

THURSDAY, 25 MAY 1995

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

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Abortion Law

From **Mr Livingstone** (230 signatories) praying that sections of the Queensland Criminal Code which make abortion unlawful be repealed and that abortion services be established in the public hospital system and community based women's health centres with no charge attached to this service.

**Liquor Licensing; Police Staffing,
Mackay**

From **Mr Malone** (36 signatories) praying that (a) discussion and debate be reopened concerning liquor licensing and closing times; (b) serious consideration be given to nightclubs/hotels closing at or prior to 3 a.m.; and (c) additional funding be provided for an increase in police staffing in the Mackay district.

Police Patrols, Rockhampton

From **Mr Pearce** (3,512 signatories) praying that serious consideration be given to an increase in police patrols in suburban residential areas in Rockhampton.

Water Fluoridation

From **Ms Power** (10 signatories) praying that legislation be enacted to require all local authorities to hold a referendum on compulsory fluoridation.

**Juvenile Offenders; Penalties and
Sentences**

From **Mrs Sheldon** (3,280 signatories) praying that the Parliament of Queensland will (a) urgently legislate for more meaningful and disincentive oriented penalties for juvenile offenders; and (b) allow for parental restitutive measures and monetary payment to victims by offenders.

Cannabis

From **Mr Turner** (25 signatories) praying that the statutory prohibition on the production and usage of cannabis be continued.

Petitions received.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**Dr D. Grundmann**

Mr BORBIDGE (10.05 a.m.): I refer the Premier to the judgment handed down by Justice Fryberg on 19 May in the defamation case Grundmann v. Georgson, in which His Honour stated—

"However I do find that the plaintiff has performed abortions on numerous women at his Townsville clinic when there was no necessity for him to do so in order to prevent serious physical or psychiatric injury to the patient. I disbelieve Dr Grundmann's assertions that he honestly and sincerely applied that test before each and every abortion which he performed."

I ask: in view of this finding, will the Premier now initiate an investigation into the abortion practices of Dr Grundmann?

Mr W. K. GOSS: I have had occasion before to draw the attention of this House to the fraudulent way in which the Leader of the Opposition misstates the facts of any particular situation, and he has done it again. I have advice here to the effect—

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn. The judge said it. The Premier is coping out.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. I ask the Premier to withdraw. The Leader of the Opposition finds the remarks offensive.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Mr Speaker, I withdraw unequivocally. But in doing so, I make the point in passing by way of privilege or order—whatever the Speaker deems appropriate—that I think we have to allow some latitude in relation to debate in this place. If it is not acceptable to say that a member has misled the House or that a member has misstated the facts of a particular situation deliberately, there will not be much scope left for debate in this place. However, I can understand that the Leader of the Opposition is sensitive about these matters, because he does it again and again.

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat.

Mr W. K. GOSS: I simply make the point in response to the Leader of the Opposition that my advice is that, although Justice Fryberg made the observation that the Leader of the Opposition referred to—and this is the bit that the Leader of the Opposition left out, which is what he does time and time again—

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr W. K. GOSS: The Leader of the Opposition misleads this House, the press gallery and the public. He does so on the cynical and dishonest basis that by the time they find out the next day nobody will follow up on the story. That is the sort of slippery character the Leader of the Opposition is. The facts are these. This is my advice. Although Justice Fryberg made the observation to which the Leader of the Opposition referred, he also specifically said that he made no finding as to whether the doctor had carried out illegal abortions. He made no finding. He specifically said that.

This matter of controversy arose last year. The Leader of the Opposition tried to make the same cheap point last year. When it did arise last year, the then Health Minister referred matters relating to the services provided by the doctor to the Health Rights Commission for an independent assessment and review. I understand that that is still forthcoming.

The law in this State which allows the legal termination of pregnancies is the law that was established in this State under the former National Party Government of which Mr Borbidge was a member. In 1986, when Mr Borbidge was a member of the Government, the law in this State was established to allow the termination of pregnancy—

Mr Littleproud interjected.

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

Mr Horan interjected.

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

Mr W. K. GOSS: —for the preservation of the mother's life, using the broad definition of that term. Mr Borbidge made no statement at that time. I presume that he endorses that broad definition of the entitlement to termination, as established under his Government in the mid eighties.

Koala Coast Secretariat

Mr BORBIDGE: In directing a further question to the Premier, I refer to taxpayer-funded slush funds operating under the auspices of the Koala Coast Secretariat, which directly involves Labor members affected by the south coast tollway buying their way out of political trouble by way of sponsorship, and I ask: has he approved and does he support the administration of this scheme by the Minister for Environment and Heritage?

Mr W. K. GOSS: At the time that the decision was taken in relation to the motorway—a decision that the Opposition when in Government never had the guts or the foresight to take, and now in Opposition it is running its standard approach: "We have a policy but we will not tell you where it is or what it is", and instead is trying to infiltrate and manipulate a community organisation—

Mr Cooper interjected.

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

Mr W. K. GOSS: The Leader of the Opposition is trying to manipulate a community organisation to use snap-frozen dead koalas for political purposes. What a policy! What leadership!

In relation to these particular communities—there have been legitimate calls from community organisations saying, "This development will have a social and environmental impact. We want the Government to respond. We have concerns", and the Government has responded. The cheap politics of the people with no policy are that, when the community calls for the Government to respond, if we do not respond they say that the Government should respond with these facilities and the Government should make these funds available. When we do respond, they criticise that as well. It is the last refuge of a policy-bankrupt coalition, and that is what we have in Queensland. The coalition in Queensland has no drive, no energy, no ideas and no policies. It is policy bankrupt. Communities have made a legitimate request—

Mr Connor interjected.

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

Mr W. K. GOSS: These communities have made a legitimate request that the Government compensate them for and address the social impacts of this

development, and the Government has indicated that it is prepared to do so. A list of criteria was developed. There was public opportunity for people to make applications. Details of those applications that have been successful have been published. Furthermore, when this matter was discussed at Cabinet, it was made plain by the Cabinet that the process should be audited by an independent firm of accountants, and that was done to ensure the integrity of the process.

Aerial Firefighting Equipment

Mr LIVINGSTONE: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister for Emergency Services: can he advise the House about new aerial firefighting equipment recently ordered by the Queensland Fire Service to enable the State's firefighters to protect high-rise buildings in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast? Can the Minister inform the House of details of new appliances referred to as TAPs—

Mr Veivers interjected.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Southport under Standing Order 123A. I will not allow interjections to be made while a question is being asked. I also warn the member for Gregory under Standing Order 123A.

Mr LIVINGSTONE: Can the Minister inform the House of details of new appliances referred to as TAPs that have recently been ordered for regional centres throughout the State?

Mr BURNS: I thank the honourable member for the question. The Queensland Fire Service has evaluated offers for the purchase of two high-reach aerial firefighting appliances and eight telescopic aerial pumpers as part of its appliance program. The QFS set aside \$2.4m for the purpose of four TAPs in the 1994-95 budget and has identified the requirement for an additional four TAPs. The QFS has been given approval for the purchase of two high-reach aerial appliances at a cost of \$910,000 per vehicle—a total order value of \$1.82m. These appliances are planned to be allocated one each to Brisbane and Southport.

I must say this about the equipment: we are having to supply that equipment at this time because we inherited from the National Party two HRA firefighting appliances which collectively were 50 years of age. The one on the south coast is a 1966 model and the one in Brisbane is a 1974 model. This morning, I looked through the newspaper headlines to

research the history of this matter. I came across an article that stated that Mr Cooper was in trouble because his ministerial colleagues thought that he was too much of a high-flier, and the National Party Cabinet of the time knocked back any spending on the Fire Service for 12 months because it did not want to promote Mr Cooper any further at that stage. So there was no high-reach aerial firefighting equipment, no firefighting uniforms and no good gear for the officers because Mr Cooper had done very well in Corrective Services and his ministerial colleagues were worried. That is what Bill Gunn said at that time.

Mr W. K. Goss: Where's Bill?

Mr BURNS: Where is Bill? G'day, Bill! This is what you said at that time.

Mr W. K. Goss: We've got a witness.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I inform the Deputy Premier that that is out of order.

Mr BURNS: I apologise, Mr Speaker. But there is someone in the gallery who would be aware of those particular matters. The fact is that Mr Austin, a former Finance Minister, and Mr Gunn said at that time that the problem was that a lot of Mr Cooper's mates saw him as a high-flier and took the view that he was getting a budget run before the Budget review process.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr BURNS: I am giving the member for Crows Nest a big plug; he should not complain. His mates were prepared to let the firefighters fry, as long as he did not get to be a fast flier.

Mr Cooper: You said "fast flier"—"high-flier".

Mr BURNS: The member was a high-flier, and he was prepared to let the firefighters fry—f-r-y. Let us get it clear.

Mr COOPER: I rise to a point of order. I find that last remark absolutely offensive and ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr BURNS: I will absolutely withdraw it.

A Green Paper was then circulated for 12 months, but the former Government still did nothing about it. No new gear was purchased and the firefighters of this State had to make do with very old pieces of equipment. As I said, the HRA appliance on the Gold Coast was a 1966 model. At the same time as Joh was counting the cranes, firefighters on the Gold Coast had to make do with a 1966-model firefighting appliance to fight fires in modern times. Members opposite talk about their support for firefighters! The HRA

appliance available in Brisbane dates back to 1974! In its last six years, the former Government spent an extra \$20m on firefighters. We have more than doubled that. We allocated that level of extra funding this year, in one go!

As I said, the new HRAs will be allocated to Brisbane and Southport. The successful tenderer for the HRA contract was a Queensland-based company, Austral Specialised Vehicles of Geebung. I must say that that company has done a remarkable job for us. We have been delivering pumpers for some time now throughout the State—recently to Thursday Island and to other areas. The Governor in Council has now given approval for the establishment of a five-year standing offer arrangement for the purchase of the eight TAPs. The successful tenderer was again Austral Specialised Vehicles. The first order of eight TAP units will have a total order value of \$4.8m. The planned allocation of those units is two to Brisbane, one to Woodridge, one to Cairns, one to Ipswich, one to Townsville, one to Rockhampton and one to Caloundra.

