard Barnes, the Managing Director of Jupiters. One would expect him to be supportive of the casino. Ian Baldock, who is the Executive Director of the Queensland Retail Traders and Shopkeepers Association, is quoted as being supportive, as are many other people.

The article also quite significantly quotes Mrs Sheldon as being opposed. Members of the Liberal Party will argue semantics and they will say, “Look, we are not opposed to the Brisbane Casino or the Cairns Casino. It is just the way you go about it.” As I outlined to the House last week, what we have done is take

all the heritage considerations into account. As the member for Everton mentioned in his speech last week, the Heritage Council was split, from memory, four votes to three on the original decision. The feedback that is now coming to us indicates that, because of the excellent work that the Government is doing in relation to the heritage aspects, the Heritage Council is now supportive of the decision. I cannot say that categorically, but I think that is the line of discussion that the honourable member for Everton developed last week, and it was good to hear. As I mentioned in the House last week, we really could not do much more in relation to the Brisbane Casino, and we will do the same sorts of things in relation to the Cairns Casino. The Liberal Party which is supposed to be, or which used to be, referred to as the party representing business has really lost its way.

**Mrs Edmond:** It is now referred to as the party of knockers.

**Mr DAVIES:** It is a party of knockers, and we have seen that so often in the Deputy Leader of the Coalition's approach. Every day, she is out there going yap, yap, yap, yap and yip, yip, yip, and knocking this and knocking that. Never ever does one hear the Deputy Leader of the Coalition praising anything or even being condescending enough to say that this Government has made a good decision. If she is not capable of saying that the Government has made a good decision, the electorate at large certainly is. We saw that in September last year and in December 1989.

This Government is a reforming Government and we do not walk away from that. We have made reforms right across-the-board, starting from the Fitzgerald recommendations. I know that Opposition members are probably going to say that that has nothing to do with this legislation, but it is an indication of this Government's commitment to the process of good government. By opposing these reforms and by using semantic arguments such as, "Look, we are not opposed to the casinos—just the way you have gone about it", what the members of the Liberal Party are actually saying is, "We don't care if these developments are held up in the courts for years, years and years." Let me tell the Deputy Leader of the Coalition that if that happens, there will be a capital strike in Australia. The Government has said, "We will not trample on the genuine heritage concerns that have been expressed, but we will set up a process and this is the way that we are going to go about it. We are going to make sure that

the Burra Charter guidelines are followed in relation to the Brisbane Casino."

I will get back to the knocking and the delays. Coming as I do from the Townsville area, I have seen what problems the delays can cause. The Magnetic Quays development is testimony to that. It was a development worth \$40m or \$50m and today it just sits in what is part of the desert in the landscape of Magnetic Island.

**Mr Budd:** What an eyesore.

**Mr DAVIES:** It is an eyesore, and that is so because the process was wrong. Certainly, people were able to have their say, but the process went on for too long and the delays resulted in there now being no project. That is the sort of outcome that can be seen in the Townsville area. What has to be done is that people's concerns have to be married to the process to make sure that those concerns are accommodated. That is the sort of thing that the Government is doing in Brisbane, and it is the sort of thing that will be done in Cairns.

As I said in the House last week, it was not many years ago that Queensland did not have casinos. Indeed, it is not very many years ago that there were no casinos in Australia. The real growth in casinos could probably be traced to the 1990 Loan Council conference, even though there were a couple of casinos before that time. At that time, the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, set the stakes for a massive shift in Australia's leisure industry and a titanic battle for control of the \$10 billion business which it was estimated to be at that stage. At that time, the Prime Minister told the Premiers of the States that the system of tied grants to the States was under notice and that they would need to examine new revenue-raising measures.

Within weeks, the Queensland, New South Wales and Victorian Governments had concluded that the financial climate in Australia had changed, and they decided that they would review their plans to introduce casinos. Until that time, there had been pretty well trenchant opposition to casinos in Australia, which was probably fairly grounded as a result of the findings of the Costigan commission that showed that there was entrenched corruption in Australia. At that time, people did not want corruption to become any more endemic than it was.

Casinos have a primarily economic attraction for Governments. In Queensland, the attraction is not only economic but is also allied to the need for growth in the tourism industry. If we trace the growth in income that

has resulted in the introduction of casinos in Australia, it can be seen that the casinos now form an integral part of State Government Budgets. In 1990, the income from casinos in Australia was estimated to be as follows: Townsville, \$18.5m; the Gold Coast, \$143.8m; Launceston, \$17m; Hobart, \$24.4m; Adelaide, \$82.7m; Perth, \$145.2m; Alice Springs, \$6.7m; and Darwin, \$5.2m. By 1995, that revenue is estimated to become something approximating—I am not sure if these figures will be reached or not—the following amounts: Cairns and Townsville, \$25m each; the Gold Coast, \$251m; Brisbane, \$120m; Sydney, depending on what goes ahead, at least \$300m; Canberra, \$55m; Melbourne, which has a combination of casinos and one will probably be announced today, \$120m; Launceston, \$25m; Hobart, \$36m; Adelaide, \$118m; Perth, \$325m; Alice Springs, \$12m; Darwin, \$35m; and Christmas Island, \$25m.

If those type of projections actually eventuate, it will show the massive income that casinos will provide to the various State and Territory Governments in Australia. At present, I think there are nine gaming houses in Launceston, Adelaide, Alice Springs, Darwin, Gold Coast, Hobart, Perth, Townsville and the recently opened one at Christmas Island. Over the next few years, up to five more could be added, including the Brisbane Casino which has started, the Cairns Casino which is soon to commence, the temporary Canberra Casino which is already operating, a Melbourne Casino which, as I said, will be announced today or certainly at some time during this week, and a Sydney Casino.

At a time when Queensland's and Australia's tourism industries in particular need capital investment, the casino boom has resulted in an incredible increase of that type in the tourism industry. I do not think it is a coincidence that allied with the growth in casinos is a growth in the number of tourists visiting Australia. I am not saying that people come here just to go to the casinos, but casino visitors are part of the tourism mix. Currently, the \$1 billion worth of casinos will add to room stock at a time when Queensland's room occupancy for last year was the highest in Australia and also at a time when room shortages have been predicted. From the point of view of availability of first-class and good quality rooms in the growing tourism market in Australia, which is Cairns, it is important for the casino to be coming on stream.

The investment returns for casinos range from the moderately good or not so good to

the extremely good and the runaway success stories. I listened to the speech made by the member for Woodridge and I agree that there were difficulties with the Townsville Casino when the project was first commenced. However, I am pleased to be able to say today that the Townsville Casino is over its problems and is now chalking up profits. It would be improper of me to forecast what its profits for next financial year will be. However, it is significant for me to say that the Breakwater Island Trust has recently taken a third stake in the \$21m entertainment centre there. That has achieved all expectations and made a profit, from memory, of about \$96,000 to June from the time when it opened in approximately January. That exceeded all expectations.

On the back of that, the Breakwater Island Casino in Townsville also recently announced that it will build a number of units on the Breakwater marina site in Townsville. It is important to realise that, although it had its problems and was incurring losses in its early days, the Breakwater Island Casino now is not only a vital part of the Townsville economy but it is also achieving profits for its unit holders and shareholders.

In time, with the land assets that it has available to it, the casino will be extremely successful. I take on board the comments from the member for Woodridge. I would like to report to this House and also to him that I think that the casino has well and truly overcome its initial problems.

The new casino developments in Australia will add approximately \$1 billion to \$1.2 billion in revenue to State Governments. Those figures are not mine; they have come from a study by Price Waterhouse Urwick. The two Queensland casinos—Jupiters on the Gold Coast and the Sheraton Breakwater in Townsville—have brought in some \$218.2m for the Queensland Government since the issue of their licences in 1985 and 1986 respectively. Revenues from those two casinos is currently running at approximately \$38m annually, and, with the addition of Brisbane and Cairns by 1995, that figure is expected to be approximately \$76m a year.

The Cairns Casino will do important things for that city. Coming into the next election—and the casino will open at around about that time—if I were running as a candidate in that region, I would certainly remind the people of Cairns that members opposite opposed what will be a magnificent development for that city.

**Mrs Sheldon:** I rise to a point of order. We did not oppose the concept of a casino. We opposed the lack of consultation with people because of it. Let that be on the record.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Power): Order! The Deputy Leader of the Coalition will resume her seat. There is no point of order.

**Mr DAVIES:** I put on record once again my support for the developments in Brisbane and Cairns, my support for the \$300m worth of development that will take place in Brisbane over the next year or two, and my support for the \$170m worth of developments and the \$36m development of a convention centre in Cairns, which Opposition members stand condemned for opposing.

**Mr BEANLAND** (Indooroopilly) (12.54 p.m.): It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak to this legislation. First of all, I want to say that I support having a casino in Cairns. It is not before time that we had a casino there. However, I certainly do not support the method that is being adopted by the Treasurer, nor do I support the location in which the Treasurer is proposing to site the casino, and the Treasurer knows that full well. He is riding roughshod over the views of thousands of citizens of Cairns and the surrounding area, as well as the local authority itself.

Over the years, when members of the Labor Party were in Opposition, we heard a lot of criticism of the previous Government for doing similar types of things. Yet at the very first opportunity when those people came into Government, they began doing exactly that, and probably worse in many respects. In the first place, a heritage site is involved. The member for Mundingburra glibly glossed over that very important point. Another site is available nearby and, as far as the people of Cairns and the local authority are concerned, it is a far more appropriate site to place the casino than the heritage site that is proposed.

This Government, which likes to utter a lot of rhetoric on heritage values and heritage issues, has again been caught out. In this matter, actions speak far louder than words. We have a double standard—something with which the Treasurer is very familiar, being the Minister in charge of double standards from time to time. He is another very good example of a double standard coming into play.

**Mr De Lacy:** No double standards with me.

**Mr BEANLAND:** This is an example of double standards. We have a listed heritage

site, which also includes a magnificent parkland area—a site that the Government ought to be going out of its way to preserve, protect and look after for the people of Cairns. Yet at the very first opportunity, the Government does away with that heritage site and puts in its place a casino.

As I said, I am sure that the casino will be a boost to Cairns and an added boost to its booming tourist industry. That does not get away from the facts and criteria as they stand. Another site—the railway site—is nearby. One must ask what the Treasurer has in mind for that site.

Although the location for the casino has been chosen, problems will arise with traffic flows and parking. It is very easy for the Treasurer to shrug his shoulders and laugh as he did in relation to the Brisbane Casino, but that is one of the issues that will come back to haunt him. Again, we hear a great deal from this Government about proper planning, that is, town planning and strategic planning. However, at the very first opportunity when issues such as this come along and when a town plan or a strategic plan is already in place, the Government tears that plan up and throws it out the window with the bath water.

That is the very thing that happens on each occasion. When the Government wants expediency, the Government does not let town plans or long-term strategic planning get in the way of any issue that it wants to rush through the Parliament. Again, as we saw with a previous piece of casino legislation, it is Caesar appealing to Caesar, Caesar judging Caesar. In this type of legislation, we see that constantly. In the legislation, all matters lie with the Treasurer as the responsible Minister. The Treasurer has all types of reserve powers and can do as he pleases.

Today, honourable members do not have before them the agreement or even a draft agreement. As I understand it, the agreement has not been tabled. From reading the legislation—and I want to make sure that the Treasurer answers this—I understand that the agreement will come into the House in due course with the regulations after the agreement has been signed, as happened previously.

I want to have it clarified and in *Hansard* that honourable members will see the agreement in due course, even though we are buying a pig in a poke today and even though we have no knowledge of the real contents of that agreement. In due course, the agreement will come into the House as regulations. I want to clarify that that will be

the case. That is the way that the legislation reads.

**Mr De Lacy:** You know that's the case.

**Mr BEANLAND:** I want to make sure that that is the situation. I heard the member for Mundingburra talk about the Gold Coast Indy and about members on this side of the House being opposed to various things. If we are talking about the Gold Coast Indy—

**Mr Davies:** You're knockers!

**Mr BEANLAND:** The knockers are those people who now occupy the Treasury benches. Had I known that the member for Mundingburra would advance down that road, I would have brought in an old copy of *Hansard* and read what his frontbenchers said about the Gold Coast Indy. Talk about knockers! They were denigrating the people involved. Sheer personal abuse was used during that debate—nothing more and nothing less—from the people who now occupy the Government front bench.

Let us cut out the nonsense. The Opposition is not knocking the proposal—far from it! Members of the Opposition support a reasonable proposal for a casino complex at Cairns. We know some of the benefits that can flow from it. One of the matters that I want to raise about the casino is what effect it will have on other forms of gambling in Cairns.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

**Mr BEANLAND:** Prior to the luncheon adjournment, I began to refer to the effects that the Cairns Casino will have on other forms of gambling in north Queensland. I want to hear from the Treasurer on that topic. I noted that his second-reading speech was silent on that matter. No doubt exists that, when the Brisbane Casino is operational, it will have a considerable effect on other forms of gambling in south-east Queensland. If another form of gambling is to be introduced in Cairns, no doubt it will have a dramatic effect on other gambling in that area. At the end of the day, it must mean that less dollars are available to be spent elsewhere. It must mean that other forms of gambling will drop off. The gambling dollar can be stretched only so far. I want the Treasurer to inform the House about how the Cairns Casino will affect other forms of gambling.

I turn to the increase in tourism which will flow from the Cairns Casino. I ask: what surveys have been undertaken to indicate that there will be an increase in tourism? It is believed that that will occur, but what studies have been undertaken in that regard? Before the Government made a commitment to this

project—which will have a wide-ranging effect on a broad cross-section of the community—I am sure that detailed studies would have been carried out. I think that the Treasurer owes it to this Parliament to table those studies so that everyone can be aware of how many tourists will be attracted by the casino and how it will affect the gambling dollar in far-north Queensland.

I turn to the revenue that the Cairns Casino will bring to the Treasury. I am sure that foremost in the minds of the Treasurer and the Treasury boffins is just how many more dollars they can make from another casino.

**Mr De Lacy:** It's irrelevant.

**Mr BEANLAND:** If it is so irrelevant, perhaps the Treasurer would be prepared to donate the proceeds to charity. Of course, the revenue that will be collected is not irrelevant at all. It is a most important and salient aspect of the Government's motivation in establishing casinos.

**Mr De Lacy:** Mr Davies has already told you.

**Mr BEANLAND:** The Treasurer should not pass the buck to someone else. I want to hear from the Treasurer about the Treasury's estimates of the revenue that will be generated by this casino. I think that the Treasurer should table those estimates. No doubt the revenue to the Government's coffers will be considerable.

This legislation reeks of double standards, for which this Government has become well known. Earlier, the member for Mundingburra referred to the Gold Coast Indy Car Grand Prix. After browsing through *Hansard*, one becomes aware of many uncharitable references by Government frontbenchers to that race. In fact, in late December 1989, the then new Government was still toing-and-froing about whether it would give a commitment to that race, even though the matter had been finalised just prior to the election.

As has been indicated, this legislation is excluded from the Judicial Review Act to allow the Treasurer to steamroller through this proposal. It is worth noting that all of the Treasurer's proposals are steamrolled through. The Treasurer talks a great deal about the various pieces of red tape introduced by his Government which supposedly do not hold up development projects. All I have heard throughout this debate is that we have to streamline and speed up the approval process. Perhaps the

Government should consider the problems created by some of its red tape and by some of the requirements that it imposes on private enterprise.

I believe that there should be an overhaul of those requirements so that the process can truly be streamlined. It is a case of what is good for the goose is good for the gander. With regard to this project, the Government has chosen to introduce special legislation to give itself special powers. It will not abide by the same stringent requirements that it imposes on the private sector. A double standard is evident in this proposal as the Government rides roughshod over the Cairns City Council and the people of far-north Queensland.

The Opposition supports further development in this State. I am sure that the Cairns Casino will mean increased tourism for far-north Queensland—even though we have not seen any studies on that matter or a study about the effect that the casino will have on other forms of gambling in far-north Queensland. The casino could also affect charity groups and church groups—just as poker machines have had a major effect on a large number of charity organisations across the community. Large gambling establishments such as this casino mean that there is less money to be spent on not only small business but also charities and community work generally. As I stated earlier, I think that the Treasurer should table the estimates of the income that will be generated for the Government by this casino over the next decade.