I must apologise that it was not possible to replace this equipment earlier. However, we have had to pay off the debts that the former Government left behind. We have been paying off the \$57.3m left behind when the QFS was formed. The Nationals left behind an ancient fleet of vehicles, 100 being more than 15 years of age. It refused to buy firefighters high-reach aerial appliances. It ordered no such equipment between 1983 and 1989. The former Government introduced the fire levy and then froze it because it was not game to implement it in a proper way, and it allowed the fire boards to run up large debts and large overdrafts. Members opposite ought to be ashamed of themselves!

Allocations to Springwood Electorate Schools

Mrs SHELDON: I refer the Minister for Environment and Heritage to the fact that she, both as local member for Springwood and Minister responsible for the so-called Koala Coast Secretariat, has distributed \$915,000 among six State schools in her electorate of Springwood, and I table a Price Waterhouse report detailing those grants. Given that this money was allocated after she and the Minister for Administrative Services went doorknocking among schools in Springwood touting the grants; given that in some cases the Minister drew up the budget and/or requested the Administrative Services

Department to produce the plans; given that schools which did apply were told by the Minister to direct their applications through her and that every school in her electorate received a grant; given that these six schools were the only schools funded by the secretariat in the initial round; and given that, as a result, grants administered by a committee set up by the Minister have been used as a shameless pork-barrelling exercise in the worst whiteboard tradition, I ask: what is it about Labor Environment Ministers that they cannot keep their hands out of the public purse when it comes to propping up their re-election chances, and will the Minister follow Ros Kelly's example and resign?

Mr Borbidge interjected.

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

Ms ROBSON: In response to the last part of that question—no, I am not going to resign. I am sorry about that! In terms of the total misrepresentation of the process that was undertaken in the Community Facilities Program—I regularly visit all of my schools, and have done over the five and a half years that I have been the member for Springwood. We do regular rounds of the schools and assess what maintenance work needs to be done. Last year, I again—not for the first time—took the Administrative Services Minister, as I have done with the Education Ministers, around to look at my schools and to talk to principals and P & Cs about work that needs to be done on the schools.

When Cabinet determined that there should be a Community Facilities Program—which, as the member knows, has been audited by Price Waterhouse—and after discussions with council officers and various others, and given that I have the notion that school grounds that are owned by the people of Queensland should be available seven days a week to residents in the areas around them, I thought that the ideal focus for my applications to the Community Facilities Program would be for me to do some more work on school grounds. I wanted to top up the work that we have been doing progressively over the five and a half years that we have been in Government. Consequently, between last August and November, I took the Administrative Services Minister around the schools in my electorate and we both identified projects which would be of benefit to the whole community and to the school community specifically. I consulted with the principals and the P & Cs of those schools and it was determined that that was a good

way to go. We all share the philosophy that we should be opening up school grounds more.

As a result, my application was treated as part of an independent process, which I had nothing to do with—and the member knows that I had nothing to do with it—and it was determined by an independent committee that those grants should be given. I am very happy with that process. There is no pork-barrelling involved in that process. My community has been affected, as have the communities of Mansfield, Redlands and various others, and I think they deserve compensation.

Drought-affected Areas

Mr BUDD: I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: can he advise the House of the possibility of a unified policy being agreed upon for handling the severe drought that is still affecting areas of Queensland?

Mr CASEY: Earlier in this House, the Leader of the Opposition asked a question of the Premier, and policies were brought up. It is good to see a unified policy and to see the Parliament project a unified voice to the community. I am very pleased to see that, now that we have some indication of a policy from the Opposition, it is in actual fact the Labor Party's policy. The Premier pointed out, and rightly so, that the Opposition is devoid of policies and that members opposite will stand up in this place and criticise, carp, whinge and whine—especially the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr CASEY: The member smiles broadly while I mention these things.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr CASEY: Well, I have been in Opposition, too, and I have been an Opposition Leader.

Mr Speaker, as Father of the House, permit me to digress to make a slight observation. Over a long period in this place one has the opportunity to watch people opposite, and I have watched the Leader of the Opposition since he came to this place. He has several traits. Firstly, if one watches him, one will see that he raises his eyebrows, and when he raises his eyebrows, he is looking for the truth. Secondly, he strokes his chin, and that is when he is thinking of the truth. However, it is when he opens his mouth that he tells all the lies.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to withdraw that term.

Mr CASEY: I will withdraw the unparliamentary word and substitute "untruths" instead.

The drought policy of the Opposition, which was announced last year, was that there would be a series of local representatives on local drought committees. This Government has done that for the last five years. After the severe drought during 1988-89, we implemented the recommendations of the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee.

The Opposition also talks about taxation concessions. The Federal Government has already brought those in; there is no question about that. In fact, it has brought in a lot of other measures that this Government suggested to it last year—and interest payment support is one of those very interesting measures. When the Commonwealth Government offered interest support of up to 100 per cent if the States could match that, the only State in Australia that could do that for drought relief was the Queensland Government. We matched that funding to take it up to 100 per cent.

The Opposition is starting to say that these measures are part of its policy. To put these matters in place has not been the Government's policy, it has been its practice for five years. It has been our practice to help the communities of Queensland that are suffering from the severe drought which has now gone on for five years. We will continue to do that while the drought holds. The Treasurer again made this commitment to those communities when he delivered the Budget in this Parliament and the Premier and I have made that commitment constantly, and we will continue to do that. It is nice to see that, when at long last the Opposition finds a policy, it comes in 100 per cent behind Labor's policy. That is good to know.

Allocations to Springwood Electorate Schools

Mr LINGARD: I refer the Minister for Environment to her allocation of \$915,000 to schools in her electorate of Springwood through the Koala Coast Secretariat. In each case, the proponent of the application for funding was listed on the form that was presented to members of the assessment committee. The Minister has just indicated that she had nothing to do with those. In each of the six schools in her electorate the proponent was listed not as the school itself or the P & C but as Molly Robson, MLA. These departmental officers were not only reviewing applications from an MLA but also directions

from the Minister in charge of their portfolio. I ask: given that the Minister engineered these grants, administered their payment and then claimed credit as the local member, will she admit that there was an obvious conflict of interest in those applications?

Ms ROBSON: What I said was that I had nothing to do with the allocation of the funds. There is a vast difference. I have admitted quite happily that I made submissions on behalf of six schools in my electorate. As a result of consultation with principals, P & Cs and staff, I made a submission—they knew I was doing it. That was where I wanted to focus my attention in terms of the Community Facilities Program. I did not apply for any other level of funding, I simply applied for funding for those six schools in my electorate. That is quite clear; it has been audited by Price Waterhouse.

Mr Borbidge: So what?

Ms ROBSON: The member should just listen. He is trying to beat up something which does not exist. I did not approve the allocation of that funding, I simply submitted for it. The independent assessment committee had a set of criteria which were based on numerical allocation. In other words, points were scored against criteria which talked about meeting community demand, etc., related to the potential of having that roadway running behind the electorate. That was a process that, once I submitted it—and I did the application myself, nobody else did it—I stood back and I heard nothing more. I discussed it with no-one until such time as that committee brought down its decisions on the allocation of that funding. Now, I cannot distance myself from it any further than that, but I can assure the House that I had absolutely nothing to do with how that funding was allocated.

Mr FitzGerald interjected.

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

Proposed Small Business Council

Ms POWER: I refer the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development to the fact that the Opposition, if elected, proposes to create a Small Business Council. I ask: will the Minister explain if this proposal has any merit?

Mr Elliott interjected.

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

Mr PITT: I understand that this proposed council will be in addition to the Queensland Small Business Corporation that the coalition started as the Small Business Development Corporation, and the current Leader of the Opposition of course had stewardship of that corporation in 1989. I just wonder if the coalition Government is admitting that it has made a mistake in the creation of that corporation. The Opposition says the council would "make recommendations direct to Cabinet". If that council is going to make direct recommendations to Cabinet, does that suggest that we will have an unelected nineteenth person sitting at the Cabinet table?

The idea of a council such as this as part of its small-business policies is typical of all the Opposition's policies. It is either a duplication of current Government practice or it is a straight copy of Government policy. The National Party was caught out back in November last year when it released its small-business policies up in Townsville. I believe it was Ken Crooke who released them at the time. He said that the National Party would ensure payment of all Government accounts to small businessmen in 30 days and they would introduce a penalty for late payment if that did not occur. Someone obviously forgot to tell coalition members that we have already done that. Maybe now, with the release of their new policy, they have woken up to that fact.

The National Party also promised that a coalition Government would abolish land tax. It is now saying it has a view that it will ultimately phase out that land tax. It is my impression that the National Party really does not know what it is doing. It really is another backflip on the part of the National Party. It does not have real policies; it makes them up as it goes along.

The rest of the coalition issues are really warm and fuzzy ones. The coalition makes statements like: the coalition reaffirms its commitment to the continued development of industrial estates. Another statement is: a commitment to buy Queensland-made services and products when all circumstances regarding the supply of same are considered equal. The coalition ignores the fact that most of these policies are already being acted upon. Clearly such motherhood statements are not going down well with the business community.

Rosedale State High School

Mr SANTORO: I refer the Minister for Environment to the allocation of \$915,000 to

schools in the Springwood electorate, the area that she represents as an MLA. Given that schools in her electorate received grants of up to \$390,000, I draw the Minister's attention to the plight of Rochedale State High School. Unlike some of the schools in her electorate, Rochedale High actually applied in writing for funding but was denied a grant even though it is just one block from the tollway. I ask: on what grounds was Rochedale denied a grant? Is it the case, as the Minister told the 7.30 *Report* last night, that Rochedale High may not have been funded because that school's local member, the member for Mansfield, could have priorities different from those of the Minister?