**Mr FENLON** (Greenslopes) (2.36 p.m.): I support the Cairns Casino Agreement Bill. I place on record my great disappointment and shock at the antics of the Opposition—

**Mr FitzGerald:** In supporting it?

**Mr FENLON:**—in opposing this Bill. I know that members opposite have tried to pretend that they support the establishment of this casino. However, it is clear—as indicated by the member from Caloundra—that members opposite want this project to go back to the drawing board. In the context of the long and difficult gestation of a project such as this, how far back is the drawing board? Members opposite want this process to go back to scratch—back out of sight. They would have us consign this very important project to the never-never and out of existence. Their problem is that they simply do not want to see this fine Labor Government be successful. This Labor Government is showing the best business acumen that has

been seen in this State for decades. The success of this project will translate directly to benefits for Queenslanders. I can express that success in three words—words which the members opposite obviously do not understand—jobs, jobs and jobs. They do not want to see job creation and they do not want to see this Government associated with job creation.

There are three areas in which this project will translate into jobs for Queenslanders. The first is the direct result of the construction phase of this project. That has already occurred in terms of the business activity that is being generated by it. The second area is the revenue which will flow to the State of Queensland via the taxation collected from the Cairns Casino. The third area, as the member for Woodridge has already very ably pointed out, is the stimulating effect that the casino will have on the tourist industry in north Queensland.

The casino will provide a very important and integral part of the future tourism infrastructure in north Queensland in general and Cairns in particular. Indeed, that should be seen in the context of the very fine work that has already occurred with respect to the Brisbane Casino. In relation to that project, \$300m will be spent. A further \$170m will be spent on the Cairns development. That directly translates to benefits in economic activity and jobs for Queenslanders.

This Bill, in common with the Acts that have been passed by this Parliament in respect of the other casino developments, in particular the Brisbane Casino Agreement Act 1992, is of an extraordinary nature. That sets the base for the specific contents of the Bill. It is an extraordinary piece of legislation in that it establishes a base to ensure that this project gets off the ground without any undue impediment. It recognises the exceptional circumstances surrounding such a development. The Bill sets out the circumstances under which the Treasurer may enter into an agreement with any party. It contains a contingency provision so that, in the event of any failure on the part of the preferred applicant, the Government may proceed with any party entering into the final development phase.

The agreement which will form part of this Bill will have the force of law and essentially override any other inconsistent legislation. Further, the Bill provides clarification of the status of the project in terms of it being a Crown project for the purposes of the Heritage Act. That is a very important provision in terms



of the specific provisions of the Heritage Act. Like the Brisbane Casino Bill, it excludes the casino process from judicial review and from other Acts of Parliament such as the Land Act, the Planning Act and the Liquor Act. In doing so, it ensures with its own specific process and its own specific thorough consideration that there is no major impediment down the line. That is very important, because a project such as this needs to satisfy its financiers in order to ensure that it has the necessary cash flow as and when it is required in order to enable the development to proceed.

The Opposition has contributed nothing to this debate. The member for Caloundra spoke on the Bill for 17 minutes—I listened very carefully—and there was nothing of any substance in her speech to provide any basis for a Government changing its direction on this issue. It was petty nit-picking such as, “We don’t like the colour of it. We don’t like where it is located.” Nothing of any substance has come from the Opposition. Frankly, there is nothing that would make this Opposition remotely happy throughout this entire process. Members opposite are there to criticise and to knock. The only reason they oppose this project is that they see that it is going to be a success for this Government.

We have just heard that plaintive, precious pontification from the Opposition side because all of a sudden they have discovered heritage. The National Party! I really had to pinch myself. I thought that I was dreaming.

**Mr Davies:** Did you feel a bit sick?

**Mr FENLON:** I almost felt a little bilious. All of a sudden, the parties opposite, with their well-known record in heritage and conservation matters, are being precious about fine-tuning elements such as the casino being in the wrong place. Because we are going to retain the existing building instead of bulldozing it, the members opposite are a bit upset about how it will look and what will be beside it. They are so precious about it.

**Mr J. H. Sullivan:** Do you think they might be trying to forge a new alliance?

**Mr FENLON:** I take the interjection. Perhaps they are trying to forge a new alliance, but it is very unclear with whom they are trying to forge it. Quite frankly, I do not think anyone would have them.

**Mr De Lacy:** Drew Hutton would have them.

**Mr FENLON:** Drew Hutton would probably be a good bedfellow for them, because there

seems to be the same level of accuracy in his pronouncements about heritage matters such as this. Perhaps they would be just as precious.

**Mr Bennett:** Even Mr Lester has become a born-again greenie.

**Mr FENLON:** Indeed. Mr Lester has shown the green colours out in the field. He has to reach deep into his pocket and check which membership card he has and that it is still green and gold. It is a little out of line with the past history of his party.

**Mr De Lacy:** I think they think the Burra Charter has something to do with the kookaburra.

**Mr FENLON:** I take the interjection by the Treasurer. Perhaps they are really thinking about chartering a launch from Cairns out to the islands when they think about the Burra Charter in this context. It is a shock to members of the Government to hear those bleatings from the Opposition side on this matter. I have great confidence in this project and in this legislation. I am sure that it will satisfy its objectives of delivering a service to Queenslanders, a service to the tourist industry and, ultimately, jobs for Queenslanders, the benefits of which will flow right through our community. I support the Bill.

**Mr PITT (Mulgrave) (2.47 p.m.):** Last week, in the Matters of Public Interest debate, I had the opportunity to speak about the Cairns Casino. Of course, I spoke in favour of its present site and mentioned that the casino would provide great benefits for Cairns. During this debate, a few points have been made which invite some comment. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred constantly to the people of Cairns and what the people of Cairns wanted. I must say to her that I happen to be one of those people. I probably mix with the people of Cairns much more than she does. I can tell her quite clearly that the media hype that surrounded the anti-casino campaign was grossly exaggerated. Many of the people of Cairns were reserving their opinion until they saw the final outcome of a very thorough and ongoing consultative process. It is too bad that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not wait to see the results of the investigation that was carried out by the committee set up for that purpose.

Much was made of opinion polls and their importance. We use opinion polls variously in this House. When they suit us, we seem to abide by them; of course, when they do not suit us, we say that they are wrong. The recent opinion polls that the honourable member cited in the case of the casino did in

fact come down against the Customs House site. I must add, though, that they were not very scientific. I have grave reservations about any opinion polls that are conducted by a newspaper or by a radio station with their phone-in methodology. Such polls are not scientific and they tend to be biased in order to get a certain result. It is amazing that the same two great sources of scientific data for opinion polls were utilised during the last State election. It was quite clear from those polls that the ALP in Cairns was going to get 7 per cent of the vote. One has to take those opinion polls seriously, if that is the case, according to the member for Caloundra, because we were going to get only 7 per cent of the vote. In the final result, the ALP held the three Cairns seats and near-Cairns seats quite comfortably.

The main Opposition regarding the casino being sited on what they call the Customs House/Anzac Park site came from, as I mentioned last week, two individuals, Madam Petrina Ferrari and a Mr Kel Ryan. I am not sure how closely the member for Caloundra is associated with Miss Ferrari, who is a staunch supporter of the National Party and had a particular political barrow to push, but I know that she would have had some contact with Mr Kel Ryan, who was a member of the Liberal Party who stood against the current member for Cairns at the last State election. I suggest to the honourable member that those two people were motivated less by their interest in the National Trust and their devotion to the RSL than by their desire to score some cheap political points.

The honourable member also mentioned the Mayor of Cairns. Let us put him in that boat as well. He is struggling to maintain his position for the March 1994 election. There is no doubt that he is using every single opportunity to get his name across the front page of the *Cairns Post*. On Monday, when I visited the airport to welcome the President of Germany, the *Cairns Post* carried a photograph of me, the president and the Mayor of Cairns. He muscled in on that photo, as well—ever one for a photo opportunity.

Mr Beanland spoke in favour of the railway site. Admittedly, the railway site seemed to be very attractive to the outside observer. It is a virtual wasteland in the heart of Cairns that needs to be utilised. As a result of this process, that land will be put to good use. The Treasurer has given a commitment to that. Many people are interested in putting it to a better use than as a casino site. When all those people had the opportunity to tender for a site in the Cairns area, overwhelmingly

they did not choose the railway site. As a matter of fact, three of the four finalists were categorically opposed to that site and submitted bids in respect of the Customs House site. I wonder whether those who were really in the know understood the deficiencies of the railway station site.

Conventions attracted 2.5 million international visitors in 1991-92. A total of 6.5 million international visitors are expected annually in this country by the year 2000. The Australian Tourism Commission expenditure study on conventions in 1990 estimated that they contributed \$260m to gross tourism earnings. This figure is expected to grow to \$390m annually by the year 2000.

As to convention visitors—I am speaking to the other aspect of this legislation, not so much the casino itself, because I had an opportunity to speak about that last week. The convention centre will be brought about by this legislation. Convention visitors spend more and spend more often when they come to conventions than do other tourists. One survey showed that delegates spent an average of \$506 per day, stayed an average of 12 nights and contributed 6.2 per cent to the country's foreign tourism income. If we are to have a viable tourist industry in far-north Queensland and expand the reasons that people go there, then this casino and the convention centre are very important, indeed. No-one would denigrate the absolute marvel of our reef, rainforests and outback. But I believe that by adding this extra dimension to the Cairns tourism bow, we are doing the local economy a service.

In an article written by Roslyn McLeod on the convention industry, which appeared in *The Valuer and Land Economist* in May of this year, she said—

"Conventions are the business end of tourism and an important factor that need more seriously to be taken into account in planning and building venues and accommodation and marketing these facilities and their environs."

I could not agree more with her. She said also—

"The benefit to tourism in this country provided by conventions, etc. is greatly underestimated because it is a difficult commodity to identify in any of the surveys that provide statistics."

It is important for people to come to grips with the flow-on effect of conventions. It is not just having a huge hall and stacking it full of people to conduct a meeting. Those people

need to be accommodated and fed. They need to go on tourist-oriented visits to the area. They also go shopping. All sorts of things are a spin-off from having a convention centre. In 1988-89, tourism earned more foreign exchange for Australia than did any other industry. It came from nowhere five years ago to beat things such as wool and wheat, coal and bauxite, to put it well and truly in our top 10 money earners.

The application of a sum of money from the successful tenderers for the casino was an important trade-off that was going to benefit the Cairns community. I understand that the sum of \$36m was set aside as an up-front payment to ensure the success of the building and associated facilities. That worked on a joint study that was commissioned some time ago by the State Government and the Cairns City Council. It was then decided that a convention centre would be of great benefit to the City of Cairns. Two of the final four bidders, that is, the Reef and Pacific consortiums, presented proposals that would utilise the Customs House/ Anzac Park site. They also suggested that the convention centre could be situated somewhere in the Fogarty Park region or adjacent to the Pier Shopping Centre near the Radisson Hotel car park. That was their view. Some people hold opposing views.

I understand that the Cairns Mayor was talking about siting the convention centre where one of the fuel dumps currently exist. It is no secret in Cairns that some people would like to see some of those fuel supply facilities moved further away from the CBD. If that is the site chosen, I believe that the mayor has set upon a very important proposition to be considered. It may not be the final result, but it is worthy of consideration.

The acceptability of a convention centre had not been tested at the time of that survey. The word from people in Cairns, including tourist operators and the man or woman in the street, is that they look forward to having a world-class convention centre that will be able to tap into that extra body of tourists. A small committee has been set up to investigate these sites. As I said—although the member for Caloundra will not accept this—we do not just go out and make these decisions. There is a process to be followed. That is the important factor to be considered with the casino and the convention centre. It is not done by dictate or a stroke of the pen, as would have been done under a previous Government in this place. There are processes to follow. That is why, during the somewhat heated debate in the local

community regarding the sites, no-one defended anything. People only attacked particular things. They attacked the Anzac Park site and the Customs House site. No-one was defending anything, because people were prepared to wait for that report and then make a judgment on their own behalf. Since the announcement was made, very little adverse comment has been made about the site. The reason for this is that most people are comfortable with the decision that was made and, most importantly, the process.

Modern convention centres require a high degree of flexibility. It is not good enough just having an open hall to attract people to sit in and attend plenary sessions. There is so much more attached to it. The European style is exactly that. They concentrate mainly on the plenary session situation. They have tiered seats. In America, they go the other way; it is a flat venue, and they jam in as many people as they can. In Australia, we have tended to take the best of both worlds. We have the open space, which the Americans go for, and the capacity to create the tiered arrangement to fit in people so that the focal point of any particular address is accessible by most people in the hall.

In Australia, we have a number of important convention centres that are bringing very important dollars to their States. We have the Adelaide Convention Centre, Sydney's Darling Harbour Convention Centre and Melbourne's World Congress Centre. I understand that Melbourne is in the process of considering establishing another convention centre to tap into that market. Each of those particular convention centres is limited to some extent. Hopefully, when the final construction occurs in Cairns, we will learn from the mistakes of others.

The design brief, which was given to the casino tenderers, stated—

“The design philosophy recommended for the Cairns Convention Centre is for a flat floor multi-use ‘Great Hall’ which has the ability to be subdivided into a combination of spaces of varying size which will allow maximum flexibility of utilisation. Retractable or elevating tiered seating for 800 should be provided at one end of the Great Hall.”

If that is done, I am sure that the needs of the major users of a convention centre will be met. The people who will use it include delegates and visitors in their hundreds. Beyond actual conventions and talkfests, we have a capacity for people to exhibit certain products. That is another group. Most

importantly, the needs of the people who have to work there day in and day out must be taken into consideration.

I understand that certain factors are required as regards the siting of a convention centre. One of those is the proximity of that centre to facilities that the people who may use the centre would require. The required associated facilities would include, as I mentioned before, accommodation and catering. It is interesting to note that a person who objected to the convention centre said recently that there would be no restaurant, but there would probably be a snack bar and that sort of thing. I am sure that that individual will have to retract that statement when he sees the finished product. There will be necessary access by the delegates and other people associated with them to the retail and commercial centre in the form of restaurants, shops, banks, the currency exchange in the city, car hire, transport and so on. Transportation had to be considered in respect of the siting of the casino. It will be no less important for the convention centre, which must have the same sort of access so that buses, tour coaches, taxis and private vehicles can set down and pick up. The actual siting of a convention centre in a busy CBD will require some effort on the part of the people planning the centre. I am sure that they have come to grips with that issue at this point.

As I indicated earlier, the great hall itself, which is the centrepiece of any convention centre, will have the capacity for tiered seating. However, as part of the specifications, it will also need to be capable of being divided up into a number of smaller meeting rooms to allow people to move from the main meeting hall into closed rooms for committee work, or whatever else they may wish to do. It has to be multifunctional in its layout to be able to accommodate a whole range of events.

In conclusion, may I say that the casino in Cairns is now an accepted fact. The people of Cairns are pleased that the toing-and-froing is over and done with, and are looking forward to its construction not only to see the finished product but also to see the jobs associated with its construction and ongoing operation. In addition, the tourist industry in Cairns and the people of Cairns look forward to the construction of the convention centre, which is part of the deal. I am sure that when it all comes to pass, those people who have been so violently opposed to it—and who have been in the minority so far—will be the laughing-stock of Cairns, as was Ms Ferrari when she attended the Chamber of

Commerce breakfast and tried once more to rant and rave and push her own barrow.

**Hon. K. E. De LACY** (Cairns— Treasurer) (3.05 p.m.), in reply: I thank everybody for their contributions. I must say that, when one sits where I sit and listens to the contributions from both sides, the difference in the standard of the speeches is very obvious. Government members always contribute in a rational, sensible and considered way. Members of the Opposition tend to resort to the old knocking, whining and whingeing attitude that they have fallen into. It comes as no great surprise to me to find that the Opposition, once again—

**Mr Perrett:** Just like you did when you were in Opposition.

**Mr De LACY:** I know all about Opposition, and I know why the Labor Party stayed in Opposition for a long time. Dare I suggest that Opposition members will be there for a long, long time, because they have learned all the skills of Opposition. They have learned how to secure their place in Opposition forever.

It comes as no great surprise that, once again, Opposition members are opposing the Government. They try to couch it in these terms, "On the one hand, we support it, but on the other hand, we are against it." That way they do not offend anybody and keep everybody on side. But at the end of the day, nobody is on side, and nobody can find a reason to vote for them and that is happening increasingly in this State.

Whether Opposition members support the casino or oppose it, the test is today. If they do support it, they should vote for it; if they are opposed to it, by all means, they should oppose it. However, I do not think that the Opposition would disappoint anybody, because I suspect that everybody expects it to oppose it as a matter of course.