Ms ROBSON: I have already told the House that I had no say in the allocation of that funding. On that basis, I cannot answer that question.

Consumer Credit

Mrs ROSE: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister for Consumer Affairs: will the consumer credit code first passed in Australia by this State Parliament still be proclaimed Australiawide in September this year?

Mr BURNS: The Ministerial Council for Consumer Affairs—MCCA—which consists of the Federal Consumer Affairs Minister and all State and Territory Ministers for Consumer Affairs agreed last year that an Australiawide consumer credit code would be proclaimed in September this year. This would take place after being passed in Queensland as template legislation and subsequently being passed by the other States. Although nearly all the States have been working towards this, some have found it difficult to have everything in place in time.

In addition to this, a number of large credit providers have appealed to the States and to the Federal Government for an extension of time to allow them to set up appropriate systems to handle the requirements of the new legislation and to develop new forms and contracts. As a result of the legislation, members of MCCA have taken a vote and agreed to postpone the proclamation of the legislation until 30 March 1996. This is six months later than originally agreed, but rather than proclaim the Act before all systems are in place, it is better to make sure that the introduction of the credit code will be a success. There is no problem with the legislation itself, but it is always a challenge to get legislation through eight Parliaments.

Members should remember that this code will be of great benefit to consumers. Greater disclosure will be required when credit is being provided so that consumers can make informed decisions. The Act is based on truth-in-leading principles. Courts will have the power to reopen unjust transactions. Credit providers will have to take into account a potential borrower's ability to pay.

Mr Stephan interjected.

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

Mr Stephan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I warned the member for Gympie and he continues to interject. I know that today is the beginning of the Budget debate and some members may be anxious to speak, but if the member keeps interjecting he will not be in the Chamber to join that debate.

Mr ELLIOTT: I rise to a point of order. I understand that reading a question the way that the deputy leader is—he was the one who always—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I warn the member for Cunningham under Standing Order 124.

Mr BURNS: I will read this last bit. There are many other positive features of the Act and it will regularise practice and contracts around the country.

Allocations to Springwood Electorate Schools

Mr SLACK: I refer the Minister for Environment and Heritage to an article in the *Albert & Logan News* by Rob Jeffs in which the Minister was congratulating herself on her ministerial allocation of \$915,000 to schools in her electorate. I refer also to the Minister's statement in answer to an earlier question in which she said that she referred the matter of that allocation to an independent process of assessment. According to that article, the Minister told Mr Jeffs—

"The money would be spent on work at six schools assessed last year."

Given that the official assessment process involving her department was completed only upon the receipt of the Price Waterhouse report this year, I ask the Minister: what assessment process was referred to by her in that article? In view of the time disparity, was it the official process or was it the real pork-barrelling process of assessment which

occurred when the Minister went doorknocking with Mr Milliner?

Ms ROBSON: That is pathetic. I have already explained to the House. We went round to the schools last year. The honourable member cannot read; he has clearly illustrated that to me. I explained to the House that I went round to the schools last year and we did an assessment of the work which needed to be done, which I submitted to the process.

Tourism Industry

Mr NUTTALL: I ask the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing: can he inform the House of new developments in the Queensland tourism industry?

Mr GIBBS: I am delighted to advise the House of the latest developments in the tourism industry, particularly in light of the fact that, in the last couple of weeks, the Leader of the Opposition and his shadow Tourism spokesman, Mr Veivers, have been spreading quite deceitful stories around their electorates in a very frenzied attempt at clawing at an issue prior to the election, whenever it may be held.

Mr VEIVERS: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks very offensive and ask for them to be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask for a withdrawal. I suggest to members that this is the Parliament. I think there should be a bit of thrust and parry—a bit of give and take. However, I ask the Minister to withdraw, because the Standing Orders state that he should withdraw whatever another member finds offensive.

Mr GIBBS: If the member finds it offensive, I can only come to the conclusion that it is because he has become homophobic in the last week so—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister to withdraw.

Mr VEIVERS: I rise to a point of order. I find that offensive also and ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr GIBBS: The member wants me to stand up here all day—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mr GIBBS: I withdraw.

The great news for the Queensland tourism industry is that the latest Queensland visitor survey shows that in spite of these ongoing criticisms by the member for Southport and the Leader of the Opposition,

the criticisms and the statements that they continue to make prove to be absolutely baseless. Let me acquaint the House with the latest visitor figures which show that visitor expenditure rose a massive 26 per cent to \$1.344 billion to the December quarter 1993-94. The figures also show that holiday visitation takings to the December quarter 1993-94 grew by a massive 16 per cent for visitor nights, which is more than 4 per cent above the national average, and that the number of international visitors to Queensland grew again by a massive 14.5 per cent to 1,569 visitors in the year to September.

These figures prove beyond doubt that not only is Queensland tourism maintaining its competitive edge; it is also galloping away from the rest of Australia in the same way as our State's economy and in the same way as business in this State is providing a leading role for the rest of this nation. Of course, further great news was announced yesterday by Qantas Airlines—this again is a result of the confidence shown in the policies and the direction of this Government—of the reinstatement of two additional flights per week direct from Nerita Airport to Brisbane. Once again, these are services which will benefit not only the tourism industry in Brisbane but also the tourism industry on the Gold Coast—in the electorates of the two worst critics of the tourism industry.

I simply say that the honourable member for Southport—and even more so the Leader of the Opposition with his ongoing criticism not just of the Indy Car event but of the Gold Coast tourism industry itself—is doing himself no credit. The member for Southport does the same thing every time. He knows full well that the Leader of the Opposition has dug himself in over the Indy Car event. Every time this subject comes up in the House, the member for Southport always indicates to me, "Not me, not me." He loves the event. However, he will never stand up and be counted on it. He will never have the intestinal fortitude to disagree with his leader in this House, and he stands condemned for that.

A Government member interjected.

Mr GIBBS: He more than bludges on the wing, let me assure the honourable member of that. As I said, in Queensland, the tourism industry is forging ahead. The reality is that this Government will spend approximately \$110m on tourism over the next three years—again more than any of our competitors in either New South Wales or Victoria. In addition, the allocation for the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation,

and indirectly to the 14 regional tourism associations throughout Queensland, is in round figures approximately \$10m. That is a massive injection of money into the RTAs.

Freedom of Information

Mr VEIVERS: I refer the Attorney-General to his waffling response yesterday in relation to the exemption of the Indy from FOI by regulation and his assertion that the Queensland Events Corporation, as a subsidiary of Treasury Holdings, always had FOI exemption. That was not the question, so I again ask: why has the Government exempted the Gold Coast Motor Events Company, which runs the Indy, almost two years after the move of the Indy from the control of Treasury Holdings to the control of the Department of Tourism?

Mr WELLS: This is just a continuation of an existing exemption which exists in order to create a level playing field.

Information Technology for Schools in Isolated Communities

Mr BREDHAUER: I refer the Minister for Education to his recent visit to schools and educational institutions in the Torres Strait and far-north Queensland including Cooktown and Hope Vale. I ask: could he advise the House of the educational benefits being reaped in those areas due to the Queensland Government's investment in state of the art information technology for isolated communities?

Mr HAMILL: I had the pleasure of accompanying the member for Cook to those communities in far-north Queensland. What was very apparent was the tremendous leap forward in the provision of education services that has come from a Government which has had education as its top priority. Successive Budgets that have been brought down by this Government have revolutionised the equipping of our classrooms, and nowhere is that more apparent than in those remote communities.

In the Budget that was brought down this week, distance education again received a significant increase in funding to \$22.7m. Those distance education programs and the method by which they are being delivered is making all the difference for those remote communities. I was certainly impressed during the visit, particularly to Thursday island, to see the progress that has been achieved with the RATEP program, that is, the Remote Area Teacher Education Program. That program

has been instrumental in training people from those communities so that they can take their place as classroom teachers.

Mr Foley: All through TAFE, too.

Mr HAMILL: I was going to come to that. This is a very good example of how the Queensland Government is investing in development of those community resources. The cooperation received from the TAFE sector and also James Cook University has resulted already in 20 Torres Strait Islanders alone coming through that process and taking their place as classroom teachers. That means a tremendous deal to those communities. In the Torres Strait alone, RATEP programs operate on Yorke Island and Badu Island. A program operates on Thursday Island and at Bamaga. In other communities on the mainland, RATEP is in place and delivering the goods.

What is most significant is that those teachers are being trained using interactive multimedia technology, which is a result of the significant investment that this Government has been making in education. That same sort of technology will assist in delivering the Language Other Than English Program in those remote communities. With the member for Cook I had the pleasure of visiting the Hope Vale school and announcing that, in the case of the Hope Vale and Bloomfield State Schools, the Language Other Than English Program will, in fact, be used to develop the local language of those people—something which the communities in those areas welcome enthusiastically. That program is providing a real bridge between the young people and elders of the community by revitalising and renewing the cultural awareness in those communities. Guugu Yimithir and Kuku Yalanji, the two local languages from Hope Vale and Bloomfield—

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr HAMILL: The honourable member will have to read it, because I know that he is not very good at oral comprehension. Those two community languages will be taught in those schools to those communities using the same sort of interactive multimedia technology which is providing services to those RATEP teachers in the Torres Strait.

It is quite evident that those initiatives and those innovations would not have been achieved were it not for this Government's continued strong support for education services, not only in our cities and regional towns but also in remote areas.

Release of Brutal and Violent Criminals

Mr COOPER: I refer the Premier to a list of brutal and violent criminals as detailed in the *Sunday Mail* on 14 May, including a man who murdered a Brisbane woman in a frenzied knife attack while her young son watched, a convicted child killer and rapist, and a notorious drug dealer, among others, who have been allowed out to the River of Gold slate project as well as being given leave of absence to go to cattle sales at Mareeba or to go and do whatever else they like. I ask: what action has he taken, as Premier of this State and supposedly responsible for his Ministers, to ensure that all of those violent and vicious criminals are put back into maximum security where they belong so as to protect the public?

Mr W. K. GOSS: I must confess that I do not take too much notice of some those *Sunday Mail* articles; they tend to be—

Mr Cooper: They're very real, r-e-a-l.

Mr W. K. GOSS: Good on you, Russell. At least on that side of the House one has to give the member who asked the question points for trying, which is more than one can say for most of them.

In relation to the process whereby people are sentenced and ultimately released in this State, this Government has continued the Kennedy reforms implemented by Mr Cooper. We have given him credit for starting that process, both when we were in Opposition and now when we are in Government. We have continued the reforms that he started. In terms of this waffle and nonsense that he goes on about in relation to people who are serving life sentences or long sentences and the length of time that they spend in prison, this Government is much tougher than the members opposite ever were. The most telling statistic in this regard is that, under the Nationals and the Liberals, the average sentence served by a lifer was 13 years. Under this Government, the average sentence served by a lifer is 17 years.

Mr Cooper: You're letting this lot out in 15 months.

Mr W. K. GOSS: As I said before, the honourable member is no different from his leader—he talks tough, but in Government he is the same wimp that his leader is.

Radio Black Spots, Redlands Region

Mr BRISKEY: I refer the Deputy Premier and Minister for Emergency Services to criticism of radio black spots in the Redlands

region. I ask: is he aware of initiatives being taken by the Queensland Ambulance Service to upgrade radio communications to aid officers during emergency incidents?

Mr BURNS: I thank the honourable member for the question, because it raises the concerns of a former member of the ambulance committee in the Capalaba area about black spots. I asked the QAS to investigate the matter. Consequently, a radio communications repeater was installed at Alexandra Hills, and that has overcome many of the identified black spots, particularly in the Capalaba area. Some difficulties continue to be experienced on the eastern side of North Stradbroke Island—that is the beach side. In October last year, the QAS made submissions to the Commonwealth Marine Safety Authority asking for the use of its facilities at Point Lookout for the installation of a QAS repeater. To date, no positive response from the authority has been received, but negotiations will continue. We are now investigating alternative sites on North Stradbroke Island for the installation of a new communications repeater. Currently, staff on North Stradbroke Island use mobile telephones as an effective backup communications capability when operating in areas where communications are difficult to maintain.

On 16 May, a detailed survey of QAS radio coverage at the locations cited by Mr Powell was conducted by QAS technical staff in conjunction with the QAS officer in charge of the Capalaba station. In every case, radio communications were found to be available through one or more of the three radio channels used in the area. No serious radio system coverage deficiency was found. The officer in charge of the Capalaba station expressed his satisfaction with the performance of the radio system.

In some other locations, particularly within buildings at the extremities of the radio coverage, the performance of hand-held radios is limited. However, radio coverage via the higher power vehicle radios was found to be satisfactory. Further action will be taken to improve the hand-held radio coverage, but it is virtually impossible to guarantee hand-held radio coverage in all locations.

Additional radio repeaters are to be installed in the Mount Gravatt and the Brisbane central district areas before the end of the financial year to improve hand-held radio coverage in those areas. So since the original radio network was installed in 1991 under a contract issued by the QATB, we have greatly improved radio communications in the

south-east Queensland area. Initially, only eight radio sites were installed to cover the area from Coolangatta to north of Nambour. The QAS radio and electronics branch has completed the installation of 22 UHF radio repeater sites in south-east Queensland and a further 14 are planned to improve hand-held radio coverage and to extend the network. In addition, we have planned to spend a further \$500,000 next year to continue to fix the black spot problem, which was left by the Nationals.

Mr Cooper: Ha, ha!

Mr BURNS: That is true. During the term of the previous National Party Government, Sally Leivesley said that it should do something about rural fire communications, yet during all the years it was in Government, it never gave the Rural Fire Service one new vehicle. It never tried to assist the Rural Fire Service. When the Rural Fire Service asked the National Party Government for a couple of hundred thousand dollars as a special grant for the Rural Fire Division, it knocked back the request, yet the Rural Fire Division covers the areas that the National Party is supposed to represent.

The initiatives for the new radio services include new facilities in the Kirwan and Normanton areas, the Emerald and Longreach areas, the Mackay area, the Toowoomba area, the Caloundra, Maroochydore, Tin Can Bay, Kenilworth, Nambour and Gympie areas, the Caboolture area, the Boonah and Ipswich areas, the Cairns area and all areas within radio contact from Brisbane.

I would also like to thank the many local ambulance committees throughout the State that have supported this Government's effort with additional funding for radio enhancements for their own local communities. I have to say that, in 1991 when we took over the Ambulance Service, there was a long way to go. Previously the service was run by many separate boards, and it takes some time to incorporate those boards into one Statewide service. With loyal staff and very good support from local ambulance committees, we have been able to develop a system that is now starting to bite into the problems that existed, and we can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Law and Order

Mr BEANLAND: I refer the Premier to his statements during a question time in this House in March this year in which he claimed that, under his Government, no prisoners

sentenced to life imprisonment would serve less than 13 years. The Premier also claimed that the average term for prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment—before being released for home detention or on parole—is now 17.5 years. According to Queensland Corrective Services, since June 1991 the minimum term served by persons sentenced to life imprisonment is actually only 12.1 years. Similarly, the average term served by the 38 prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment and who have been granted parole is only 15.6 years. I ask the Premier: in view of the fact that in Victoria convicted criminals now receive life sentences in the vicinity of 30 years, will he now admit that his Government is soft on crime and that he has misled the Parliament?

Mr W. K. GOSS: No.

Computers in Schools

Mr DOLLIN: I ask the Minister for Education: is he aware of the article that appeared on 24 May 1995 in the *Maryborough-Hervey Bay Chronicle* regarding parents' concern over the use of funds for computers in schools? If so, could he inform the House of the Government's strategy in the use of these funds?

Mr HAMILL: Yes, I am aware of the article. Indeed, my office drew it to my attention. The president of the Maryborough State High School Parents and Citizens Association was making comments concerning statements that had been made by the Government regarding the spread of information technology through the Queensland education system. In that article, Mrs Ott stated—

"We would like our students to be able to take advantage of the super highway."

For the information of National Party members, I point out that the super-highway is actually the information super-highway, not the south coast motorway. Mrs Ott went on to say that the P & C would like to see high schools networked into the information super-highway. Because of the initiatives of this Government, that goal will in fact become a reality. Indeed, when the President of the Maryborough State High School P & C Association expressed concern regarding the \$40m funding for computers, I think she was getting that funding confused with the announcement made by the Premier that some \$5m would be made available for the Schools Information Management System. That system, of which funding of some \$18.7m of that \$40m

initiative was contained in this year's State Budget, is about providing the platform upon which schools can access the information super-highway. So Mrs Ott and her P & C members ought not be concerned that those funds are going towards administrative systems for schools. This funding is all about achieving the goal that she and other members of P & Cs have for their students in our schools.

As well, I am pleased to inform the honourable member that the Government's Computers in Schools project is continuing to provide computer hardware and software to our schools. In fact, this year \$9.2m is being provided to schools by way of funding for computers. That amounts to over \$30m funding for the provision of computers to schools under this Government. In very practical terms, under that program, during this year alone, 532 primary and special schools received new computers. To put it another way, 17,000 Queensland students at schools—and I am talking about primary schools—gained access to computers for the first time when they started school this year. That is a tremendous achievement.

Again, this is in line with the comments I made during my response to a question asked by the member for Cook a short while ago. Through the repeated commitment to education by this Government in successive Budgets, the classrooms of this State have access to modern equipment, including computing equipment. That is the sort of thing that parents throughout the State wish for their children. Through this important program, not only are children in Years 6 and 7 receiving the same degree of access to computers as has existed in high schools, but those programs are also being progressively extended down through the primary school system so that all primary school children will be able to access a mode of learning—a vehicle for learning—which is part of the modern-day world and which is truly revolutionising education in Queensland classrooms.

Tree-clearing Guidelines

Mr HOBBS: I refer the Minister for Lands to the new tree-clearing guidelines that were forced on land-holders without consultation and without genuine scientific or economic data to justify their implementation. I also refer the Minister to his statement about land-holders, which appeared in the *Western Times* of 18 May as follows—

"If they can put forward valid reasons why the clearing of the mulga or gidyea country or downs should be much lower than the standards, then they should put this forward. But if they can't then our draft guidelines remain."

I ask the Minister: why should the onus of proof be on land-holders when the DPI, the regional Lands Department officers, Landcare organisations and all industry organisations have already acknowledged that his Government's draft guidelines are seriously flawed?

Mr SMITH: There has been no acknowledgment that the draft guidelines are flawed. The draft guidelines have been put forward on the basis of information which has been put together over a considerable time and which demonstrates the caution that is needed in order to prevent degradation by excessive tree clearing. There may be variations from those guidelines. Again, I emphasise that they are draft guidelines.

Mr Hobbs interjected.

Mr SMITH: Mr Hobbs is the Borbidge of the bush. He runs around spreading misinformation and distorting the truth.

There may be variations from place to place. There might be a lower or a higher retention rate, depending upon the evidence which is available on the land. Although honourable members opposite do not want to know about this, I point out that we will be in a much better position when we see the evidence available from the satellite data in respect of the extent of the tree-clearing that has occurred. That will be the proper basis for the decision making.

Taxi Industry

Mr ROBERTSON: I ask the Minister for Transport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Economic and Trade Development: in light of recent reports in respect of the rumoured deregulation of the taxi industry in Queensland, will he inform the House of the Government's views and intentions in relation to this matter?

Mr HAYWARD: I thank the honourable member for the question, because it raises a very important issue. Right from the start, let me say quite categorically that there is no possibility of the Queensland taxi industry being deregulated. I am aware that concern has been expressed that, in the wake of the Hilmer report, which recommends widespread deregulation and removal of trade barriers, taxis would also be subjected to that form of

deregulation. This week I have written personally to each of Queensland's more than 3,000 licensed taxi drivers to inform them of the State Government's position. I take this opportunity to confirm that the Queensland Government, along with the taxi industry, shares confidence in the current regulatory arrangements, which exist to deliver secure, efficient and reliable services to all Queenslanders who use taxis.