When I listened to the member for Mulgrave, who lives in that part of the world, and who understands how people in that part of the world think, the ill-informed comments that came from members of the Opposition, particularly the Deputy Leader of the Coalition, who made two visits to Cairns during the process and pretends to be an expert, were put into perspective.

**Mr J. H. Sullivan:** She made nine, but on seven occasions she wasn't noticed.

**Mr De LACY:** Yes. I know when she comes to Cairns only if she appears in the local media, so I suppose there were several occasions when she missed a media appearance. The extraordinary suggestion

was made today that the Government ought to make these decisions based on the result of public opinion polls. A public opinion poll was conducted by radio 4CA. As the member for Mulgrave said, it was one of those notorious phone-in polls, yet it is on that basis that the Deputy Leader of the Coalition suggests that we ought to make our decisions. I have news for everybody here: that is not the way this Government makes decisions. It has a process in place; it spells out the process; it follows that process to its logical conclusion, and it finishes up making the right decision. I put it to honourable members that in respect of the casino in Cairns, the Government has made the right decision.

In my second-reading speech, I said that there was a lot of opposition to the Customs House site and there was a very strong majority opinion in favour of the railway site. However, since the decision was announced, overnight that strong opposition has virtually evaporated. It did so for two reasons: the high quality of the winning proposal, and the fact that everybody can now see that the matters about which they were concerned had no foundation. Everybody was concerned that we were going to rip down the Customs House, or that we were going to build over Anzac Park. Neither of those fears has proved to have had any foundation at all.

I wish to talk about the quality of the decision and the reason why it has been accepted. I know that the cost of the building is not the only indicator of quality. Nevertheless, the proposal on the railway site was for a 200-room hotel, plus casino, at a total cost of \$80m. The proposal for the Customs House site is for a 130-room hotel and casino, at a total cost of \$160m. One does not have to be very smart to see which one was the quality proposal. A lot of suggestions and, dare I say, ill-informed suggestions, or observations about traffic, parking and a whole range of other things—

**Mrs Sheldon:** You don't think that's a problem?

**Mr De LACY:** How can the honourable member stand up and talk about traffic problems as though she knows that there will be traffic problems? The Opposition says that we have ridden roughshod over the people of Cairns, and that we have taken no notice of the Cairns City Council. For a start, the traffic study, which was carried out by Connell Wagner, was part of the brief to the applicant. The honourable member says that no traffic study was carried out, and that there was no

interest in it. However, it was carried out with the full involvement of the Cairns City Council. The Government took into account all the planning considerations of the Cairns City Council. It complies in every way with the requirements of the Cairns town plan, whether in respect of traffic, parking, height, plot density or anything else.

The town-planner for the Cairns City Council was given access to the four proposals and asked whether or not they met the planning requirements of the Cairns City Council. He ranked them, and he ranked the Reef proposal first on town planning considerations. How anybody can stand up in this House and make ill-considered and ill-informed comments about town planning, I do not know. The fact is that we have taken all those matters into consideration. Not only was a previous town planning study done, but each of the consortiums was required to carry out a traffic study. The winning consortium is now required to update that traffic study. It is not as though we made a decision based on no information and without a study having been carried out. A proper process was followed taking into account all of the requirements that should be taken into account.

In relation to the railway site—people who live a thousand miles away from Cairns can stand up in this House and say that the project should have been built there.

**Mr FitzGerald:** Why didn't the Government decide which site it should go on? The member for Albert raised that, didn't he?

**Mr De LACY:** I will take up that point. I think that is a good question. It was raised today by the member for Woodridge, who said that only one site should be put up for tender.

**Mr FitzGerald:** I agree.

**Mr De LACY:** The honourable member might remember that, in Brisbane, we put up three Crown land sites. In Cairns, we put up two sites. From my point of view, it would have been easier to have put up a single site. Nevertheless, the site that was suggested was the railway site and the advice that came to me from the Casino Control Division was simply that those officers did not think that a casino on the railway site was viable.

**Mr FitzGerald:** Why did you put it up?

**Mr De LACY:** So that the private sector could test it. They said that if I were to put up only the railway site—

**Mr FitzGerald:** They wasted all their money on that site.

**Mr De LACY:** No. I am trying to explain it to the member for Lockyer. They said that if I put up only the railway site, it was possible that I would get a very low quality, inferior proposal.

**Mrs Sheldon:** Why should you?

**Mr De LACY:** This is what they said. It is to do with the viability studies on the location, and that was their considered advice to me. They said that if you only put up one, you should put it on the uptown site. But I was determined that the railway site would have its chance in court, as it were.

**Mr FitzGerald:** You wasted their money.

**Mr De LACY:** No. Nobody was required to tender for the railway site or for the other one. People could tender either way.

**Mr Milliner:** No-one was made to tender for any of them.

**Mr De LACY:** Exactly. Nobody was made to tender for any of them, so we put up two sites and we let the market decide—something which would be very foreign to the member for Lockyer. We put up the two sites, and it was then up to the people who were interested in building the casino to put the proposals forward. As it turned out, it seemed to me that the advice I received from the Casino Control Division was right because the quality of the proposals that came in for the Customs House site were vastly superior to the one that came in for the railway site.

**Mrs Sheldon:** You got a good design. What does it matter whether it was there or on the railway site? If that is a good design, why not put it there? I am sure that that one was just as good.

**Mr De LACY:** That was up to them. They had to decide that and, of course, in subsequent discussions with the proponents, the Reef consortium, I was told by them that they would never have tendered for the railway site. They said that if the railway site had been the only site, they would not have tendered. The Deputy Leader of the Coalition can see the position we would have been in, if we had taken the ill-considered advice that she still presumes to pass on to us. We put up the two sites and then let the market decide, and the people in the market decided that they were prepared to put the money into providing a quality facility on the Customs House site.

Since the people of Cairns have had a look at the quality of the proposal, they have accepted it. Even from the point of view of promoting the Liberal Party, it ill behoves the Deputy Leader of the Coalition to run around

opposing that proposal because, as I say, it now has won acceptance. All that the people of Cairns want to do is get on with the job. Sometimes, I think that members opposite are a little bit jealous that we have made the right decision and that Cairns will benefit dramatically from the casino, the hotel and, of course, the convention centre which will be fully funded by the up-front sale of the casino licence. The member for Mulgrave made considerable mention of the benefits that will flow from a convention centre in far-north Queensland, so I will not repeat them.

The member for Burnett, as the member for Greenslopes mentioned, let us in on the big surprise, namely, that the National Party has found the environment. Members of the National Party stand up in this House, look us in the eye and start talking about the Burra Charter, the environment and conservation. I guess a lot of members on the Government side of the Chamber simply shake their heads in bewilderment.

The member for Burnett asked me to confirm or deny that Daikyo was going to take up a position in the Reef consortium. I said that the founding partners have been identified already, so it is not open to anybody else to take up a founding position. Obviously, Daikyo, in common with anybody else, can buy public shares or the tradeable shares in the casino, but there is no substance to the rumour that Daikyo will take up a founding position in the consortium.

The member for Mundingburra commented on a whole range of issues, but he spoke particularly about the tax stream which comes back to Governments throughout Australia, including Queensland, and the fact that this is a voluntary or passive tax. Of course, it is true that people voluntarily play in casinos and the Government receives a tax stream.

The member for Indooroopilly worked himself up into a lather by wondering or conjecturing about how much tax the Government will receive from the casino. He demanded to know Treasury's figures in relation to the tax. I can respond to that by simply saying that at this stage it is projected to be worth approximately \$10m. He said, "That's the only reason you're going ahead." I answer that by saying that that is absolute nonsense. I mean, \$10m in a \$10 billion Budget does not really make very much difference.

**Mr FitzGerald:** I will quote you on that one. I will quote you on that one for a long time—" \$10m doesn't make much difference!"

**Mr De LACY:** The honourable member can quote me. In a \$10 billion Budget, it does not make much difference.

**Mr FitzGerald:** I will throw that one back to you.

**Mr De LACY:** It would fall off the back of a truck. The member for Indooroopilly carried on about town planning considerations. He also said that a traffic study would be needed, but he then left the Chamber before I could produce one.

The member for Mundingburra spoke in favour of a casino because, in Townsville, he has had the experience of a casino. All of these straw men like to build up some people just to knock them down. When a casino arrives, they all prove to be exactly that—straw men. All the social problems, organised crime and all the terrible things that will occur as a consequence of the establishment of a casino just do not occur. The Breakwater Casino in Townsville and the Jupiters Casino on the Gold Coast have been great assets to their communities.

**Mr FitzGerald:** There is no prostitution? There is no illegal money laundering? Have a look in the *Courier-Mail*.

**Mr De LACY:** What is the honourable member's point?

**Mr FitzGerald:** They do increase prostitution. They do increase laundering of money. There are no problems, you are saying. Let's be realistic. They are a great asset, but they do cause problems.

**Mr De LACY:** What I am saying is that all of the so-called social consequences of casinos simply do not materialise and there is a great community benefit from the establishment of casinos. In Townsville, the casino provided a five-star hotel which would not have been provided otherwise. It has provided opportunities for entertainment, dining, shows and a whole range of other things. It ultimately led to the establishment of an entertainment centre as well. It has been a great addition to the Townsville community, and that was also the case on the Gold Coast.

The member for Indooroopilly had two bob each way—"Two bob each way" Denver! He said that members of the Opposition are not really opposing the casino, but they would vote against it. I think I will probably rest my case on that comment.

In conclusion, I simply say that the Queensland Government decided to proceed with the calling of tenders for a casino in Cairns because we believed that the time had arrived for such a casino. The exclusivity

period for the Breakwater Island Casino in Townsville had passed. The casino will provide a major addition to the tourism infrastructure of Cairns. I know that a lot of people in Cairns say that we do not need a casino to entice tourists to Cairns, and to a certain extent that is true, but the other side of the coin is that the more we can broaden our tourism product, the better off the tourism industry will be.

It probably is an advantage to have those kinds of additional attractions because, if all tourists who come to Cairns must spend all of their time traipsing on the rainforest or diving on the reef, they will do more damage to those precious natural attractions than they will do if they spend three or four days in the casino, leave all their dollars behind and head back overseas.

**Mr FitzGerald:** How will it affect the Townsville Casino?

**Mr De LACY:** It will have a marginal effect on Townsville. I do not think that a lot of Townsville's patronage comes from Cairns, and that is the only way in which the Cairns Casino will affect the Townsville Casino. I am aware of the fact that the proprietors of the Townsville Casino are not very concerned about the Cairns Casino. The Cairns Casino will be unique in Australia in that it will get most of its patronage from tourists. It will get more patronage from tourists than from locals, which is not the case with other casinos.

When one puts together the fact that we have that very high quality casino and hotel, that we have preserved the Customs House, that we have expanded Anzac Park and that the casino provides the wherewithal to establish a convention centre to once again expand the tourism product and to lock into the fastest-growing area of world tourism, which is convention tourism, it is a win, win, win situation.

The casino is great for Cairns. That has been recognised by all members on the Government side of the House. It speaks volumes about members of the Opposition that, when the Government has a proposal that is so obviously to the benefit of the people of Cairns and the people of Queensland, even then they can find a way to oppose it.

**Question—**That the Bill be now read a second time—put; and the House divided—

**AYES, 44—**Ardill, Barton, Beattie, Bennett, Bird, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Budd, Campbell, Casey, Clark, Comben, D'Arcy, Davies, De Lacy, Dollin, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Gibbs, Hollis, Mackenroth, McElligott, Milliner, Nuttall, Pearce, Purcell, Pyke, Robertson, Robson, Rose, Smith,

Spence, Sullivan J. H., Sullivan T. B., Vaughan, Warner, Welford, Wells, Woodgate *Tellers*: Pitt, Livingstone

**NOES, 29**—Beanland, Borbidge, Connor, Davidson, Elliott, FitzGerald, Gamin, Gilmore, Goss J. N., Grice, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Lester, Lingard, Mitchell, Perrett, Quinn, Randell, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Stoneman, Veivers, Watson *Tellers*: Laming, Healy

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

### Committee

Clauses 1 to 13, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr De Lacy, by leave, read a third time.

## GOLDEN CASKET ART UNION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Debate resumed from 24 August (see p. 3814).

**Mrs SHELDON** (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.35 p.m.): The Golden Casket has been a part of Queensland for many years. Tens of thousands of Queenslanders buy Golden Casket tickets every week, and the revenue they generate contributes a great deal to the well-being of our State. Occasionally, some of them win, and good luck to those who do. The vast majority have to be content with the warm inner feeling they get from contributing to the Treasury coffers.

Already today, I have made the point that the Treasurer is very keen on gambling—not for the enjoyment that it gives participants or the winnings that some of them receive, but for the winnings that Treasury receives each time the rest of us have a flutter. Most Queenslanders would agree with me, because each time they turn around they find the State Government promoting some new form of gambling and creating a new way to tax it. In its latest foray, the Government seems to have finally achieved the ultimate with its plan to allow gambling on royal births and flies crawling up the wall. It is plain that the spirit of the Government's interest is not in the fun of gambling or the dangers of gambling; its interest is in the fun of earning more money and the danger that its returns might not be as great as the Treasurer had hoped.

That is why the Government has moved to make the effect of this Bill retrospective—a provision that is really quite abhorrent in these circumstances. Retrospectivity should be considered only in extremely serious circumstances. It means changing the rules after the event and it should not be applied to something as simple as a Scratch-It casket ticket. Ever since Scratch-It tickets first appeared, Queenslanders have abided by the rules of the game and won and lost like everybody else. The Government has moved to respond in an appropriate way to events interstate but, in proposing retrospectivity, it has gone right over the top.

The Government is jealously guarding every cent of its Scratch-It winnings by stopping gamblers from seeking to exercise their legal rights within the rules of the game. I ask the Treasurer to answer this fairly civil question: how many people have lodged a claim for moneys that they alleged were owed to them since the recent decision in New South Wales? Is that what brought about his decision to have a retrospective clause in this Bill? If the Treasurer bothers to answer me now, which I think is his duty, the Opposition will know how to respond to this Bill.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Power): Order! I inform the Deputy Leader of the Coalition that it is not necessary for the Treasurer to answer her now. He will reply to this debate. I ask the Deputy Leader of the Coalition to continue with her speech.

**Mrs SHELDON**: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am aware of that. The Treasurer's response to my question—if he bothers to answer it—will determine whether the Opposition supports the Bill or not.

**Mr Bennett**: You should have read it.

**Mrs SHELDON**: I have read the legislation, and I suggest that the honourable member do likewise. If anyone in his electorate is being prevented from making a legitimate claim by this retrospective provision, be it on his head! The honourable member would not like to receive such treatment. He likes the odd dollar.

Most gamblers are ordinary people who like to have a flutter. To slap them with a retrospective Bill, as the Government proposes, is not sporting and it is not proper. It undermines the reputation of the Golden Casket as a Queensland institution and reveals the penny-pinching, mean-minded outlook of this State Government. As the Treasurer has seen fit not to clarify that situation, the Opposition will oppose the Bill.



**Mr D'ARCY** (Woodridge) (3.39 p.m.): This Bill provides for a fairly simple amendment. It has been prompted by the case in New South Wales. The procedure for winning with instant casket tickets is clear. However, that procedure was challenged in the New South Wales courts. It has not been challenged in Queensland. As a safeguard, the Queensland Government is introducing this legislation.

Gambling has become very common in Queensland. I believe that there should be an extension of the outlets that can sell casket tickets. I have previously broached that topic with the Treasurer. Because only newsagents and subnewsagents can sell casket tickets, some communities are prevented from participating in that form of gambling. The instant casket ticket has become much more attractive than the old-style casket tickets. Unless a particularly enticing prize is being offered or unless a casket is being run for a special occasion, people do not like waiting for results.

Instant Scratch-Its have been a tremendous success in Queensland. To a large extent, they have taken the place of the old-style casket tickets. The fact that one receives an instant result and that the tickets are offered in various denominations—\$1, \$2, \$3, \$4, \$5 and even a \$10 Scratch-It for varying occasions—has had great appeal to a large section of the Queensland public. Again, I place on record that I believe that we should extend the types of outlets that can distribute those tickets.

The Bill contains a fairly simple amendment that brings Queensland into line with the other States of Australia. It will eliminate any double meaning that could lead to a rorting of the system. The system that was introduced in New South Wales does not take account of the gambling factor. The system in Queensland contains a gambling factor, with the Government taking a certain amount of revenue from each set of tickets printed. If the words printed on the tickets were misinterpreted, it could throw the figures out. We all know that gambling contains an element of luck, but the element of luck also contains a quotient regarding percentages. If the Government is to receive revenue and the people selling the instant Scratch-it tickets are to receive their revenue, those percentages must be maintained, and we cannot have a situation in which there is an unknown quotient. To some extent, the law introduced an unknown quotient in this area. It is up to this Parliament to eliminate it. I support the Bill.

**Hon. V. P. LESTER** (Keppel) (3.43 p.m.): I agree that the Scratch-it tickets have been very successful.

**A Government member:** Have you got a winner there?

**Mr LESTER:** Yes, a little winner worth \$3. Although I do not disagree with what has happened with Scratch-it tickets and the latest types of casket tickets, I believe there is a need, if a person wishes to purchase a ticket as a gift for a friend, to provide a facility to enable both names to be placed on the ticket. That does not happen with Scratch-it tickets. In the past, people could buy a casket ticket and put both names on it. Those casket tickets were very popular gifts at Christmas time. That cannot be done with a Scratch-it. Of course, I am aware that, under the current system, one can buy a casket ticket and write both names on it, but it makes things a bit more difficult.

I request the Treasurer to investigate introducing a casket ticket similar to the old ones, whereby I could buy Tony Elliott a casket ticket and place both our names on it. In that case, we could claim any prize without there being any argument. At present, if I bought a casket ticket and sent it to Mick Veivers and it won first prize, even though I intended that the ticket be in both names, Mick Veivers could collect the prize himself.

That matter may seem a little funny, but many people have raised it with me. I believe it is relevant. People would like to be able to place two names on a casket ticket so that there is no dispute about who wins the prize. With the Scratch-it tickets, it is difficult to sort out who should claim the prize. I would like the Treasurer to consider my suggestion about making provision to place two names on some casket tickets.

**Mr DAVIES** (Mundingburra) (3.46 p.m.): As the member for Woodridge said, this is a simple Bill to clarify a situation that has already occurred in New South Wales and which may occur in Queensland. Although, in principle, I do not agree with retrospective legislation, there are occasions on which it is needed, and this is one of them. I am not sure whether the Opposition is supporting the legislation or not.

**Mrs Sheldon:** I said we wouldn't support retrospectivity.

**Mr DAVIES:** That again is an indication of how blinkered the Opposition is. It seems to knock, knock, knock and oppose just about everything that the Government puts forward,

whether it has merit or not. It opposes just about everything.

**Mr Veivers:** You know that is not true, what you just said.

**Mr DAVIES:** In recent days, very few of the positive issues that the Government has put forward have been supported by the Opposition. Last week, the Opposition rejected amendments to the regulations under the Brisbane Casino legislation, and today it has opposed the Cairns Casino Agreement Bill. If that is not an indication of knocking two significant projects for this State, I know nothing. This is not a debate about the casino Bills, but, for the information of the member for Southport, the Opposition's attitude to those measures is an example of why Opposition members are getting the reputation of being knockers of just about everything put forward by this Government.

This kind of revenue-raising is another example of the type of passive taxation with which I agree. Some other good examples of passive taxation are the TAB, casinos, Scratch-it tickets and the Golden Casket. In those instances, people participate in the revenue-raising of the Queensland Government in ways that give them some pleasure. Most of us do not like paying tax, but they are indications of some tax-raising measures from which the people of Queensland obviously get enjoyment, because they participate in those ventures. Passive taxation is always better than some of the regressive taxation measures about which we talk from time to time.

It is worth remembering that caskets were originally introduced in Queensland to assist hospitals. About a year ago, the Government arranged for one of the major hospitals in Queensland to be the beneficiary of a special Golden Casket. I commend those types of measures. I listened with interest to the member for Keppel.

**A Government member:** You are about the only one that did.

**Mr DAVIES:** It is not all that often that I agree with suggestions from the other side of the House, but I believe that is a suggestion that we as a Government could consider. I support the Bill.

**Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (3.50 p.m.):** I wish to make some general comments about the Golden Casket. I believe that all members agree that this is a simple amendment. I also wish to follow on from some comments made by the member for Keppel. Once, it was

enjoyable to be given a casket ticket as a birthday present or Christmas present, but now it is really something that one does not want to receive. I will tell members why. There are no butts on an ordinary casket ticket. We cannot put our names or other names on it. We cannot even include the name of the person to whom we are giving the ticket. We do not know when it is being drawn, because we are not certain which casket it is in. If we miss the newspaper that publishes the results, the only way to find out if the ticket has won a prize is by making a special trip to a newsagent.

In the old days, if one held a winning casket ticket but did not collect the prize within six months, the Golden Casket Art Union Office would send out a letter saying that the ticket had won a prize and that the holder should take it in to collect that prize. I would like to get some figures on how many Golden Casket ticket prizes are not collected. I think that the figure might have increased since the introduction of on-line cards.

I have bought casket tickets that are still in my desk. I have no idea whether they have won anything. In fact, I cannot even remember who I bought them with, because there are no names on them. All I know is that I had a bet on something, lost, and had to buy a casket ticket. Casket tickets have become a less useful item than they once were. I believe that we should change that situation around. In some way, we should be able to include a person's name and address on a casket ticket so that people are notified if they have a winning ticket.

**Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns— Treasurer) (3.51 p.m.),** in reply: I think that some members got off the topic a little bit during this debate. However, they raised some interesting issues and, if possible, I will address them. First of all, as to the subject of the Bill itself—I think that everybody will understand that this Bill seeks to remove any misunderstanding or any unintended consequences among people who have been playing instant casket games and, through a misunderstanding, believe that they are entitled to something to which they are not entitled or, because of a court case in New South Wales, knew all along that they were not entitled to it, but now believe that they can give it a go. Good luck to them.

**Mrs Sheldon:** They may not have known they were not entitled.

**Mr De LACY:** They may not have known, but prior to the New South Wales court case, nobody in Queensland made representations to the Golden Casket Art Union Office for

payment on the basis of a misunderstanding of the instructions on instant casket tickets.

**Mr McElligott:** Does that mean that Queenslanders are more intelligent?

**Mr De LACY:** I think that, generally, it means that Queenslanders are more intelligent. I do not want to overstate it, but where a ticket states, "Match any three numbers", people are now trying to interpret that as meaning match the number three times. No, that is not right, either.

**Mrs Woodgate:** Match three pair.

**Mr De LACY:** Yes. They are trying to imply that it means to match three pairs. On one interpretation, if a person has three numbers, and matches them to other numbers, that person has matched three numbers. But what is meant—and what was always meant—is that one must match the same number three times.

**Mr Bredhauer** interjected.

**Mr De LACY:** The member for Cook said, "Thank you for clearing that up."

About three years ago, the Golden Casket Art Union Office saw the prospect of a misunderstanding and changed the wording on the tickets, which now states, "Match the same number three times". I think that is quite clear. That change was made three years ago. Nevertheless, since that court case in New South Wales, a whole range of people have been digging into their biscuit tins and coming up with old tickets. Members would be absolutely amazed how many people keep old tickets.

**Mrs Sheldon:** How many? How many people have actually lodged a claim?

**Mr De LACY:** There has been only one writ issued for \$35,000.

**Mrs Sheldon:** Is that Queensland or New South Wales?

**Mr De LACY:** I am talking only of Queensland. As of yesterday, there have been 69 claims totalling \$22,662,487. They are coming in all the time. It is important that this legislation is passed to remove any shadow of doubt. It will do exactly that. I hope that those people are not getting too excited about their prospects of getting a payout.

**Mrs Sheldon:** Can we have a list of those claims? There have been 22 million claims.

**Mr De LACY:** No, not 22 million claims. There have been 69 claims.

**Mrs Sheldon:** For \$22m?

**Mr De LACY:** They are sending in letters or the tickets and asking, "Am I eligible?" That

is what I mean by a claim. There has been only one official claim.

**Mr Milliner** interjected.

**Mr De LACY:** Good luck to them. It will not do them much good going to court now. It is three years since we changed the wording on the instant tickets to remove all misunderstanding. We received no claims prior to the court case in New South Wales, so people are trying it on.

**Mrs Sheldon:** If you have changed the legislation, you have no problems.

**Mr De LACY:** That is right. We have no problems at all. As another famous Queensland used to say—no problem.

**Mrs Sheldon:** Why make this retrospective?

**Mr De LACY:** To remove all doubts. It has to be retrospective, because these claims are all from before the change.

The member for Keppel was bemoaning the fact—with some nostalgia—that the good, old Golden Casket is no longer part of our culture. I think that many of us would look back to the days when casket tickets ruled the roost, as it were; when we would pay all our bets and debts by way of a casket ticket. But technology and changing cultures have overtaken the old casket ticket. Everything is now on line.

**Mr Milliner:** His nickname was "Wild Duck"; he wouldn't settle.

**Mr De LACY:** He used to pay for the casket tickets. He would always put two names on them in the everlasting hope that at least he would get half of the debt for which he settled.

**Mr Veivers:** There is nothing wrong with that.

**Mr De LACY:** No. I used to do that myself.

Modern technology, people's desire to have quicker responses and, I think, our desire to have a better system in place to make sure that nothing went wrong means that all caskets are now on line. By definition, that almost removes the old style of casket. It is not the ticket itself that is sent away; the information all travels back to head office by way of computer. I suggest to the honourable member for Keppel that he get an on-line card. I suggest to the honourable member for Bundaberg that he also invest in an on-line card. If he does that, the system is then foolproof in the sense that he will always get his money. If he has an on-line card, and he throws the ticket in a drawer and never looks

at it again, the Golden Casket Art Union Office will write to him and eventually send him the money.

**Mr Lester:** The only point I am trying to make is that it does leave the other partner dependent on your honesty; that is all.

**Mr De LACY:** Not altogether. If the honourable member were to get an on-line card—

**Mr Lester:** I've got one.

**Mr De LACY:** I am pleased to hear that. I must say that I am not a great expert on this, but if a person wants to give somebody a ticket, or owes someone a ticket, it is possible to purchase a gift ticket. The person buying the ticket makes a cross on the ticket. I understand that the ticket then becomes a bearer-only ticket.

**Mr Milliner:** I had a bloke on a motor bike who gave me a ticket like that.

**Mr De LACY:** I trust that the Minister got the payout.

If a person crosses the appropriate box, it is a bearer-only ticket. That means that the casket office will not send out the money. It will pay only on presentation of the ticket. To overcome the problem raised by Mr Campbell—if, within eight weeks, that ticket has not been presented, the on-line card owner will receive a letter saying that he purchased a ticket on his on-line card and that it has not been claimed. It is then up to that card owner to chase up the person to whom he gave the ticket, tell him some sort of story and get the ticket off him.

Nevertheless, the Golden Casket office is trying to overcome those concerns. Let me say that, on many occasions, people have said to me that they wish we still had the old ticket. John Stubbs, who is the journalist who writes those great columns for the *Sun Herald*, often bemoans the fact that the era of the old casket ticket has passed. He still cannot see why we cannot go back to those halcyon days. As I say, it is just a symbol of the way in which the world is moving. I commend the Bill to the House.

Motion agreed to.

#### Committee

Hon. K. E. De Lacy (Cairns—Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—

**Mrs SHELDON** (4.02 p.m.): In my speech during the second-reading debate, I voiced

my concern about this clause which gives the legislation retrospectivity. It would certainly seem that the words "conducted before commencement of this section" do refer to retrospectivity. I am a little confused about what the Treasurer said—

**Mr Livingstone:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs SHELDON:** Indeed, I think we are all confused as to the exact extent of that retrospectivity. I understood the Treasurer to say that he had changed the Bill three years ago.

**Mr De Lacy:** No, just the instructions on the ticket.

**Mrs SHELDON:** I must admit that I really do not know about the legality of that. However, it seems to me that if someone has bought a ticket in good faith and there is ambiguity because of the legislation, that is not that person's fault. If a person does make a claim and is successful, good luck to that person. Surely, if people are making spurious claims, they are not going to get anywhere, anyhow. My understanding is that the majority of the claims—possibly all of the claims—which make up that figure that the Treasurer mentioned of \$22m would, indeed, be spurious, because people are pulling out a ticket and saying, "I think I have a claim." I have a concern about retrospective legislation and, for that reason, unless the Treasurer can satisfy me in respect of that clause, the Opposition will have to oppose it.

**Mr De LACY:** The great majority, if not all, of the claims—if one can call them claims—that have come into the Golden Casket Art Union office have been made by people who have produced a ticket which has three pairs, and which is contrary to the instruction. The instruction said—and here I go again—"Match three numbers." It was always quite clear what that meant. I think that that is borne out by the fact that nobody sent in tickets or made any claims prior to the court case in New South Wales. However, this legislation removes all possible doubt. The doubt is removed, and it must be removed retrospectively because the only people to whom it can apply are those people who had bought tickets in the past. There is no other way of doing it. The other option is to not worry about it at all, because we can change the instructions on the ticket, and we did change the instructions on the ticket either in 1990 or in early 1991. We are now seeking to remove all legal doubt. The only people who won were those whom it was intended would win—those who had three matching numbers. Those people were all paid out, or were

entitled to be paid out. However, those other people were not entitled to be paid out, and this legislation will ensure that they are not paid out.

**Mrs SHELDON:** I am still not totally convinced by the Treasurer's explanation of that. It would seem to me—and I would like to know whether he has received any legal opinion on this—that if indeed there is now an instruction on the ticket which specifies exactly what is able to be claimed and what is not, that would prevent anyone from being able to make a spurious claim.

**Mr Livingstone:** On the new ticket there is, but not on the old one.

**Mrs SHELDON:** Yes, but it has been approximately two years.

**Mr FitzGerald:** This is retrospective?

**Mr De LACY:** That is right; it is retrospective. I cannot say that all the claims that have come in are for tickets purchased prior to the change to the instructions on the ticket. I think that people have started to look through their old tickets and every time they have found one with three pairs, they have sent it in.

**Mrs Sheldon** interjected.

**Mr De LACY:** No, the honourable member would be surprised. The fact is that nobody has ever been entitled to a pay-out if they had three pairs of numbers. This legislation puts that beyond any doubt.

**Question**—That clause 3, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

**AYES, 47**—Ardill, Barton, Beattie, Bennett, Bird, Braddy, Briskey, Budd, Campbell, Casey, Clark, Comben, D'Arcy, Davies, De Lacy, Dollin, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Gibbs, Goss W. K., Hollis, Mackenroth, McElligott, McGrady, Milliner, Nunn, Nuttall, Pearce, Power, Purcell, Pyke, Robertson, Robson, Rose, Smith, Spence, Sullivan J. H., Sullivan T. B., Vaughan, Warner, Welford, Wells, Woodgate *Tellers:* Pitt, Livingstone

**NOES, 30**—Beanland, Borbidge, Connor, Davidson, Elliott, FitzGerald, Gamin, Gilmore, Goss J. N., Grice, Hobbs, Johnson, Lester, Lingard, Mitchell, Perrett, Quinn, Randell, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Stephan, Stoneman, Turner, Veivers, Watson *Tellers:* Springborg, Laming

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr De Lacy, by leave, read a third time.

## PUBLIC OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BENEFITS RECOVERY AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Debate resumed from 21 May (see p. 3326).

**Mrs SHELDON** (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (4.14 p.m.): I rise today to speak on the issue of corrupt conduct by public officials and on the legislative remedies in regard to these offences. It is also appropriate and timely to remind the Government—a Government which is inclined to manipulate due process—that Ministers are not only subject to ethical obligations as elected members, but also constitutionally required to act in the public interest. I also remind Ministers and the Executive that acting in the public interest does not mean acting in the interest of the Government where these actions may clash. I remind this Goss Government that this Bill and the Act which it amends were introduced to provide a shield to protect the public's purse. It is not a device for the Government to use as a sword against those politicians and public servants who may speak out against the Government and/or its Ministers.

This legislation is intended to catch and to deal with public officials who have acted on the basis of personal benefit. This legislation is not intended to be used by the Government to oppress those public officials who have acted, in speaking out, in the public interest. In the application of this Bill and the Act which it amends, I remind the Government that this legislation was introduced to rectify and remedy actions of official misconduct. This legislation is not being introduced to give the Government yet another device where the Premier or any other Minister can attack and harass members of the Opposition and public servants who draw attention to the Government's misuse of power.

The legislation gives this Government broad powers to pursue any public official who is alleged to have committed "prescribed" offences. In clarifying these powers, attention has been given to the Supreme Court's interpretation of the existing legislation, which has implications that were not originally intended. These prescribed offences have now been more clearly stated and include sections of the Criminal Code. We recognise and applaud the amendments to the Public Officers' Superannuation Benefits Recovery Act which provided for offences in the nature of official corruption. Prior to the introduction of this Bill, Ministers of the Government of the day who had been convicted of an offence of

official misconduct while holding public office were treated differently from all other public officers. The changes introduced in this Bill should remedy those inadequacies in the current law.