The Government will continue to work with the Taxi Council of Queensland and its members to ensure the delivery of quality taxi services to Queenslanders. The regulation of the taxi industry, as with many other industries, is an essential component of making sure that consumers have access to safe and reliable services backed up by the necessary legislative controls and framework. I believe, as the Queensland Government believes, that it would be in no-one's best interests for those controls to be removed from the taxi industry.

Sunshine Coast Bus Services

Mr LAMING: I refer the Minister for Transport to a report in yesterday's *Sunshine Coast Daily* claiming that the Tewantin Bus Service will be awarded the contract to provide urban bus services across the Sunshine Coast, and I ask: if this is correct, will other existing operators be fully compensated, and how soon will significantly improved services be introduced?

Mr HAYWARD: I am aware of the article that appeared in yesterday's *Sunshine Coast Daily*. As all members of this Parliament would be aware, there has been a review of transport services, and that has been proceeding right across Queensland. New contracts have been signed in Cairns and Townsville. Yesterday, a question was asked about Rockhampton and an interim contract which was entered into there after the Rockhampton City Council reneged on a previous agreement for bus services. Contracts have also been entered into at Ipswich.

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

REVENUE LAWS AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (11.05 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend certain Acts administered by the Treasurer."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

Bill and Explanatory Notes presented and Bill, on motion of Mr De Lacy, read a first time.

Second Reading

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns—Treasurer) (11.06 a.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The purpose of this Bill is to implement revenue measures which were provided for in the 1995-96 Budget. These initiatives will apply from the 1995-96 financial year. The tax changes announced in From Strength to Strength and implemented in the Budget will provide a competitive benefit to Queensland business, delivering savings of around \$40m over three years. The cutting of stamp duty on share transfers will halve the duty on share transactions for investors and benefit local brokers through the expected increased volume of transactions, especially international transactions returning onshore.

As was announced in the From Strength to Strength economic statement, the payroll tax exemption threshold will rise from \$700,000 to \$750,000. This will be achieved in two stages: a rise of \$25,000 from 1 July 1995 and a further \$25,000 increase from 1 July 1996. This will represent an overall lift in the threshold of 50 per cent by the Goss Government, placing Queensland far ahead of any other Government. What is more, the maximum rate of payroll tax has remained unchanged at 5 per cent throughout this period.

Business costs will also fall as a result of two further measures: an increase in the land tax exemption threshold for companies and trustees from \$40,000 to \$60,000 and an increase in the rental duty exemption threshold from \$10,000 to \$100,000. The increase in the land tax threshold means that over 4,000 companies and trustees will no longer pay the tax. Increasing the rental duty threshold to \$100,000 means that a lot of small hire businesses, including those which hire out goods as a sideline, will no longer pay this tax. In fact, around 45 per cent of rental businesses currently paying this duty will no longer do so.

In addition to these measures, the rate of stamp duty on transfers of marketable securities listed on the Australian Stock Exchange will be halved. This reduction is aimed at capturing the large volumes of share transactions that are currently being channelled through other financial centres in

the region where duty is much lower than in Australia. A more active and more mature securities market will lead to more investment in Queensland, and that will generate more jobs. It will also provide a powerful symbol of our status as the low-tax State. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr FitzGerald, adjourned.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL APPROPRIATION BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Debate resumed from 23 May (see p. 11848)

Mr BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—Leader of the Opposition) (11.08 a.m.): This is another Budget of missed opportunities from this Government. This is another Budget of attempted patch-ups, another Budget of sneaky taxes and another Budget of fiddling the books. Therefore, it is a typical Goss Labor Budget.

Firstly, I turn to the issue of missed opportunities. Queensland emerged from the eighties in absolutely extraordinary shape to enter the 1990s. In the eighties, every other mainland State had its economy decimated to one degree or another by Labor. In Queensland, the National and Liberal Parties simply continued the development of the most fiscally responsible administration in the nation. While Labor leaders in other States fell into the trap of becoming political versions of Christopher Skase, we kept our heads. We had the lowest net debt per capita in the country, even though we funded massive infrastructure programs right throughout the decade. We developed the only fully funded public sector superannuation scheme so that these massive annual outlays were not a drain on the Consolidated Fund. We developed the only fully funded workers' compensation scheme and the only fully funded third-party insurance scheme for exactly the same commonsense, responsible set of reasons. We developed the Queensland Treasury Corporation to manage these savings and to increase them, and we were moving from the mid eighties on to funding our social infrastructure from the Consolidated Fund so that social policy works had a one-off cost only.

In 1989, this Government inherited a State economy in extraordinary shape, in unique shape, and then we had the recession we had to have. That was the coup de grace for Labor interstate. So there Queensland

stood—on the cusp of the nineties, in the box seat. We were in a position to have the rest of the country eat our dust. We were in a position in which we could easily afford to provide the very generous levels of social infrastructure required. We were in a position in which we could easily afford more big economic infrastructure projects of the sort managed right through the eighties. We were in a position to help the battlers, to help the environment, to maintain law and order, to help the bush, to increase jobs and to help diversify and modernise our economy. It should have been all so easy, but where are we now?

After five and a half years of Mr Goss' handling of that extraordinary inheritance, what do we have—a Government forced to resort to band-aids; a Government of bumlbers; a Government of missed opportunities; a Government desperately looking for quick fixes. We have 15,000 people on waiting lists for elective surgery, many of them the battlers who never had the luxury of dropping private health insurance—they could not afford it in the first place. We have a Kidney and Liver Transplant Unit struggling to stay in business. We have a disgrace! We have Queensland battlers waiting three years for a set of teeth. We have nowhere near 1,500 extra police, but we do have police in near open revolt, and we do have rapidly rising crime rates.

We have firemen in open revolt over staffing levels and equipment failures. The men and the women of the Queensland Ambulance Service are biting their lips. National parks are not being managed. Our schools are wrapped in so much red tape that it takes months to have a principal appointed. Those in need of special education or special health care are being abandoned through cop-outs called mainstreaming and deinstitutionalisation. We have people languishing in watch-houses for months, as if Queensland were some Central American banana republic. We have an economic infrastructure drought—barely \$30m in this Budget, for example, for new power generation initiatives.

In short, we have an incompetent Government which took the inheritance of the National Party and the Liberal Party and mismanaged it into a crisis of service unmatched around this country—even by those States which, at the beginning of the decade, were starting from ground zero. The lack of performance from this Government, in comparison with what has been happening in those States which were so recently cot cases,

which were starting so far behind, clearly labels the photo-opportunity Premier opposite the biggest wastrel, the biggest policy fraud and the biggest management fraud ever to have been inflicted on this State.

Growth rates in Western Australia and Victoria now match the growth rates of Queensland. That is absolutely ridiculous! They have had to reinvent the wheel. All we had to do in Queensland was to put the wheels up and to light the afterburner. Look at the reality of what we have in this State after five and a half years of the stewardship of the member for Logan. Forget for just a moment how photogenic or how Garbo-like he seeks to appear as he teases the masses. Where are we for all our riches? We are back in the ruck. We are saddled with vast policy and management problems. That is the missed opportunity.

If this mob were half as good as they think they are, this Budget should and could so easily have been the mother of all election Budgets. This Government, given its inheritance, should have been able to produce in this election year an unassailable Budget, a Budget which would have been good for the State and made its re-election a formality. I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that had the coalition been on the Treasury benches over the past five years of such great opportunity, this would have been the case. Instead, the highlights of this Budget, according to the Government, are further big increases in spending for the problem areas. There should not be problem areas! The drover's dog could have avoided problem areas in Queensland, but they are here.

Mr Santoro: They've had six years to fix them.

Mr BORBIDGE: They have had six years to fix them, as my honourable friend reminds me. They demonstrate exquisitely to the people of this State the depth of incompetence, the extent of the missed opportunities that this Government has plumbed in its bumbling effort to manage the affairs of Queensland.

I will deal with health first. The first thing that must be put right in order to put this Government's performance in this crucial area into perspective is just what it did inherit, because this Government has made a habit of trying to apologise for its disgraceful performance by suggesting that the system that it inherited was beyond hope. I will simply refer adherents to this myth—opposite and elsewhere—to the 1990 report of Prime Minister Bob Hawke's Economic Planning and

Advisory Council, which studied the relative performance of the States in delivering services in the arena. The conclusions are very clear cut and unambiguous. Queensland, despite the fact that it spent less per capita on health services than did the other States, delivered services—that forgotten criteria—which were at least the equal and by some key measurements clearly superior, despite lower outlays. Those are not my words; they are the words of Prime Minister Bob Hawke's Economic Planning and Advisory Council.

There is the core of the incompetence of this Government: it can spend; it cannot manage. The Premier himself has told this place that health expenditure under his Government has increased by a billion dollars—one thousand million dollars. How, therefore, do we have 15,000 people on waiting lists for elective surgery? How can we have a health system which has seen operating theatres close, wards close—even hospitals close—for weeks on end? It is pathetically, tragically because this Government cannot think. It can spend; it cannot manage. The evidence emerges from the heart of its own ranks.

In 1993, David Shand, formerly Dr Peter Coaldrake's deputy chair at the Public Sector Management Commission, addressed a seminar at Griffith University on the first term of the Goss Government. The deputy chair said—

"Certainly, when we were reviewing a number of Government agencies, we found that they were desperate to get their expenditure up to national levels, particularly in health and education."

Dr Shand went on to say—

"They weren't necessarily clear what they wanted to spend the money on; the important thing was spending up to the national level, and that was particularly the case, I might say, in the area of health."

Those are not my words; they are not the words of the coalition; they are the words of the former deputy chair of the PSMC. There is the health crisis in this State under the stewardship of the member for Logan in a sad, silly nutshell. A Government given a dream opportunity dropped the ball, stored its grey matter and simply ploughed ahead as if it were the 1980s and Wayne Goss was John Bannon—spend, spend, spend! Shand said that the Government did not know what it wanted to spend its money on; it just wanted to spend it and it just wanted to spend it quickly and heavily to get expenditure levels

up to the national levels—levels which helped send the rest of the country broke.

That attitude explains plainly, sadly, simply why we can have \$1 billion more spent on a hospital system, as we have had under the member for Logan, and produce a system that simply does not work. The money just is not reaching the sharp end of health care. The Government, in its haste to get spending levels up to the national levels, did not have the wit to care where the money actually went. It was simply out to get that warm inner glow from getting the level up. This failure is now notorious. I do not need to go on.

Exactly the same disease chronically afflicts every other area of service delivery under this Government. Certainly, exactly the same disease afflicts the law and order arena, which was the Government's other keynote area for big spending increases in this Budget. As with Health, we have certainly had the big increases in outlays throughout the life of this Government. They continue in this Budget. The core question again for Queenslanders, however, is simple: has the investment been wisely managed, wisely structured and wisely planned? Again, the answer, simply, has to be no.

A core use of funds was to have increased police numbers very significantly. That undertaking was a key promise as far back as 1989. I chronicled the Government's management and budgetary failures in that arena in detail in the House earlier this week. I will not go over the ground again, except to say that both the Criminal Justice Commission and the Public Sector Management Commission have totally undermined the Government's claim to have produced 1,500 extra operational police. Having failed in delivering that promise, while putting its head ever deeper in the sand in relation to the crime problem, there will be very few adherents to the view that the Government is likely to deliver its latest promise on police numbers. Certainly, the promise was not enough to stop police officers in the Beenleigh/Logan area yesterday letterboxing to put the blame for the police manpower, and the crime situation, clearly at the feet of the Government. Other elements of the law, order and public safety area of the Budget also highlight the basic incompetence of this Government.

In Corrective Services, the Government's mismanagement has been as breathtakingly irresponsible as has been its performance in Health. I refer in particular to its performance in relation to prisons and watch-houses. The legacy of five and a half years of the member

for Logan's stewardship of the prisons system is a system which is, on the latest available estimates, over capacity by some 15 per cent to 20 per cent. In that regard, it is the law and order reflection of the health system.

The excuse for this, from the member for Logan, and from the departing member for Rockhampton, is lame. The excuse they offer is that the Government was caught short in the prison system suddenly, and by surprise, by an increase in prisoner numbers which it claims was against the trend. That claim is absolute rubbish—just as the rubbish these men peddle in relation to police numbers is exposed by the CJC, the PSMC and the rank and file of the service.

The PSMC's 1993 review of the Corrective Services Commission gives the lie to the Government's excuse on prisons. On the issue of infrastructure, at a time, I simply illustrate, when the prison system was already running at near 100 per cent capacity—and these are not my words or the words of the coalition—the PSMC said—

"While there are a number of construction options to meet a range of scenarios, the review has not been able to identify a documented infrastructure planning strategy."

I repeat: "the review has not been able to identify a documented infrastructure planning strategy."

In 1993, the Government simply did not know how many cells it needed. Far from being caught short, the PSMC establishes that the increase in prisoner numbers was far from sudden—numbers were moving up almost immediately in the wake of the closure of Woodford gaol in that year, to the extent that by the time of the review period in 1993, capacities were already at almost 100 per cent. The PSMC actually had to tell the Government to develop a predictive correctional centre population model. The Government did not have one. It did not know what was going on. It had no idea about what to build or why. That is simply another reason that this Budget is a catch-up Budget from a Government which can spend but cannot manage. We should never have gotten into the mess we are now enduring in Corrective Services.

The Kennedy review, set in place by the previous Government in the late eighties, gave the Government a blueprint. All it had to do was follow the dotted line—to join up the dots. Instead, as the PSMC review also shows, by early 1990 it was resenting the amount of money being spent in the area, canned plans

for new prisons planned by the old Prisons Department and laid the foundation of the disaster we have today where we now confront a mad and expensive scramble to build enough gaol cells quickly enough to avoid a public safety disaster. Again there was, and there is, simply no excuse. The funds were there; the money was available. The job had to be done. It was neglected, and in the very same way that the people of Queensland are now paying for the incompetence of this Government in administering a billion-dollar increase in health spending, they are now paying for its equally demonstrable incompetence in the management of the police and the prison system.

So there, briefly, are the status quo reports on the two areas of big spending increases in this Budget. The health system is terminally ill. The law, order and public safety system is in disarray. All the Government can offer is another tranche of cash. There is absolutely no reason why Queenslanders should believe that another bucket of money thrown at these areas in 1995 will be any more effective than have been the five previous buckets of money.

Without a sea change in the attitudes of this Government towards a management and a planning focus nothing will get any better, and there is nothing in this Budget which suggests that that sea change is on the way. In fact, it represents the opposite. Money is still, allegedly, an answer in itself.

I turn now to another major aspect of this Budget—sneaky taxes. The Government maintains that we are still the low-tax State it inherited in 1989. It has certainly sought to maintain that illusion.

Mr Livingstone: Prove it.

Mr BORBIDGE: For the benefit of the honourable member who interjects, I will disprove it. Outlays have increased between the 1990-91 Budget and the estimates presented this week by over \$3.5 billion to \$11.6 billion.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right! The House will come to order.

Mr BORBIDGE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I can understand why they do not want to hear it. That is an increase in total outlays of some 44.6 per cent. When one considers State-based revenue—because the global outlay figure includes the Commonwealth's contribution—the increase is actually 48.7 per cent. In other words, State-based receipts

have increased by almost 50 per cent since June 1991. That is up by almost half! What the Government would have us believe is that it can increase the revenue of the State Government by half without introducing new taxes—without increasing taxes and charges above the CPI. Pigs might fly!

Have the wages of the average Queenslanders gone up by half since 1991? Is the economy half as big again as it was in 1991? Of course not. The fact is that the Government is boosting its coffers with sneaky taxes. Far and away the biggest source is corporatisation. In 1990-91, the Government earned \$50m from corporatisation-related revenue. In this Budget it is up from \$50m to \$537m. That is tenfold growth. The Government will argue that these are not tax increases because they are not direct taxes. The charges, in the form of full State taxation, full Commonwealth tax equivalents and dividends, are paid by Government businesses, like the electricity industry, Suncorp, the QIDC or, from 1 July this year, poor old Queensland Rail.

Mr Elliott: Get everything off Budget so you can't see it.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the member for Cunningham reminds me—get everything off Budget. That is precisely what they have done in fudging the debt. Forestry and Water Resources will soon follow down the twisted and tortured corporatisation trail of the Treasurer. And the Government will say that this is all part of delivering back to the people of Queensland a share in the profits of these enterprises, which will be a means of protecting Queenslanders from direct tax increases. The Treasurer's patter suggests that Queenslanders will actually get their money back in social justice spending and in tax cuts. But will they? Certainly there are increases in social justice spending in the Budget, although to what end is open to question.

But where are the tax cuts? The only tax cut we can see is one for stockbrokers, in the reduction of the stamp duty on share transactions. That is a nice little diversion. As soon as the other States match the cut, as they must, all that will be gained will be more share transactions and less tax. There are no tax cuts in this Budget for the battlers. There might be for Kerry Stokes. He would have done nicely out of the cut in respect of share transactions and stamp duty, but there are no cuts in this Budget for the battlers, nor will there ever be from corporatisation, despite the promises from the Treasurer.

Just ask yourselves this: when Suncorp, the QIDC, Queensland Rail, the electricity industry, Water Resources or Forestry start finding it difficult to meet the charges imposed by the Government, where are they going to get the money to meet those charges and obligations? Where does any business go when it has to make up for increases in Government taxes? It goes to its market. If it is the car dealer, forced to pay the Federal Government's 22 per cent sales tax—which the Prime Minister said in One Nation was gone permanently—who pays? Does Ford pay? Will the electricity industry in this State pay? Will Queensland Rail pay? Will Water Resources pay? Will Suncorp or the QIDC pay? Of course they will not! The taxpayer will pay! Having paid to build Queensland Rail, the taxpayers will pay again! Having paid for water resources, they will pay again!

So make no mistake. The 1,000 per cent increase in corporatisation income that we have seen in the life of this Government is a cost to the taxpayer. They might not pay it directly this year. They might not even be called upon to pay it directly next year, but they will eventually pay for it, and certain ways in which this Government has gone about its corporatisation process make that as inevitable as night following day.

Firstly, the way most corporatised entities around the world have been able to deliver efficiencies of the scale required to meet the Government imposts that go with corporatisation has been through labour market reform. Has that been done in Queensland? Of course not. That is the avenue that has been blocked for Queensland's public businesses, because the Labor Government could not get that one past the unions, and it has retained public sector employment conditions. So the costs will be passed on and they will be passed on quickly.

Another form of sneaky tax that we have seen from this Government concerns gambling revenue. In 1990-91, gambling taxes and associated charges were \$251m. In this Budget, gambling taxes will bring in some \$491m, an increase in this sneaky tax over the life of the Government of some \$240m or 95 per cent.

Mr Santoro: It sounds like a gambling-led recovery.

Mr BORBIDGE: A gambling-led recovery, as the member for Clayfield suggests.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: Do not bet on it—a good assessment. The argument from the Government, of course, is that these taxes, like its corporatisation flow-ons, are not direct tax increases. And for what it is worth, that is right. They are not paid direct, but they are there. They are being paid not by the punter, but by the TAB, in the same way as the cheque for casino taxes may be written out by Conrad. The cash, ultimately, is from the pockets of Queenslanders—from battlers. As I say, sneaky taxes from a sneaky Government. When this Government came to office, it knew that to increase direct taxes would be electoral death. It knew that others were jealous of our low taxes. It also knew, as David Shand so eloquently and simply pointed out at Griffith University, that it wanted to spend, and it wanted to spend big. It did not know what it wanted to spend on exactly, but it did want to spend, right up to the national averages that had driven the rest of this great country broke! It was determined, as Shand pointed out, to do so come hell or high water. So it had to find the money in a sneaky way, an underhand way, a way it hoped the people would not latch onto. From that came the sneaky gambling taxes and the sneaky corporatisation taxes.