The Bill recognises that benefits payable by the Government under the parliamentary scheme cannot be recovered by the Crown. As such, this will align the remedies available to courts with those currently provided for all other public officials. Similarly, equity has been recognised in the recovery process by altering the extent to which the courts can access pension entitlements. Prior to the introduction of these amendments, a recovery order issued by the courts provided for the removal of the entire pension entitlements, irrespective of the degree of access needed in order to satisfy the judged debt. These all-or-nothing provisions in the original Act were oppressive in their application, discriminatory in their approach and unjust as a remedy. Recovery orders to satisfy judgment debts will now provide for a rationalised approach, where access to pension entitlements will apply, only to the extent to which it is necessary to satisfy the debt.

We, the Opposition, acknowledge that this Bill seeks to correct a law which was not originally intended to have the implications that the courts have given to it. On this basis, the Opposition supports the Bill.

**Hon. K. E. De LACY** (Cairns— Treasurer) (4.17 p.m.), in reply: This is a singularly important day in the history of the Queensland Parliament, because it seems that the Opposition will support a Bill that the Government has introduced.

**Mr FitzGerald:** We totally support it— totally.

**Mr De LACY:** I thank the honourable member. As the Leader of the Liberal Party said, this Bill is intended to clarify the nature of the word "corruption" and to bring the definition into line with what I believe was the intention when the legislation was introduced some years ago by the previous Government. I thank the Opposition and other members for their support.

The definition of the prescribed offence that is included in this amending legislation is actually retrospective. This means that any cases that are currently before the court shall be caught up with these amendments; therefore, it is retrospective. I will be interested in the Opposition's attitude to retrospectivity in this Bill to see whether it is consistent with the Opposition's attitude to retrospectivity in the

last piece of legislation. I thank all honourable members for their support for this Bill.

Motion agreed to.

### Committee

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr De Lacy, by leave, read a third time.

## EDUCATION (CAPITAL ASSISTANCE) BILL

### Second Reading

Debate resumed from 20 May (see p. 3159).

**Mr QUINN** (Merrimac) (4.21 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Education (Capital Assistance) Bill 1993, and in doing so wish to preface my remarks about the Bill with some historic facts so that members can fully appreciate the background from which the Bill was born. For many years, State Governments have provided assistance to non-Government schools for capital works through the Loan Interest Rate Subsidy Scheme.

With the high interest rate regime forced on the Australian economy by the Federal Labor Government in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the unlimited nature of the scheme produced budgetary problems that could no longer be sustained. In the 1991-92 State Budget, the Government announced sudden changes to the conditions for interest assistance, catching many schools by surprise and leaving some of them with unexpected debts totalling hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Schools had applied for interest assistance some three months prior to the Budget announcement but had been deliberately stalled by a Government that was in the process of secretly introducing changes to the scheme without any consultation with the non-Government sector. That deliberate underhanded attack on the non-Government sector was a disgrace.

Unaware that the Government was even contemplating any changes, some schools were expending money in the preliminary stages of design and documentation for new buildings. Had they been aware that changes were being considered, they, with their prudent management approach, would have decided to halt all expenditure in order to be

assured of Government assistance under the new guidelines. The Government's deceitful tactics cost one Toowoomba school at least \$100,000, with other schools caught for similar amounts, and the parents would ultimately pay.

Last financial year, a new Capital Assistance Scheme totalling \$5m was introduced, and for some months non-Government schools have been accessing those funds under draft guidelines. The Bill now before the House will set up a legislative framework to transfer responsibility for the administration of those funds to the non-Government sector whilst maintaining strict accountability to the Government, and the Bill in this respect will formally end a very disruptive period for non-Government schools.

It is reasonable, after all, for non-Government schools to expect some certainty in Government funding to enable them to make long-term planning arrangements for their respective schools. Hopefully, the new mechanism will eliminate that feeling of uncertainty. After all, the demand for non-Government education in Queensland has never been greater. Twenty-eight per cent of all our students are currently educated in that sector—not an insignificant number. In fact, Queensland now has the largest independent sector of all Australian States, although the recession has no doubt impacted on many parents' ability to afford non-Government school fees.

The rate will continue to increase so long as parents recognise that there are opportunities and benefits for their children in the private sector and they have the financial ability to afford such a choice. There is no doubt that the voting march is on. It is important that Government assistance to non-Government schools move with that shifting tide. Any old-fashioned rhetoric about elitism is certainly old hat. Education is now a microcosm of our competitive world, and this is the new reality that Australia as a whole faces. We must get the very best out of every dollar that we spend on education. The non-Government sector of education has demonstrated its ability to deliver effective education at an efficient price over and over again.

The Liberal Party recognises the entitlement of all students to a measure of Government support and the simultaneous need for a reinforced and stabilised funding base. The Queensland Government's total assistance to non-Government schools has fallen over the past two years from 19.5 per

cent to a low of 17.6 per cent of the cost of educating a child at a Government school.

**Mr Comben:** Where did you get that from?

**Mr QUINN:** I understand that it will be cut again in the forthcoming Budget. At the very time as the voting march from Government to non-Government schools is in its crescendo, the Government moves the other way. Those figures have been provided by the non-Government school sector. Is this a Government for all Queenslanders when it starts to cut funding to one sector of the education establishment?

The Opposition supports the privatisation of the administration of the capital assistance system to the CAAs, out of the hands of Government and into the world of reality. We support the move to a more efficient use of taxpayers' dollars. We notice, however, that the Government wants a little each way and cannot sever completely the ties of bureaucracy.

The coalition has a strong commitment to a high standard of education for all Queensland students. We see that as one of the primary roles of any State Government. Further, we have a strong commitment to the right of freedom of choice for parents who may wish to educate their children in the non-Government school sector.

We make no bones about this: the coalition in Government would not abuse this needs-based funding mechanism to support capital funding for non-Government schools, because of the philosophical difference between the Labor Party, on one hand, and the non-Labor parties, on the other. However, the coalition does recognise the need for certainty of funding so that non-Government schools can make long-term planning for capital expenditure and, on that basis alone, we will support the Bill with the amendments that we have circulated to members.

The amendments to the Bill are necessary, we believe, because of various practical anomalies that exist in the Bill.

**Mr Comben:** We haven't got the amendments.

**Mr QUINN:** I am sorry. I was under the impression that they were supplied to the Table Office in plenty of time and that they would be distributed.

**Mr Comben:** They are mine. We'll pick them up later.

**Mr QUINN:** I will make the point that in fact the amendments were provided to the

Table Office by the Office of Parliamentary Counsel some weeks ago on the understanding that they would be circulated when the second-reading debate was to proceed. My apologies if indeed they have not been circulated.

Firstly, the Government vests the administration of this Bill in two non-Government school authorities, and it is necessary for those authorities to have guidelines for needs-based funding. With such guidelines, the CAAs can assess the school's level of need and its ability to access that needs-based funding.

We understand that the guidelines have been in draft form for some 12 months. It seems extraordinary to be discussing this Bill without the benefit of having the full facts being before us. A Green Paper on the proposed guidelines, at the very least, should have been made available for public comment. Although the guidelines will come before the House by way of regulation, this is yet another piece of legislation that honourable members are being asked to pass without having the full facts before us.

I will be interested to see whether or not the guidelines maintain some incentives for school communities and not impose a regime designed to ensure equal outcomes by simply guaranteeing Government funding regardless of performance. Last year, \$5m was distributed to non-Government schools on a needs basis. I understand that a similar amount will be allocated in the forthcoming Budget to the capital assistance authorities, with increasing amounts in future years as the Loan Interest Rate Subsidy Scheme winds down.

The coalition is concerned about the formula that the Government proposes to use to allocate those substantial sums between the CAAs. Where has the Minister spelt out exactly how those funds are to be distributed between the two CAAs, and will the formula be set for a particular period? Again, given the Government's commitment to needs-based funding, the exact nature of the formula used is of concern. Will it be per capita based, or will it be designed to benefit one CAA over another, and, if so, why and to what extent? I would have thought that the Minister would have made reference to that question in his second-reading speech.

Each of the administering authorities will be a proprietary limited company, registered according to the Companies Code. The role of the CAAs is to administer the Capital Assistance Program to assess a school's level

of need and its appropriate funding level according to the, I might say, absent guidelines mentioned earlier and to receive progress reports from schools that are using funding.

As proprietary limited companies, each of the CAAs will have to undergo an audit by an approved and accredited auditor under the Australian Securities Commission requirements. It is therefore not necessary or proper for another person appointed by the Minister who may not necessarily have the required qualifications to again audit those companies. The duplication is inefficient, and having to have their books effectively audited twice is tautology—an unnecessary and costly burden. The amendments which I have circulated to members are designed to correct that improper procedure.

The Opposition understands the desire of the Minister to receive progress reports directly from individual schools. The desire to control and to interfere bureaucratically must be almost irresistible. That process is wrong and certainly defeats the whole purpose of establishing CAAs in the first place. The Opposition believes that this is a job for the CAAs alone. In return, the CAAs have a responsibility to report annually, as I have mentioned, to the Minister. I think that we should be letting them do their job.

As I understand it, schools would be accessing Commonwealth funds and State funds for the same building project. The Commonwealth requires a return at the completion of the project. If the Commonwealth is satisfied with that level of accountability, I believe that the State ought to be, as well. The Commonwealth scheme has been operating successfully for a number of years without any hiccups. I believe that the State ought to be looking at the same sort of scheme without the bureaucratic impost of requiring schools to present returns on an annual basis.

Another bureaucratic impost will occur with the requirement of the CAA to establish an administrative account and a capital account, with the interest earned to be applied only to capital assistance. No efficient private enterprise prudently managing its funds would organise its affairs in such a manner. Should the Government fail to allocate sufficient funds to the administrative account, the question of who will fund the shortfall must be raised. I understand that the Government's purpose here is to allocate something in the order of, say, for example, \$10,000 per fund and then say, "We have allocated that fund. If you



cannot match spending by efficiencies in that fund, then the shortfall will have to be picked up somewhere else."

If a shortfall occurs, only two avenues are possible. The first is the affiliated schools of the CAA, namely, the Catholic Education Commission or the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland. In this instance, all affiliated schools will be forced to subsidise the building programs in only a few schools. This may involve payments by schools which may not access funds for decades. One has to ask whether that is just or equitable. The other instance is that only schools benefiting directly by capital assistance would contribute to the shortfall. In that scenario, schools would build this cost into their financial considerations and it would be reflected in the application for assistance—in other words, just a paper-shuffling exercise. The separation of the administrative and capital funds is an impediment to efficient and prudent management that ought to be eliminated.

The Bill has shortcomings in the several areas that I have outlined. The circulated amendments, if accepted, will deliver an efficient and smooth-running capital grants scheme which will help Government and non-Government schools alike. The areas of accountability under the Bill are also addressed and will bring this Bill into line with similar legislation in other parts of the country. Some weeks ago, I forwarded to the Minister a copy of the proposed amendments which will be moved by me at the Committee stage. I trust that the Minister has given due consideration to those matters, and I look forward to his support.

**Mr PITT** (Mulgrave) (4.33 p.m.): I rise to speak in support of the Bill before the House. Before I do, I draw the attention of members to a well-researched document prepared by the Queensland Teachers Union. Every year, the union publishes a budget submission, which I think is an appropriate action on the part of an organisation which represents schoolteachers throughout Queensland. Much of the document outlines what the union would like to see happen in education funding in Queensland. Some of it is not achievable at this time and some of it is a little utopian but, generally speaking, I find the document worthwhile reading cover to cover. However, this year I was a little disappointed in the attack on the non-Government sector of education in Queensland. I understand, of course, that the State school system sometimes feels as though perhaps it should have all the cake rather than only its very

generous slice. I object to that. In common with the member for Merrimac, I believe that there is a valuable place in our society for non-Government sector schools. We certainly do not want to have all of the same, and they perform a very valuable role in the fabric of our education system.

The document prepared by the QTU is not even a thinly veiled attack; it is an open assault on non-Government school spending. The inference is that, somehow, public education is suffering neglect because the Government is directing too much of its resources to the non-State system. The document sends a bit of a shudder through one's spine. It takes one back to the sixties, when we had the State aid sectarian debate that divided the community and was totally unnecessary. I thought that all of this disputation in our society had settled down. I thought that we had come to grips with the reality that diversity does not necessarily mean a watering down of the end product to our clients—the students.

Page 94 of the document prepared by the QTU under the heading "The Cost of Private School Funding" states—

"The continued growth of private schools has hurt government schools."

I point out to honourable members and also to the members of the Queensland Teachers Union that non-State school funding is in addition to that for Government schools. As a matter of fact, the State Government is only a 25 per cent partner in the non-Government sector. We contribute to that non-Government sector by way of capital assistance and provide about 20 per cent of the per capita funding which is provided to State school students. It is not a great proportion of the funding. Most of the funding for non-Government schools comes from the Commonwealth and from fees. As a matter of fact, 28 per cent of Queensland's students attend non-Government schools. Of that figure, some 20 per cent attend schools run by the Catholic Education Office. Any person who has seen the parochial schools in small communities could not claim that they are over-endowed with funds and resources. I understand that, of the remaining 8 per cent, only about 1 per cent or 2 per cent could be said in real terms to be rich or extra well endowed. When those figures are taken into consideration, one must wonder at the veracity of the attack on non-State schools.

The document prepared by the QTU goes on to state—

“ . . . government funding of private schools is directly linked to reductions in funding for the public system.”

If there were a reduction in funding for the public system, the funding to non-Government schools would also suffer. The funding for non-State schools is linked directly to that for State schools, and it increases and decreases by the same amount per student. A formula is applied. The submission by the QTU states further—

“The grants are made on the basis of ‘need’ which means in practice that the lower a school’s fees the higher the Government grants and vice versa.”

I know that sounds like a very sound and simple sort of argument, but it is not quite true. In common with any other organisation, private schools attempt to keep their fees down. I think that they should be applauded for doing so. Lowering of fees in itself does not necessarily mean that an increase in funding will occur. Funding is based on need and that causes differential payments among schools, but it does not affect, in the end, the quantum of funds available. The submission states further—

“Instead of lowering its commitment to non-Government schools, this move”—

whereby, in the 1992-93 State Budget, the needs-based funding of private schools was implemented—

“. . . has seen an increase in funding for non-Government schools.”

Earlier, the member for Merrimac stated that, according to the non-Government schools, that is not the case; they feel as though their funding has dropped over the past 12 months. I will not dispute that. Obviously, someone is right and someone is wrong. Right or wrong, I think that it is important to realise that the Education Department, under the control of the State Government, has been a major beneficiary of funding over the past few years. If the linkage between the State schools and the non-Government schools means that non-Government schools get extra money as well, I think that is appropriate. I think that is the way it should be.

The submission by the QTU states further—

“The QTU calls on the State Government to introduce a true ‘needs-based’ system of funding for non-Government schools. Under such a system, unlike the system presently being implemented, the wealthiest private

schools should receive no State funding on the basis that they do not need it.”

That is going a little too far. As a Government, we are in the business of educating students, not trying to pick one out from the other—whether or not they attend a private school or a State school; whether or not they have red hair; or whatever other criteria one is going to use. The parents of students at non-State schools are also taxpayers. They receive additional educational benefits from both the Commonwealth and State Governments, as do any other taxpayers. State schools also receive funding from the Commonwealth. As I said, there is no reason why they should not receive the same sort of support from this Government as do State schools.

The final point of interest from that submission is on the aspect of accountability. The submission states—

“The accountability requirements built into the funding arrangement for non-government schools are completely inadequate by comparison with what is now expected of state schooling in Queensland.”

I understand that the accountability process in State schools is quite stringent, and so it should be. If we are going to spend money on anything, we should make sure that those who actually are in the process of distributing that money are as accountable as possible. Although in the past it has not been stringent enough in the non-Government schools, Cabinet recently endorsed a group to develop a stronger accountability process for non-Government schools. The recommendations from that appear as part of this legislation.

The Bill and Explanatory Notes encapsulate the essence of the Bill when they state—

“The objective of the Bill is to authorise the provision of capital assistance to eligible non-State schools on a needs basis, for capital projects that consist of the planning, construction, alteration, extension, renovation, relocation or upgrading of certain educational facilities.”

Honourable members will notice that it is targeted and that there is a desire to make sure that the money is spent in the right quarters.

Previously, the Government did provide capital assistance to non-State schools, and that was done through an interest subsidy scheme. It was unfair to the less wealthy schools, because they did not have the

wherewithal to raise the funds to attract that sort of assistance. It meant that, if a school had a AAA rating as a school or had a large benefactor and was able to put money up front—borrowed money, as a matter of fact, in most cases—it could also attract funding from the interest assistance scheme. It was recognised as inequitable. Virtually all the capital projects in non-State schools became eligible under that process. Whether they were deserving of it or there was any need for it, any project that was put up generally received that sort of assistance, which was not fair to the small schools that could not provide that sort of funding.

The Labor Government, I believe, is about equity. No-one interested in equity could doubt the fairness of this Bill. The needs-based scheme did not come about by accident. Under the previous Minister for Education and the present Minister, the process of consultation has gone on. Now the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland have come to basic agreement that this is the way things should go. Those organisations will not be left out of the process. They will play a significant role in its administration, which is as it should be.

We must realise that, as there is a dual system of education—private and State—there is also a dual system of education within the non-Government schools. That is why this legislation proposes two capital assistance authorities: one to cover the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland and the other to cover the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. That will mean that the schools which belong to neither of those groups will have to come in under the umbrella and open themselves up not only to the scrutiny of the authority to be set up but also to the protection of that authority in gaining assistance through this scheme.

Those authorities will have the process of assessing the particular projects that come before them, but the criteria themselves will be set down by Government, as it should, because Government money is being spent. Obviously, the dollars must be spent wisely. The Government will take into consideration, of course, the existing facilities at those schools and be aware of what is needed to bring those schools up to a satisfactory standard to provide a modern education system. I suppose that consideration must be taken to the capacity of the school community to support its school in those circumstances. As we know, some school communities are not as well off as others, and that aspect must

be taken into consideration. In the end, the dollars being spent on capital assistance will go to those schools in greatest need, and no-one should quibble with that.

The Government will not allow certain facilities that are not provided by Government itself. Such things as swimming pools will not be eligible under the scheme. They are additional facilities. Not all Government schools are given swimming pools as part of the kit. Facilities for the place of worship, which do not exist in Government schools, and assistance for acquisition of land will be kept outside the framework of the scheme.

As I come from regional Queensland, I note that one important aspect is that those schools that provide boarding facilities will find that the capital assistance funds can be directed towards that purpose, because in many cases that is the reason why the school exists, to provide those students from far-flung corners of the State with the sort of education which their parents want them to have and which is not available—and could never be available—in their local community through lack of numbers and distance.

The authorities themselves will make recommendations to the Minister for final determination. Along with those recommendations, reasons for the recommendations must be included. The Minister will then have to either accept or refuse that particular grant on the basis of the information put before him, but he will provide, in addition, reasons for that acceptance or refusal.

The staffing of the capital assistance authorities is important. It is important that some support be given to make sure that the right sort of people are involved to carry out these projects. I understand that the legislation suggests that that should be included. For 1993, the administrative funding will be provided for each authority, and I understand that that will be reviewed at the end of the year to make sure that the money being provided is sufficient to allow those people who are doing that particular work to carry out their duties effectively.

Earlier, I mentioned accountability. I am sure that the accountability process will be sound. Each year, each of those authorities will be required to endorse an accountability statement provided to the Minister, who will be able to assess on that basis whether or not the workings of particular authorities are what they should be.

I refer to an interesting part about interest which may accrue on sums that are paid to

those authorities. The interest must be paid into a fund. Any money will be returned by the schools to the capital assistance authority at the end of the day. Each year a capital assistance authority would be required to give an audited statement listing all the details of the projects undertaken and it would also be required to include the administrative costs.

I am confident that this legislation will be well accepted by the broad scope of independent schools, as has already been indicated by their involvement in the process. I am pleased, therefore, to support the Bill, because I would think that at long last it will ensure that the Government's dollars—the taxpayers' dollars—are spent on those schools which most need them.

**Ms SPENCE** (Mount Gravatt) (4.48 p.m.): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Education Minister on taking the initiative to reform the scheme by which the Government subsidises the cost of the building programs in non-Government schools. The history of this scheme is important because it reveals how important this initiative really is. Under the old scheme, the Government provided a subsidy on loans raised for capital works. For example, the grammar schools scheme provided a 25 per cent subsidy on the total cost of eligible projects in grammar schools. All eligible projects were funded and there was no control on expenditure.

I am told that our top private grammar schools have some of the best laboratory and sporting facilities partially funded by the State while the poorer private schools, the little parish schools that needed the new facilities, could not get any Government subsidy because they could not even raise the money to get a loan in the first place. Government expenditure on the scheme increased as the wealthy schools raised more and more money to attract bigger and bigger loans to build bigger projects, and this attracted larger amounts of Government money.

When people question me about reforms of the Goss Labor Government, I tell them that it is not just the big reforms in education, social justice and police but also the smaller reforms such as this one which have an important role to play in the overall scheme of things. Reforms such as this mean that the little private catholic schools in my electorate will have an opportunity to receive funding for their building programs.

I have studied this Bill in some detail and I am impressed by this new scheme. I know that Education Department officials and representatives from non-Government schools

have been working on the details of the scheme for some time, and I have faith that this proposal offers a fair and accountable distribution of Government money based on need. The condition and number of existing facilities in the school in relation to the level of facilities needed and the financial situation of the school and its community will be part of the assessment criteria. Those with the greatest financial and educational need will receive the greatest assistance.

The Government is giving the decision making on these matters back to the schools where the body of knowledge lies. Two authorities, namely, the Association of Independent Schools and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission will assess the applications. Any private school wishing for funds must affiliate with one of these bodies, and the Minister will decide on the amount of assistance after considering the recommendations. This system takes the administrative burden off the public service, and each of the authorities will be given \$65,000 to cover their administration costs.

Another important feature of this scheme is the accountability provisions written into the legislation. The scheme provides a high standard of accountability to ensure that Government funds are used appropriately. I am pleased that the Opposition has recognised this feature of the Bill. Each capital assistance authority must establish a Capital Assistance Fund, and these funds must be held with a bank or financial institution approved by the Treasurer. The capital funds must be kept in a separate account, and all moneys must be used solely to provide capital assistance to schools. Each CAA is required to provide to the Minister an audited statement each year, and the audit must be carried out by a person approved by the Minister.

Before a school can receive funding, it must enter into a written agreement with the CAA, which will bind the school to the requirements of the scheme. Schools which receive capital assistance must provide a return to the CAA each year in which the school uses Government funds. Any funds not used by the school for the approved project must be returned.

The scheme is very specific about the type of projects that will or will not be funded. The scheme does not provide funding for the purchase of land, buildings solely for religious purposes, swimming pools or facilities that are not used in State schools. Boarding facilities, however, will be funded in due recognition of the obvious need for boarding facilities to be

provided in the State, and the important role that the non-Government sector plays in providing education to rural children.

The Government's contribution to the building projects for non-Government schools rose from \$9.9m in 1989-90 to \$19.4m one year later. I believe that we have heard a lot of ill-informed, off-the-cuff, grandstanding comments in this Chamber in recent weeks about all the things that we are not doing in education in this State. The fact is that this Government has spent more on education than has any other Government. That is, we have devoted more of our Budget expenditure to education. We have shown our commitment to education in real financial terms, which is something that the Opposition was never prepared to do.

Education has always been one of the top priorities of this Government. We on this side of the House can proudly stand up and talk about our achievements in this field. This scheme is one important example of the reforms that we have undertaken to sort out the bureaucratic funding disasters which we inherited from the previous Government.

Education is about children and teachers. Having spent some time in the classroom, I know that there is nothing more important than the quality and number of teachers in front of children. The learning environment has to be of a high standard if we want to achieve quality learning experience. Fans, heating, pleasant buildings, undercover seating areas, auditoriums and good libraries are absolute imperatives in the education experience. Teachers know this, parents know this, and the Government recognises this.

This Government's education capital works program has led to an unprecedented number of new schools in this State. As well, our school enhancement program has meant that millions of dollars are being spent on painting, repairing and providing new facilities in our existing schools. In my electorate, schools that should have been painted 10 years ago are finally being painted, security is being provided, and the list goes on.

This scheme gives the needy non-Government schools the opportunity to give their children a better learning environment. I am a frequent visitor to all the schools in my electorate, and I am aware of the needs of the non-Government schools that have difficulties raising funds for their building projects. We, as a Government, are interested in the quality of education for all children, whether they be in a Government or non-Government school. If there are schools in

need, then we are obliged to offer assistance. This scheme is designed to do that.

I congratulate the Minister and his department on the thought and detail that has been devoted to this scheme, and trust that the principles of social justice that have guided the Minister's endeavours will result in a very successful capital assistance program for non-Government schools.

**Mrs ROSE** (Currumbin) (4.55 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I rise to speak to the Education (Capital Assistance) Bill 1993, the purpose of which is to provide a workable, needs-based State Government funding scheme to assist eligible non-State schools with capital projects. Assistance for such projects is on the proviso that they are designed to upgrade the general educational amenities offered by applicant non-State schools in Queensland. This would include the cost of upgrading general educational facilities for the purpose of tuition and boarding, construction, the building of extensions and renovation.

The State Government recognises non-State schools as valid and important providers of education for primary and secondary-aged children in Queensland. Inherent in the Government's recognition of these schools is an understanding that the educational standards that they maintain are directly affected by their ability to facilitate the periodic upgrading of their educational facilities. So the Government understands that expenditure on capital projects is an ongoing concern to many of those schools.

In the past, under the Interest Assistance Scheme, schools which were in no financial position to raise loans for expenditure on capital projects found it difficult to access subsidy relief from the State Government. This situation left some non-State schools in an unenviable position in relation to raising funds and seeking relief for expenditure required to upgrade educational facilities. With the Education (Capital Assistance) Bill, this situation has been addressed.

In line with this Government's wish to implement a fair and equitable allocation of resources to both State and non-State schools, an emphasis on needs-based funding for capital projects is an integral part of the proposed legislation. The Minister for Education's commitment to a process of consultation with the Association of Independent Schools and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission exemplifies his wish to deal with the funding requirements of non-State schools sensibly and fairly.

Under the Education (Capital Assistance) Bill, eligible non-State schools must be affiliated with either the Association of Independent Schools or the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. According to the proposed legislation, they will act as capital assistance authorities through which applications for funding from the Government must be made. Individual schools must apply to the Minister for capital assistance funding through a capital assistance authority. The capital assistance authority will make funding recommendations to the Minister in relation to each application that it receives from its affiliated schools.

These recommendations will be made according to a set of relevant criteria based on the school's needs and existing facilities, its financial resources and the capability of the school community to provide financial support. The new process as set down in the proposed legislation embodies three of the Queensland Government's key objectives in relation to the equitable funding of non-State schools. First, the new scheme is consultative and actively involves non-State school peak bodies in the funding assistance process by allowing them to take on the role of capital assistance authorities.

Secondly, the criteria with which the capital assistance authorities assess applications have an emphasis on ascertaining the existing resources and current needs of individual schools. Lastly, there is a vital emphasis on assessing a school's financial situation and the capability of the school community to provide support. I believe that these objectives mark a serious and effective attempt by this Government to take into account important factors which place constraints on certain non-State schools and put others at an advantage when it comes to raising funds for essential capital projects.

The underlying theme is the efficient method of reaching the schools that are in genuine need of assistance to upgrade their educational facilities. Once again, I must emphasise the importance of the role of the capital assistance authorities to the capital assistance scheme. They enable the Government to gain a better appreciation of the funding requirements of an individual school in the non-State school sector.

Currently, the Currumbin electorate has one non-State school. St Augustine's Primary School was established at Coolangatta in 1926, and moved to its location in Currumbin Waters in September 1987, at which time it had 153 enrolled students. Between that time

and now, St Augustine's has grown considerably and currently has around 400 students enrolled. It is expecting an increased enrolment next year. I am pleased to say that St Augustine's has benefited already under the Queensland Government's capital assistance scheme for non-State schools, and continues to benefit from the Government's overall commitment to equitable funding for the non-State school sector. In November 1992, St Augustine's received over \$60,000 in capital assistance for work on the extension of three classrooms and the library amenities classroom block. More recently, St Augustine's received \$27,783 as part of the total Semester 1 funding of \$85,105 from the State Government.

In the Currumbin electorate, there are two State secondary schools, six State primary schools, and one State special school, all of which have a proud and continued tradition of educational and extracurricular excellence. This legislation will allow a smaller non-State school, such as St Augustine's, to coexist with such schools and to continue its own proud traditions without the hindrance of an inequitable system.

The Education (Capital Assistance) Bill 1993 will provide a more equitable system of assessing and providing assistance for capital projects to non-State schools in Queensland. The methods employed to achieve this, such as the establishment of accountable, capital assistance authorities based on non-State school peak bodies, exemplifies one of this Government's most important themes—equity and fairness through consultation.

**Hon. P. COMBEN** (Kedron—Minister for Education) (5.03 p.m.), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions, and I will respond specifically to the member for Merrimac. I thank him for his potted history of capital assistance in Queensland, and his comments—

**Mr Quinn:** Chequered history.

**Mr COMBEN:** I suppose that everything to do with finance is always a little chequered. However, to suggest that there was some deliberate, underhand method of change a year or two ago is not correct. I place it on the public record that that is not so. The figures cited by the member for Merrimac of some 17.6 per cent of funding for State schools being allocated to independent schools—

**Mr Quinn:** No, based on the cost of educating a child at a State school.

**Mr COMBEN:** Based on the cost of educating a child at a State school? I

challenge that figure. My belief is that at the present time it is about 19.9 per cent. It always depends on what one is comparing it with, what one takes into account at head office and what one takes into account in terms of matters such as the Wiltshire committee—whether that is included in the basket—whether it is 17.6 per cent or 19.9 per cent. It has to be a relevant basket, and it is certainly my understanding that the figure is some 19.9 per cent. Curriculum development benefits both sides, although double counting occurs at times. School support services are accessed by independent schools, the Office of Higher Education or the Office of Non-State Schooling. Whether those sorts of figures are included in the original basket or not are always matters that will affect any sort of percentage.

However, in broad terms, I appreciate the support of the Opposition. I understand that it may divide the House on certain specifics, but I think that it is a tribute to non-State schooling that both sides of this House will now, in general terms, support non-State schooling. It is part of the diversity and the richness of education in this State. During the 1960s, we had debates over State funding. Those debates have been held and have gone. Today, the debate is about how we provide for that rich diversity of alternative education.

The honourable member raised a number of specific matters. Firstly, as to the guidelines—there has in fact been full and open consultation with AISQ and the Catholic Education Office, so I am not sure what concerns the honourable member might have in that regard.

**Mr Quinn:** Will they be made public?

**Mr COMBEN:** They certainly will be made public, and I do not think that there is any flinching from that. Certainly, if the honourable member had sought those guidelines from me at any time, I would have given them willingly. It is, therefore, a case of what is relevant in terms of those two interest groups and their constituencies. I understand that the guidelines have been distributed widely to independent schools. Secondly, the honourable member raised the matter of how funds will be distributed to the CAAs. Firstly, I should say that the funds will be allocated to CAAs on the basis of the most recent census enrolment, with a weighting of 1.5905 Commonwealth area weightings—9.75 metres squared for secondary; 6.13 metres squared for primary—for secondary enrolments.

**Mr Quinn:** This means?

**Mr COMBEN:** This means that we will certainly be giving weightings to secondary schools ahead of primary schools, but not just on those figures. It is simply not enough to say that there are 1 000 students on the Catholic side and 2 000 students on the Association of Independent Schools side. There must also be the weighting for secondary schools as against primary schools, as occurs in every area.

**Mr Quinn:** Is there a difference between the Catholic sector and the AIS?

**Mr COMBEN:** No, purely on census enrolments. They tell us how many students they have, and then we juggle the figure to arrive at the conclusion that a secondary student receives 1.5905 of that received by a primary student. So it is fairly complicated. In addition to that fairly complicated process, weightings based on each location—the Commonwealth Building Index—and the Commonwealth general recurrent grants for primary students would also be applied, as the honourable member would expect, and would ask me to ensure that it is applied to the third decimal point. But that is how it is applied between the two sides within the funds. There is a needs basis, which has now been well accepted by the independent sector.

As to any shortfall in funds—I believe that the honourable member was referring to administrative funds. He seemed to raise a figure of \$10,000.