I now turn to the fiddling of the books. It is difficult to know where to begin and where to end. If I were to give all the examples that this Budget revealed, we would be here till midnight. So what I will give are simply some examples for the information of the honourable members opposite. The first concerns an angle on corporatisation. Honourable members will see in the Budget a reference to the fact that the Government will pay Queensland Rail some \$225m for the 1994-95 financial year to cover the cost of provision of community service obligations. They will also see a payment from Queensland Rail back to the Department of Transport, which is recompense for the profits made on the provision of those community service obligations.

So community service obligations—CSOs—cancel each other out. These community service obligations cover Citytrain, Traveltrain, interstate passenger traffic, Q-Link, low volume routes and standard gauge rail infrastructure. So there is developing pressure on what is left. When there is this quaint bookkeeping, the message is: watch out if you are sending freight by rail. The other part of this little fiddle we will not see until we get the QR annual report for the current financial year.

Mr Johnson: We won't get it in time, though.

Mr BORBIDGE: I suspect we will not get it in time, as the member for Gregory suggests. A few annual reports are running late. I notice that the Lang Park Trust report is lost in the mist. I notice that we now have FOI exemptions for the Gold Coast Indy. Let me have a look at QR. If last year's annual report is a guide, and I am sure it is, then we will also see the transfer to the Consolidated Fund of some \$200m plus in coal royalties. The significance of this fiddle is this: Queensland Rail has effectively lost a significant percentage of its potential to make money through the CSO regime, and honourable members can bet that CSO payments to QR will remain on the right side of the ledger for the Consolidated Fund—stay on the right side of the ledger.

On top of that, QR is down \$200m plus on coal royalties this year, and no doubt again in the Budget year of 1995-96.

Mr Johnson: Thanks to derailments.

Mr BORBIDGE: Derailments have had a fair bit to do with it, as the member for Gregory suggests.

Mr Johnson: Tell them about the \$2.16 billion transferred from Rail to Treasury.

Mr BORBIDGE: And all the funding transferred from Rail to Treasury, a litany of deceit—\$2.16 billion. The result: \$200m plus of pressure on QR's costs as it meets State tax payments, Commonwealth tax equivalents, dividends, etc., from a reduced business base. Who is available to soak up the pressure? Who are the bunnies who will pay? Anybody who puts freight on a train. But this is a low-tax Government!

Another fiddle concerns this Government's treatment of trust funds. The Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund was one of the first funds to face ongoing raids by this Government.

Mr Rowell: Absolute disgrace.

Mr BORBIDGE: An absolute disgrace, as the member reminds me.

The Government's argument for using excess funds in trust funds to boost outlays is, superficially at least, quite reasonable. If there is a fund that is much more than actuarially sound and if unrequired sums are not going to be returned in the way the workers' compensation system works, whereby employers with a good record achieve a return of a proportion of their premiums, then I suppose many people, particularly honourable members opposite, would regard it as reasonable to boost spending in some needy area with some of that cash.

However, the auctioneers fund is an interesting case in point. In June 1991, before the big raids started, the fund had a balance of \$101m. In 1991-92, the Government grabbed \$43.6m and put it mostly into housing, arguing that it benefited nobody to have the money sitting idle. The fund ended that year with a balance of \$67.6m. In the financial year 1992-93, the Government took another \$16.4m for spending and left the fund with a balance of \$50m—just half of what it had two years earlier. In 1994-95, the Government took \$15.1m and in the next financial year—according to this Budget—it plans to take another \$19.5m. With annual receipts running at around \$8m over the past couple of years, these latest grabs are going to push the balance of the fund back to something well under \$50m—perhaps around \$40m.

On one level, that may be considered reasonable. Certainly, a minimum requirement is that the fund must remain actuarially sound. But another consideration is this: if the fund continues to be bled by this Government to the very edge of soundness—or beyond—what does it then do? The Government has generated an engine of recurrent expenditure by annual raids on a fund that has a definite use-by date. The question then becomes: where does the member for Cairns get his next bite? Where does he find a replacement source for a fund from which he has raided—stolen—\$108m over five years? Does he raid another trust fund? They are already being raided! How does he then go on spending? I believe that the taxpayer can work that one out.

I will give honourable members one final example of the great fiddle: the Government's Capital Works Program. Again, the extent of the fiddle defies the time available to me for this speech, so I will content myself with demonstrating the point through the fate of the capital works programs for the Queensland Police Service and the Health Department. This Government's alleged commitment to an ongoing, allegedly massive Capital Works Program has been one of its biggest and most profound cons—a deceitful confidence trick. Let us consider the Police Capital Works Program for this year—the year of law and order. It includes—taking a couple of examples alphabetically—a replacement district headquarters and watch-house for Bundaberg, with \$5.6m provided in this Budget for commencement of construction and with the project to be completed in 1996-97 at a total cost of \$7.6m.

Mr Cooper: It's what you call a recycled product.

Mr BORBIDGE: A recycled product.

Mr Cooper: Mr Campbell spends all his time going backwards and forwards to Bundaberg every year and making announcements.

Mr BORBIDGE: Does it sound familiar? I hope that the people of Bundaberg are patient. The Treasurer first announced this project four years ago—four Budgets ago. It has been in the Capital Works Program since then.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: It is a bit like the Toowoomba ambulance centre.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: It is a bit like the Waterford bridge.

Mr Hobbs: The Cunnamulla Aboriginal Health Centre was allocated \$718,000 four years ago. It is still there.

Mr BORBIDGE: Cunnamulla is still there.

Mr Johnson: The same with the Barcaldine Hospital.

Mr BORBIDGE: Barcaldine, Cunnamulla, Emerald!

An Opposition member: Toowoomba Police Station.

Mr BORBIDGE: Toowoomba!

An Opposition member: Mission Beach Police Station.

Mr BORBIDGE: Mission Beach Police Station!

Mr Quinn: Twelve schools.

Mr BORBIDGE: Twelve schools, my friend the member for Merrimac tells me.

Mr FitzGerald: Recycled.

Mr BORBIDGE: Recycled! What a crazy, disgraceful, disgusting fudge of figures.

Let us consider the glorious anticipation of the people of Bundaberg. The Treasurer announced the Bundaberg police station four years ago. In the 1992-93 Budget, the Treasurer allocated \$600,000 for the design of a replacement district headquarters and watch-house for Bundaberg, with construction to be commenced in 1993-94 and with the project to be completed in 1994-95.

I hope the people of Doomadgee are even more patient; I am sure they must be, given the treatment of their project and their race by this Government. In relation to the replacement station announced by the Treasurer on Tuesday for that remote and

deserving community—the Treasurer might recall that he announced that on the first of five occasions way back in 1991, when it was to have been completed in 1992-93. What a joke! What a farce! The Treasurer, Ministers opposite and the member for Logan claim to have credibility. Their capital works budget is a fraud. It has been a fraud every year that they have been in Government. I could go on with further examples, not only relating to the Police Service but right across the emergency services spectrum and—as my honourable colleagues have prompted me—right across the Capital Works Program.

I will deal briefly with the Government's hypocrisy in relation to the Health Capital Works Program. Honourable members and the other people of Queensland would remember that, in 1992, the Treasurer dropped a Budget one day; the Premier turned around and on the very next day announced a big tax increase on tobacco which was not in the Budget and which he said would fund a \$150m-a-year Hospital Rebuilding Program.

The hospital Capital Works Program delivered by the member for Logan after that promise and for that year was \$49.455m. I refer to page 16 of Budget Paper No. 6 for that year. In 1993-94, it was \$47.984m, according to page 58 of that Budget Paper No. 6. In 1994-95, it at least reached nearly half the pre-1992 election promise level, but it is a bit like the police numbers issue; it reached \$74.091m, as shown on page 61. Now, allegedly, in this Budget we have the first genuine, real—Wayne Goss promises; it must be going to happen—\$150m hospital Capital Works Program. But the fact is that, for the entire second term of this Government, the central promise of the member for Logan in seeking that second term was not honoured once. Again, that is very reminiscent of the police numbers issue, which was one of the central promises from the very same man way back in 1989. He does not tell the truth about police numbers. He does not tell the truth about capital works. This is a Government of deceit with a Premier of deceit.

As I said at the outset, this is another Budget of missed opportunities, another patch-up Budget, another Budget of sneaky taxes, and another Budget of fiddles. It is readily demonstrated as such. As I also said at the outset, that is a great tragedy for Queensland and Queenslanders. Given the great launching pad presented to this Government in 1989, we have deserved much better throughout, particularly in this Budget.

The Government was handed a hospital pass by the Prime Minister in the form of the recession we had to have. Revenues were knocked around substantially in 1990-91, but recovered quite quickly. Given the extraordinary solidity of the 1989 base, we should have been in a position to rocket into the recovery to quickly replace the 50,000 full-time jobs knocked out of our State economy. But what happened? Instead, our Government fiddled, and our leader posed—predominantly for photo opportunities—and postured, so that only now are we getting our full-time job levels back to pre-recessionary levels. That represents years of suffering for tens of thousands of families which could have been alleviated substantially by a Government that was simply prepared to take off the white fedora, come out from behind the palm trees and do a day's work.

Mr Cooper: And stop pouting and pirouetting.

Mr BORBIDGE: As the member for Roma reminds me, and to stop pouting and pirouetting. Of course, that is one thing that the member for Logan is good at doing.

We should have been able to help the battler instead of prolonging the recession for thousands with the billion-dollar dose of snake oil represented by the Deputy Premier's very own and disastrous HOME fiasco, copied straight out of the Neville Wran disaster book. As the current Minister for Housing knows so well, we are still paying the bills for that scheme. We should and could so easily have had some decent safety nets in place.