**Mr Quinn:** No.

**Mr COMBEN:** I am sorry, I misunderstood the honourable member. The figure that is being given to CAAs is \$65,000 for administration. If it is clearly insufficient, then we will happily negotiate the need for the funds. But the CAAs will have to show that there is a clear need for more. It seems to my advisers that \$65,000, which is the salary of a reasonably senior person, should be adequate and sufficient to cover the administrative cost. However, we would be open to further negotiation if needs are shown.

Finally, the matter of accountability was raised. The accountability in the Bill is the minimum needed by the Queensland Audit Office, and the amendment which I believe is suggested by the honourable member, and which I am prepared to move later, to provide for a registered auditor under Part 9.2 of the Corporations Act, will in terms of accountability strengthen the provision even further.

I thank the member for Mulgrave for his learned dissertation on the budget submission by the QTU. It is certainly an interesting

document. It cannot be said to have great rigour in terms of what our society needs, and it is not a document that would be supported generally by our society. However, I certainly thank him for his support for the Bill also.

The member for Mount Gravatt and the member for Currumbin both referred to the needs in their local areas and to the requirement for needs-based funding in different areas. Obviously, I appreciate the support of those members and their support for the diversity and richness of education in Queensland.

Motion agreed to.

### Committee

Hon. P. Comben (Kedron—Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—

**Mr QUINN** (5.12 p.m.): The Minister has already indicated that he will be giving an amount in the order of \$65,000 for administrative purposes to each of the CAAs. If he thinks that the \$65,000 will be sufficient, why is it necessary to have the division between the administrative accounts and the capital assistant accounts? If he thinks and believes that the amount will be sufficient in the first place, why does he need to have the division? After all, if the Minister were running a business, he would not separate his administrative account from his capital expenditure account. If the funds were all in the one account, he would have to manage his funds prudently. By imposing this bureaucratic division between the two accounts, he is saying to the CAAs, "We are not really concerned whether or not you manage your business prudently because there is a division here."

The Minister would be far better off, in my opinion, saying to the CAAs, "Here's your money in total. We've given you \$65,000. If you manage it prudently, the interest you earn can go towards more capital assistance. But if you don't manage it prudently and there is a blow-out in your administration costs over and above the \$65,000, then the member schools or the schools affiliated with each of the CAAs can come back and hold the CAA to account." That is the way in which a normal business runs.

**Mr Beattie** interjected.

**Mr QUINN:** It is not run by creating a division or by putting a line down the middle and saying, "Here's your administrative

account and here's your capital works account." A private enterprise business could not be run along those sorts of bureaucratic lines.

**Mr COMBEN:** I suppose the distinction that could be made has been made eloquently by the member for Brisbane Central who referred to the bottom of the harbour. No private enterprise actually is given its profits, which in this case would be basically \$5m for capital, and then has someone come along saying, "By the way, we are willing to look at your administrative costs as well, and here is some extra." That is the view I would take, although I appreciate the point that the member for Merrimac is making, namely, that a reasonably prudent and fiscally responsible administrator will always act prudently. However, in terms of public policy, one must always guard against any possibility of undue largesse in any administration, so we are saying to the benefiting schools, "Here is your money. Section 12 of the Act will account for that but, by the way, in respect of your grant authorities that are doing a good job to process this for us, here is some money for that." I see these as two totally separate matters. I think the member for Merrimac is coming from a direction which indicates they are both the same, so I think I had better beg to differ on this point.

**Mr QUINN:** I move the following amendment—

"At page 6, lines 12 to 16—

*omit.*"

**Question**—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

**AYES, 45**—Ardill, Barton, Beattie, Bennett, Bird, Braddy, Bredhauer, Budd, Campbell, Casey, Clark, Comben, D'Arcy, Davies, De Lacy, Dollin, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Goss W. K., Hollis, Mackenroth, McElligott, McGrady, Milliner, Nuttall, Pearce, Power, Purcell, Pyke, Robertson, Robson, Rose, Smith, Spence, Sullivan J. H., Sullivan T. B., Vaughan, Warner, Welford, Wells, Woodgate  
*Tellers:* Pitt, Livingstone

**NOES, 30**—Beanland, Borbidge, Connor, Davidson, Elliott, FitzGerald, Gamin, Gilmore, Goss J. N., Grice, Hobbs, Johnson, Lester, Lingard, Mitchell, Perrett, Quinn, Randell, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Stephan, Stoneman, Turner, Veivers, Watson  
*Tellers:* Springborg, Laming

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr Briskey): Order! For all remaining divisions on this Bill, the bells will be rung for two minutes.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.



Clauses 9 to 22, as read, agreed to.

Clause 23—

**Mr QUINN** (5.22 p.m): I have not proceeded with my proposed amendments to clause 12 because they were contingent upon the first one being accepted by the Minister. As they were not, there is no use continuing. I move the following amendment to clause 23—

“At page 13, lines 15 to 27, and at page 14, lines 1 to 10—

*omit, insert—*

‘Return by eligible non-State schools

‘23.(1) If the approved authority of an eligible non-State school receives capital assistance, the authority must, by the day prescribed by regulation for the year following the year in which the capital project for which the assistance was provided was completed, give to the CAA with which the school was affiliated when the assistance was provided a written return—

- (a) identifying the capital project; and
- (b) stating when the project was completed; and
- (c) specifying the amounts, and sources of the amounts, used to fund the project; and
- (d) containing any other information required by regulation.

‘(2) The CAA must make the statement available for inspection to a person approved by the Minister for that purpose.

‘(3) The person may make a copy of, or take extracts from, the statement and for that purpose may retain it in the person’s possession for a reasonable period.’”

In opening my remarks, I hark back to the remarks made by the member for Brisbane Central, who suggested that a bottom of the harbour scheme could eventuate from some of the proposals that I have put forward. I simply make the point that most of the non-Government schools are governed by people of outstanding ability within the community, and the remarks of the member for Brisbane Central are a scurrilous attack on the good name and reputation of those people. I would also make the point that more funds have been misappropriated from State schools within Queensland than from non-Government

schools. Certainly, the State school system has no claim to total integrity in that regard.

In moving this amendment, the idea is to bring the accountability procedures into line with the Commonwealth system. Under the Commonwealth system, schools are required to report at the end of the project, not on a yearly basis. That system has been operating for many years and, as I said before, the administrators of those schools are not fly-by-night operators. Many of the schools are church related. Many of them are governed or have on their boards of directors very prominent people within the community and most are administered by highly qualified people with accounting or other economic-related qualifications.

The amendment will save schools a dual approach to funding. As I said, many schools can access Commonwealth funds and also State funds for the same project. If we have a Commonwealth requirement that they report at the end of the project and a State Government requirement that they report on an annual basis, there are two sets of accounting procedures. Surely, if the Commonwealth’s audit requirements are considered satisfactory by the Commonwealth Government, we ought not to impose another impost upon schools.

If it can be the case that the State’s requirements can be brought to the same level of accountability and with the same requirements as the Commonwealth, it will save the schools some considerable amount of time and money. I understand that the Government’s objection to that is through the Audit Office, which says that the requirements are not strict enough. The point that I raise is: if the requirements are strict enough for the Commonwealth, why are they not for the State?

**Mr COMBEN:** At the request of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, the accountability return by a non-State school covers the period of 12 months beginning on 1 April in a year and ending on 31 March in the following year. As the return includes capital assistance received or retained, received in a previous year but not used in a year, having an accountability period which extends over two calendar years will simplify accountability returns for most schools, and that is the basis on which I am working.

The proposed clause does not provide for the abovementioned reporting period, which was requested by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and supported by the AISQ. The proposed clause also does not

provide accountability for capital assistance that was not received in a year but is again retained from a previous year. In addition, the proposed clause provides accountability only with respect to completed projects.

To provide accountability only in respect of completed projects is not, as the honourable member says, acceptable to the Queensland Audit Office, as a project could take a number of years to complete and accountability must be provided each year, whether a project for which capital assistance has been provided has been completed or not.

I do take note of what the honourable member says in terms of the work that may be required from schools. If fairly quickly it appears that the period is not appropriate, I give an undertaking that the Government will amend the legislation. On the best advice available to me from QCEC and supported by AISQ, I must oppose the amendment.

Amendment negatived.

Clause 23, as read, agreed to.

Clause 24—

**Mr QUINN** (5.28 p.m.): I understand that the Minister will also move an amendment to this clause. In line with the fact that my proposed amendment was based on the other amendments being accepted, my amendment is no longer applicable. I have already seen the amendment that will be moved by the Minister. It is based upon part of the amendment that I forwarded to the Minister, that is, removing the situation in which the books of a CAA could be audited twice, which indeed would be an unnecessary impost. It simply makes the registered person or the person appointed by the Minister also liable to be registered as an auditor under Part 9.2 of the Corporations Law. It would simplify the procedure. I commend the Minister for taking on board my suggestion.

**Mr COMBEN:** I thank the honourable member for making the suggestion. I have no difficulty in supporting what he just said. I therefore move the following amendment—

“At page 14, line 29 (after ‘person’)—

*insert* ‘registered as an auditor under Part 9.2 of the Corporations Law and’.”

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 24, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 25 to 27, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with an amendment.

### Third Reading

Bill, on motion of Mr Comben, by leave, read a third time.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH**  
(Chatsworth—Leader of the House)  
(5.30 p.m.): I move—

“That the House do now adjourn.”

### Charges under Animal Protection Act and Fauna Conservation Act

**Mr SLACK** (Burnett) (5.31 p.m.): I wish to draw the attention of members to the sorry situation in which, at a very late stage, charges under the Animals Protection and Fauna Conservation Acts against a Roma man of Aboriginal descent were withdrawn. Members will recall that I raised this issue on Friday last in a question to the Minister for Environment and Heritage, the Honourable Molly Robson. The man was charged not only with taking a protected echidna but also with cruelty towards the animal. I understand that the echidna was tied alive by the leg to a roo bar on the back of a utility for at least five hours.

In a press release, I accused the Minister for Environment and Heritage of intervening in the case in order to have the charges withdrawn. I had heard the Minister on air make reference to the expected withdrawal of the charges. Although I cannot recall the exact words, I certainly got the impression that the Minister, through her department, had applied to have the charges dropped.

On 23 July 1993, on the Rod Henshaw program, that accusation was denied by the Minister several times. When asked directly by the interviewer, “Did you intervene?”, the Minister stated, “No, of course not. I did not intervene.” When asked again by the interviewer, “So what did you actually do?”, the Minister replied—

“Well, I did nothing. I did absolutely nothing. I mean, I was given advice from my departmental people and they informed me that they had followed through with the police officers involved to determine whether or not there had been a breach of the law. The end result is that there wasn’t.”

The last sentence refers to no breach of the law having occurred. The interviewer then asked—

“But you didn’t bring influence to bear to have those charges withdrawn?”

The Minister replied—

“Oh, heavens no, no. Obviously I was informed, that’s my duty, to know what is going on in those areas. And when they inform me, they just keep me informed as to what is going on. There is certainly no interference.”

That is a very interesting answer, particularly given that, just after that program was aired, I received a copy of a letter from the director of the Minister’s department, Dan Gillespie, addressed to Inspector K. Wallace, District Officer, Police Station, Roma. For the benefit of the House, I will read the last two paragraphs of that letter, which state—

“Although I do not wish to interfere in the work of your officers in the administration of the law as it currently stands, it is the view of this department that the public interest would not be well served by proceeding with the Fauna Conservation Act matter against Mr Mailman. I believe that to proceed with the matter may cause substantial division in the wider community and it will certainly place this Department’s current discussions with the indigenous community under negative pressure.

In view of these facts and the fact that the matter on which Mr Mailman is charged will in all probability not be an offence in a matter of three or four months, I request that you give consideration to taking the administrative steps to cease the prosecution of the Fauna Conservation Act matter against him.

I thank you for your consideration. I may be contacted on (07) 225 1779.

Yours sincerely

Dan Gillespie, Director,

Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service.”

That is hardly what the Minister said in the interview. The Minister had stated that she was informed of what her officers were doing. Obviously, she knew of the letter and its contents.

In answer to my question on Friday, the Minister acknowledged knowing of the letter and its contents but argued that the letter sought only to give advice. There is nothing mentioned in her director’s letter about there not being a breach of the law. If anything, the opposite is true, as the text of the letter canvassed the inadvisability of proceeding on the grounds of it causing, as the writer said,

substantial division in the wider community and, by the very nature of saying that in all probability it may not be an offence in a matter of three or four months, the letter indicated that it was considered to be an offence now. If the final sentence is not a request to have the case dropped, I will walk to Bourke and back. Some may say that was very strong advice indeed. I repeat that sentence—

“I request that you give consideration to taking the administrative steps to cease the prosecution of the Fauna Conservation Act matter against him.”

In other words, it is better to ring and not put it in writing.

Further to that, the Opposition rang the Roma Court House and was informed that some of the wording in the letter was the same as that used by the police prosecutor when he referred to the public interest not being well served by proceeding with the Fauna Conservation Act matter against Mr Mailman.

The letter and the use of the terminology completely discredits the Minister’s claims on the Henshaw program. It also discredits the Minister’s claim, in answer to my question, that it was purely advice being offered. During the Henshaw program, the Minister claimed that there had not been a breach of the law. Interestingly, she did not advance that argument in answer to my question. Clearly, she knew of the letter. Clearly, as Minister in charge of her department, she authorised the letter. Clearly, as Minister, she is responsible for the letter. As a Minister under the Westminster system, clearly the Minister cannot seriously deny that there was a request for the charge to be withdrawn, which constitutes interference, and that she was responsible for it.

Obviously, the Minister has a serious case to answer before this Parliament in relation to her honesty and whether she interfered in a matter before the court. The Minister’s competence must be questioned. At best, it could be said that the Minister—

Time expired.

### **Redlands Bowls Club**

**Mr BUDD** (Redlands) (5.36 p.m.): One of my early engagements as the new member for Redlands was to officially turn on the poker machines at the Redlands Bowls Club. It was my first visit to what is undoubtedly one of the best-designed and most functional clubhouses that I have ever seen. I was even

more impressed when I learned that it had been built almost entirely with volunteer labour. I acknowledge the contribution that the founding members of that club have made to what has become an important and valuable asset to the Redlands community.

In April 1980, a group of local bowlers held a meeting to discuss the possibility of forming a new bowls club at the southern end of the Redland Shire. As a result of that meeting, Adam Clarcken, Ken Heaven, Lloyd Mann and Morrie Noon formed the land and finance committee to look into the availability of suitable land and the costs involved.

On 7 May 1980, a public meeting was held at the Victoria Point public hall at which the resolution was carried that a bowls club be formed in the southern district of the Redland Shire and at which the further resolution was carried that a ladies' committee be formed to raise money for the inauguration of a ladies' bowls club. That was the starting point of an enormous effort over the next two years to raise money. Every available means of fundraising was tried, from lamington drives and garage sales to boat trips and fashion parades. One unique form of fundraising was when the club was donated a crop of sweet potatoes and members turned up at the fields with picks and forks and spent the whole weekend digging, washing and selling the crop from door to door, raising \$562 for their efforts.

That enthusiasm and determination quickly paid dividends. In October 1980, approval was given by the local shire council to establish the proposed bowls club. The council required a \$7,000 bond to show honesty of purpose, and five members of the proposed club—Allan Russell, Tom Tams, Les Moore, Alan Marshall and Jim McGrath—put up bonds of \$1,000 each and another member, Beryl Lankford, put up \$2,000.

On 22 April 1981, the Redlands Bowls Club was established with a foundation executive comprising president, Don Jackson; secretary, Doug Woolard; and treasurer, Tom Tams. The then Redland Shire Council Chairman, Merv Genrich, was appointed patron. In September of that year, Doug Woolard resigned as secretary and Allan Russell took over. His first task was to draw up with solicitor Mr C. S. Lang the memorandum and articles of association. In December 1981, the inaugural meeting of the ladies' club was held, chaired by QLBA president Ruth Burton. The foundation executive elected that day were: president Dorothy Peele, whom I acknowledge as a source of the club's early

history; secretary, Ailsa Smith; treasurer, Carla Kent; and patroness Alma Dowling. It was also in December of that year that the club officially adopted the design of the poinciana tree as the club badge.

In 1982, work on the club began in earnest. Teams of volunteers worked on getting the land ready and putting down the cement block for the clubhouse. A loan of \$100,000 was approved by the National Bank, subject to a guarantee of security from 12 members. Once again, the members of the club rose to the occasion. I acknowledge now the dedication and commitment of the following members: Joe Darmanin; Keith Dyer; Merv Genrich; Don Jackson; Dick Johnson; Ross Kimberley; Alan Marshall; Allan Russell; Dorothy Peele; Bertha Peterson; Ailsa Smith and Hannah Tams.

**Mr Bennett:** Fine members of the Redlands community.

**Mr BUDD:** They certainly are. The building of the clubhouse was completed in September that year and was painted by Harold Jones as a contribution to the club. By the end of the year, furniture had been installed; the cold room had been completed; the bar area had been finished; the road and parking area had been surfaced with gravel; scoreboards were delivered; seats were donated by members; and a flagpole was erected.

In 1983, the club was given full affiliation by the RQBA and was granted a bowling club liquor licence after substantial amendments were made to the memorandum and articles of association by Ross Kimmorley. The club was officially opened by RQBA president, Mr D. Pickering, on 4 June 1983. I note that among the guests that day were the late member for Redlands, the Honourable John Goleby, and the now Deputy Premier of Queensland, the Honourable Tom Burns.

Over the last 10 years, the club has become acknowledged as one of the finest clubs of its type, and I am extremely proud that it is located in my electorate of Redlands. My wife and I have spent a great number of very pleasant evenings there. I am pleased to have the opportunity to acknowledge the contribution made by its founding members.

#### **Comments by Member for Brisbane Central about Liberal Party**

**Mr DAVIDSON** (Noosa) (5.41 p.m.): Last Wednesday in this House, the member for Brisbane Central chose to take a pot shot at the Queensland Liberal Party.

**Dr Watson:** Where is the member for Brisbane Central?

**Mr DAVIDSON:** Is the member for Brisbane Central in the Chamber?

**Dr Watson:** Oh, there he is, hiding over there in the corner.

**Mr DAVIDSON:** Oh, he is in the Chamber. He opened his speech using words such as "ugly", "nasty", "vindictive", "faction fighting" and "brawling". This would have to be the most classic example of the pot and kettle that I have ever seen. The member for Brisbane Central must be potty, because we all know that, if anyone should know anything about faction fighting, surely it must be the Labor member for Brisbane Central.

**Dr Watson** interjected.

**Mr DAVIDSON:** He has chosen not to sit in his own seat so that he does not have to interject. He cannot even get a guernsey on his own side of the House, let alone get anywhere near the front bench.

The member for Brisbane Central has often, I believe mistakenly, been touted as someone of ministerial worth. In fact, I am sure that that is an option he holds himself. They tell me there are not enough members in his faction of the Labor Party to form a run-on basketball side. I am aware that he may have picked up another member last week, if one is to believe the *Sunday Mail*, but I do not know how he intends to get that person into the House as a new member of the Beattie faction.

The word has it that Mrs Helen Abrahams, the recently deposed Socialist Left member of the Brisbane City Council, is going to challenge the member for Mount Coot-tha for preselection, which would mean that Mr Beattie would lose one of his few factional friends in this House.

**Mr Randell:** He hasn't got any friends at all.

**Mr DAVIDSON:** He has not got any friends. How many friends has he got? Fancy the member for Brisbane Central referring to the Liberal Party's ugly factional brawling when we all know that over on his side of the House sits the Old Guard, the Socialist Left, Labor Unity, the AWU, the Goss faction and the seven dwarfs. In fact, the ALP could be the only party to have more factions than members, because half of them cannot seem to make up their mind which side of the fence they want to sit on. We must all be aware of the brawling of the Socialist Left in which they stacked their branches but lost three aldermen

candidates for the next Brisbane City Council election.

Even Wayne Goss got involved, put up his own man, John Mickel, but got rolled, which must mean that Jim Soorley has more power in the Labor Party than the Premier. With that power, maybe Jimmy now has his eye on the Premier's job. After all, everyone in Brisbane knows that they are far from friends. In fact, if members want to talk about factions, Labor leaders Goss, Soorley and Keating may as well be in different parties for all the good cheer that currently goes on between the Executive Building, Town Hall and Canberra.

The member for Brisbane Central took another pot shot at the Liberal State President, Paul Everingham, and let me say that that is like throwing pebbles at Ayres Rock. He should be made aware that, if he chooses to play games with the big boys, he had better learn to take a couple on the chin and around the ears.

Most people on this side of the House realise that the member for Brisbane Central is doomed to be a backbencher not only for as long as he continues to meddle in Liberal Party affairs but for as long as he tries to play Labor's rough and tumble faction game without being connected to the heavyweights in his own party. One could have been less surprised if Mr Beattie had launched an attack on Labor's factions rather than any perceived Liberal actions. After all, he probably has more friends on this side of the House than he does on the other side with his so-called Labor Party colleagues.

We will laugh this off as a poor attempt by the Labor Party to transfer some of the petty, childish Labor Party factional in-fighting. At the end of the day, he is not a bad bloke, and we appreciate that he is still desperately searching for the meaning of life in State politics as one who aspires to the heights of the Premier's office but faces the fact that he is likely to stay where he is for a long time.

#### **Green Movement; Mr C. Hunt**

**Mr PITT** (Mulgrave) (5.46 p.m.): I wish to take this opportunity to expose the double standards applied by Colin Hunt and other members of the radical Green movement in this State. I should preface my remarks by clearly differentiating between the majority of environmentalists on the one hand, who are rational and genuine in their commitment to conservation issues, and a radical minority whose agenda appears to be driven by personal political ambitions.

The individual in question—a Mr Colin Hunt—has recently, through his solicitor, threatened legal proceedings against two Cairns residents as a result of letters to the editor published in the *Cairns Post*. Correspondence from the solicitor to each person stated—

“The matter contained in your letter disparages my client’s personal reputation. The imputations which you directly expressed concerning my client are likely to injure him in his profession and occupation.”

A serious matter indeed! Just what is it that so offends and damages a high profile figure—a person not above outlandish criticism of others himself—a man who would have been happy to hold public office if more than a mere handful of people had supported him at election time?

Let us examine the offending letters. The first one is from a Ms Judy Farrelly, who states—

“Dear Sir,

The trouble with Colin Hunt, and other Green politicians, is that they think all green voters are stupid.

Could you imagine a person with a genuine concern for the environment giving their preferences to the National Party? Martin Tenni may even come out of retirement at this prospect.

Frankly I think Colin Hunt and Drew Hutton are doing the Labor Party a great favour by putting everything into perspective.

Voters with a green commitment will be deserting the ‘Green Party’ like rats from a sinking ship. They will see that there is no future in a Green Party that is run by failed politicians intoxicated by the sound of their own voice but not much interested in the environment.”

It is interesting to note that the same Green Party would be endorsing a National Party policy at the last State election which proposed the mining of uranium and the introduction of nuclear power to Queensland. Obviously, Mr Hunt conveniently forgot those particular issues.

A second, rather brief letter referred to by the solicitor was one by Mr John Gane, who stated—

“Dear Sir,

Colin Hunt should join the Nationals. After all he carries on just the same—whinge, whine, criticise and knock.

In fact I’m starting to think he was probably one to start off with.”

There is no doubt that radical Greens are against everything. They say “No” to development; they say “No” to anything that may be constructive for far-north Queensland. I am assured that that is wearing very thin with the majority of the population. This negative attitude is doing them no credit whatsoever. The views expressed by Ms Farrelly and Mr Gane are views widely held by a sizeable proportion of the voting public, sick and tired of radical minority groups with an inflated opinion of their own importance attempting to hold elected Government to ransom.

Mr Hunt purports to be a person with a great commitment to public accountability and freedom of speech, judging by the fact that he continuously criticises the Goss Government and its members on this very issue. This is the very same person who, when the first letter to the editor appears criticising his very public call for the Greens to direct their preferences to the National Party, fired off a threatening solicitor’s letter to the authors.

The taking of legal action serves one of two purposes: it is either designed to achieve redress and/or compensation for damages or it is merely used as a means of silencing critics. I would suggest that the motive in this case is a cowardly attempt to do the latter. It seems to me that any individual who has a high profile on public issues or who seeks or attains public office must be prepared to wear a little criticism as well as dish it out. If the material contained in the two letters I have read to the House is actionable or compensable, then each of us in this House could by now have achieved considerable wealth through the courts. I say to Mr Hunt that, if he cannot stand the heat, he should get out of the kitchen. His double standards condemn his less than satisfactory commitment to freedom of speech.

#### **Australian Workers Heritage Centre, Barcaldine**

**Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory) (5.49 p.m.): Today, I want to draw attention to the efforts of those who are developing the Australian Workers Heritage Centre at Barcaldine as a major tourist drawcard for outback Queensland. The Workers Heritage Centre is planned as a tribute to the average working

men and women who helped develop Australia, with a big emphasis on those who have helped open up the outback. Development of the centre is being overseen by a non-profit foundation with support from three levels of Government, the corporate sector and the union movement. Barcaldine was the logical place for the centre, since it was the site of the 1891 shearers strike that eventually led to the formation of an organised labour movement in Australia. We saw there the birth of the Australian Labor Party and the birth of the United Graziers Association.

The history of the labour movement in Australia is rich in characters, incidents and legends that deserve to be collected and preserved in one spot. The centre at Barcaldine will not be a party political attraction; it will be a celebration of the contribution of ordinary workers to our nation's past—and its future. It is worthy of support from all quarters and from people of all political persuasions.

The first stage of the centre was opened in 1991 by the Honourable Bob Hawke, then Prime Minister, to mark the centenary of the shearers strike in 1891. We are about to witness the opening of that venue in Barcaldine. At present on the site there is a retail centre, former school buildings used for photographic displays and a large theatre tent—thanks to the contributions by the former National Party Government, which set up a feasibility study. I pay tribute to my predecessor, Bill Glasson, for his efforts in making it possible for the Workers Heritage Centre to be a part of this great venture. The tent was previously used during the 1988 Bicentenary to tour regional and rural Australia.

On that note, it is important to remember that development of the centre has had widespread support. The former State Government supported its development. We, in the National Party, are proud of that. The current Queensland Government has committed itself to funding works associated with mounting permanent displays, showcasing the contribution made by Government workers in opening up the west. I shall have more to say about that shortly.

As I said before, the Federal Government supports this project, as does the Barcaldine Shire Council and the people of the west. It also has the support of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation and the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame at Longreach. All of these groups recognise the

value of developing such a major tourist attraction at Barcaldine. The centre can be a major tourist drawcard on the increasingly popular Matilda Highway concept. As a tourist attraction, it will be a significant contributor to the economy of the central west and a promotion of our heritage and the contribution of the colourful characters that gave us this heritage—shearers, ringers, fencers, drovers and others who fraternised with the outback and made it their home.

The Matilda Highway will eventually include several major tourist destinations—the Hall of Fame at Longreach, the restored historic wool scour at Blackall, the planned Waltzing Matilda Centenary at Winton and other heritage sites, the Workers Heritage Centre at Barcaldine and Flynn Place in Cloncurry. Each year, up to 90 000 people travel the Matilda Highway to visit the Stockman's Hall of Fame at Longreach and other centres. When fully developed, the Workers Heritage Centre at Barcaldine could attract those people already taking motoring holidays along the highway. It will also act as a spur for new tourists to visit the Queensland outback. As well, more people will be encouraged to go west for their holidays once the new Spirit of the Outback train from Brisbane to Longreach commences operation in November this year.

The Matilda Highway has the potential to be one of the great motoring holiday trips in Australia. It also has the potential to be recognised internationally as a way for tourists from other nations to taste the real flavour of the Australian outback, its characters, humour and colour. It is our great outback that most people overseas recognise as being truly unique about Australia. To them, the outback is the real Australia. That is what many of them want to come here to see. The easier we can make it for them to do that, and the more high-quality attractions we can develop in the west, then the more attractive it becomes for people to come to Queensland and take the time to drive the Matilda Highway. That, in turn, means a great tourist industry for western Queensland and, therefore, stronger local economies and employment potential. That is why I am a strong supporter of the development of the Workers Heritage Centre.

At this point, I must acknowledge the work done by the Deputy Premier, Tom Burns, in helping the centre. The Deputy Premier is an honorary project officer for the Workers Heritage Centre and, as Minister for Administrative Services, is responsible for

coordinating the State Government's support for the centre's development.

As I mentioned earlier, the first stage of the centre opened in 1991. The next stage is now being planned. It involves the development of the centre as an oasis in the west. Barcaldine is an absolute picture at present. Bougainvillea and other shrubs and flowers are in full bloom throughout the town. This part of the project is designed to transform the site into a cool and refreshing sanctuary in the central west. It involves construction of an artificial billabong, a tree-planting program and landscaping of the site to make it more attractive to domestic, national and international tourists. It will be a real oasis where visitors know that they can spend a few hours relaxing or picnicking beside billabongs and flowing streams and visiting the centre's attractions and displays.

Time expired.

#### Queensland Justices Association

**Mr T. B. SULLIVAN** (Chermside) (5.55 p.m.): Justices of the peace play a vital, quasi-judicial role in our society. I have the greatest respect for those thousands of Queenslanders who have voluntarily given of their time and ability to carry out the role of justices of the peace with dignity and goodwill. Therefore, it is a shame to see a constituent of mine—Mr Peter MacDonald—continuing to act in a manner that is detrimental to justices of the peace in Queensland, and particularly harmful to the Queensland Justices Association.

We need to know who this Mr MacDonald is and why he is an unfit person to be associated with the Queensland Justices Association. The members of the Queensland Justices Association need to know what they can do to rid themselves of the cancer that has befallen their association under Peter MacDonald's iron-fisted control. Of course, Mr MacDonald is not himself a justice of the peace, because a person with his record is not deemed a fit and proper person to hold the office of a JP.

In 1989, the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs wrote to the President of the Queensland Justices Association, saying—

“ . . . yours is a non-profit making organisation serving a part of the community under the terms of its constitution. I therefore see it as being inconsistent with these provisions that the Registrar (or any Councillor or member for that matter) should be able to use the

organisation to make profits for himself to the degree that a commercial advantage is being obtained by him or to obtain a significant personal advantage.”

That was in reference to Mr MacDonald. A short time later, on 24 November, in the *Cairns Post*, the *Sunday Mail* and a range of other newspapers, the following article appeared—

“A consultant who was once a press secretary to former Queensland premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen was yesterday convicted and fined after pleading guilty to a dishonesty charge.

. . .

Peter MacDonald was fined \$2,000 after pleading guilty to the charge brought by the Australian Securities Commission.”

That is a Federal body, not a State body, as Mr MacDonald is trying to claim. The article continued—

“The court had heard MacDonald, 45, of Wavell Heights in Brisbane, charged a marketing fee of about \$1800 to the Queensland Justices Association, which represents justices of the peace, when he acted as both its registrar and consultant.”

Mr MacDonald was also accused by many association members of interfering with elections. I have a letter that he wrote in 1986. He said—

“I also understand there was some comment regarding proxy votes being solicited by Clive Lanham. I'm told there was a suggestion of some sort of conspiracy involving Q.J.A. office.”

He finished the letter—

“You have my personal assurance that neither Q.J.A. office, nor I, have actively sought to influence voting.”

That is a lie. Mr MacDonald has consistently and persistently interfered with elections. He has organised things so that he has an iron-fisted control of the association. He has ignored requests from members for basic information about the state of the financial affairs of the QJA. He has control of the proxy votes, so he knows who has to be contacted before an AGM is held, and he can control totally who is elected.

Members should read the *Sun Herald* of 15 November 1992. In an article headed “The Last Days of Sir Joh” members will get an idea of the sort of scheming mind that Peter MacDonald had, and which he brought to the



Queensland Justices Association. There has been a drop in the QJA membership from 12 000 to about 6 500 under his tutelage—a disastrous state of affairs. He has made personal attacks on senior members of the QJA—both divisions within the QJA currently, former presidents, former vice presidents and former councillors. He sees any question raised or any criticism as a personal attack, he launches a personal vendetta against individuals and, in fact, takes out writs against them.

The worst thing that Mr MacDonald has done is double dipping. As well as getting his registrar's fees, he also charges consultant's fees. The printing of the QJA journal—rather than getting advertising in and covering its own costs—is done by his consultancy group and firm. He has two businesses registered which sell the plaques and paraphernalia of the association. It is difficult to know the exact details of all this, because he will not let the details be known. A former constituent of mine asked for this information and was told, "You cannot have it. You have to be there at the AGM", and was given no further information.

I believe that the QJA funded MacDonald's legal defence, but I cannot find out exactly what has happened. Members of the QJA have two options: get involved in the association and clean MacDonald and his cronies out, or get out of the association and let it die. The current situation in the QJA cannot be allowed to continue.

Time expired.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.