We should have been genuinely addressing the needs of the public health system in the face of strong growth in demand and escalating costs instead of rushing into the lemming-like plunge for the outlays that David Shand told us about—where money was spent simply for the sake of it, simply to catch up with the catastrophic spending rates of the Premier's interstate mates, with the predictable result of a rudderless system in crisis.

The member for Logan, the Premier, says that that is all a beat-up, a distortion and that in 1989, we were worse off. Under the system that existed in 1989, dedicated medical staff were not writing 20 close-typed pages detailing instances of people on waiting lists, or of doctors that had left hospitals 18 months prior and had not been replaced. We did not have the situation of a 22-year-old losing a kidney donated by that person's mum, which occurred tragically in recent weeks in Queensland. It is happening now, and it

should not be happening. The shame rests squarely on the shoulders of the member for Logan.

On the basis of our granite foundation in 1989, years ago we should have had under way a vast and rolling program of large economic infrastructure projects. Again, given the state in which the National Party left Queensland in 1989, we could have afforded it. We should have been doing it. Instead we have a promise to build a tollway that, before the last election, the member for Logan promised that he would not build.

Apart from that and a couple of Federally funded projects, this Government's efforts in relation to economic infrastructure have been two—so far equally unproductive—efforts to get somebody else to undertake the outlays. The first was a glossy approach to the private sector, which failed. The second was QIFF, which was announced in last year's Budget. Do members remember QIFF? The Premier could not even explain it.

Mr Cooper: Sunk without a trace.

Mr BORBIDGE: It has all but sunk. All we have after that is a series of infrastructure promises qualified by ifs, buts and maybes.

Mr FitzGerald: Sounds like an "if" in QIFF.

Mr BORBIDGE: A big "if" in QIFF. Today, I have not offered an alternative structure for this Budget. We are too close to an election. I am sure the coalition is being asked to play with a stacked deck. The Premier will not go to the polls with this document. Unless he is a bigger mug than I think he is, he will hold back, just as he did in 1992 when he dropped the Budget one day and announced a virtual replacement document not a day later. "You show me yours, I'll show you mine"—that is what the Premier did the last time. This is not the document the Premier will be going to the polls with, and the Opposition is more than happy to play that game.

I am also more than happy to give the House, and many of those departing members opposite, some very firm, general undertakings both in light of this document and the one that we have not yet seen. A coalition Government will treat the dollars of the Queensland taxpayer with respect—for a change, and some change! A coalition Government will plan expenditure; it will manage expenditure; and it will get most dollars, instead of just some of them, to the sharp end of service delivery. There will be a heart transplant, not band-aids, for the health

system. There will be genuine increases in police numbers. There will be the restoration of services in the bush which, almost continuously since 1989, has been devastated by the two "ds"—drought and dills. There are plenty of dills on the Government side of the House.

It is a coalition commitment that corporatisation will not be the haven of sneaky taxes or the Trojan horse, which it represents currently, on the flawed model put forward by this Government. The coalition will deliver a dividend to the people of Queensland in the form of better health care, more police and better opportunities for Queensland kids. Under the coalition, revenue from corporatisation will be pegged at a level that is realistically affordable by business units without recourse to big increases in charges.

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: Only the member could turn the seat of Gladstone into a marginal seat. He should enjoy his final days. Unlike the member and his captains and chiefs, the coalition will not raid the trust funds to the extent that they develop an engine of recurrent expenditure that forces the Government to find another way to raise money and, at the same time, reduces the soundness of the funds. In short, the coalition will bring back what is missing; it will bring back commonsense to the Government of Queensland.

The tyros who spent 32 years in the wilderness and who came to the job of Government in 1989 with not much more than fire in their bellies can go away and, hopefully, learn something from their experience in Government so that sometime down the track, when the people of Queensland are again ready to give the Australian Labor Party a run, they will have learned what not to do. Labor has been an experiment for Queensland and, as this Budget so amply demonstrates, it has failed. Only a Labor Government could turn a great opportunity into a lost opportunity. What this Budget claims to do in the rhetoric amounts to an admission of defeat. Labor has not built a better health system; Labor has not built a better education system; Labor has not made us a safer society. That simply has not occurred. Labor talks about building a better Queensland. Do we have a better health system? Do we have a better education system? Are we safer in our homes and in our places of work? Of course not!

Now we have this spectacle, weeks before an election, of Wayne Goss and Labor seeking to bribe us with our own money. The

Budget is more of the same—record spending, diminishing front-line services and bigger bureaucracy. It fails to address the structural problems of this Government in providing services. This Budget is not about the good government of Queensland; it is all about the self-preservation of a Labor Government that can spend but cannot manage.

Already, honourable members opposite have thrown five buckets of money at the problems that they themselves have created. Why should anyone believe that bucket No. 6 is going to be any more effective than buckets Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5?

Mr Santoro: There is absolutely no reason.

Mr BORBIDGE: There is no reason to believe honourable members opposite. It is time for Queensland to get back to the basics, to put services and value for money back on the agenda. The coalition has learned valuable lessons in Opposition. It will be a wiser, better Government within a few weeks.

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central) (12.01 p.m.): For almost all of the past hour, we heard the contribution from the Leader of the Opposition. At no time during that contribution did we hear him come forward with what he would actually do in the unfortunate event that he were ever elected as Premier of this State. He demonstrated that he is bankrupt in policy and strategies.

Mr Bredhauer: A policy-free zone.

Mr BEATTIE: Exactly, a policy-free zone. The Leader of the Opposition was high on rhetoric and slippery figures but at no time did we hear him talk about his plan, his strategy or his commitment to Queensland. Where is his blueprint? We did not hear it mentioned, but we did hear some fairly slippery uses of figures. I intend to deal at some length with what the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Surfers Paradise, said.

First, he talked about so-called sneaky taxes. He said that receipts are up 50 per cent since 1991. Honourable members should not forget that this is the bloke who wants to be the Premier. The alternative Premier does not understand basic economics. Basic economics tell us that growth in the economy and population will lead to an increase in payroll tax. Combined with increases in weekly earnings, that will lead to a significant increase in receipts. An increase of about 4.5 per cent in weekly earnings, 3.5 per cent in employment and 5 per cent in payroll tax will

lead to an increase of about 8 per cent. That is the bracket creep that the Treasurer has spoken about on previous occasions. That is where the increase in receipts comes from. Anyone with a basic understanding of economics would appreciate that that is where it has come from since 1991.

Sure, there has been a tobacco tax, but no-one has argued about that; we have been open about it. The money has gone into schools and a range of other places. That money has never been hidden. Anyone with a basic understanding of economics knows where that increase in receipts has come from. It has come about by bracket creep and the enormous growth in the Queensland economy.

Let us deal with what Mr Borbidge said. In spite of all of the rhetoric of the Leader of the Opposition, he is not prepared to face up to the facts. The honourable member does not even have the decency to stay in the Chamber! Let us not look at Mr Borbidge's facts; let us look at independent facts. In its latest report, the Commonwealth Grants Commission takes into account all State revenue, including revenue from gambling, an issue which Mr Borbidge made something of. Its report includes all taxes and dividends from GOEs—the whole lot.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission has said that revenue in the other States is one-third higher than that in Queensland. That is not something that the Treasurer, the Premier or I have said; the commission said it. In other words, if we had the same tax policies in Queensland and at the same rates as in other States, we would have to change our revenue and increase it by one-third, or an amount of \$1,280m. That is what would happen in Queensland if we had the same taxing policies as other States. It is wrong, a misrepresentation and a lie to say that our tax position is worse compared with that in other States, which is what the Leader of the Opposition said. That is just not true.

Let us move on to another taxation comparison. On a straight taxes, fees and fines comparison, as measured by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the differential between Queensland and the other States has increased from a high 32 per cent in 1989-90 to 40 per cent in 1994-95. In comparing the position in 1989-90 with that in 1994-95, we see that the differential since we have been in office over six years, while we have been bringing down Budgets under this Treasurer and this Government, has increased by 8 per cent. It is clear how well we compare

with the other Australian States. It is dishonest and simply not true to allege—and this is what the Leader of the Opposition said—that we have in some way lost our low-tax status. In anyone's language, that is not true. The Leader of the Opposition should start being a little more honest when dealing with these figures.

Mr Bredhauer: How is the Liberal Treasurer in Victoria going?

Mr BEATTIE: Yes, that is exactly right.

Let us look at another illustration. When the Leader of the Opposition was attacking the Treasurer, he made reference to the health statistics. He referred to only part of the statistics. He did not produce all of the figures. He said that the capital works component of the Health budget for 1993-94 was \$47,984,000. That is simply not true. That is a lie. If honourable members turn to page 58 of that document, they will see that, conveniently, the Leader of the Opposition left out all of the expenditure for primary health care centres. He left out the whole lot! How he could possibly have done that is beyond me. He left out all of the expenditure for capital works set out at the bottom of page 58 and the total on page 59. The capital works budget was not \$47,984,000. In 1993-94, the total capital works budget for health was \$150,475,000. It is absolutely outrageous for the Leader of the Opposition to misrepresent in this House what the capital works expenditure for the Health budget was in 1993-94. If honourable members look at pages 58 and 59, it will be absolutely clear to them what he did. It is disgraceful.

The people of Queensland are entitled to a Leader of the Opposition who will tell the truth in this place and not misrepresent figures. The Leader of the Opposition is slipperier than vaseline. He and petroleum jelly have a great deal in common when it comes to dealing with statistics. And he has about as much backbone as petroleum jelly, too. If we are going to have debates on statistics and facts, let us deal with them honestly. Let us not have them misrepresented. For the life of me, I cannot believe that the man holding himself out as the alternative Premier of Queensland would come into the House and misrepresent the capital works budget for health in the most outrageous way possible. It is simply unforgivable. I do not believe that his credibility will survive this debate, let alone the State election campaign, if he is going to continue to behave in that dishonest way.

Having dealt with some of the misrepresentations that we have heard from

the Leader of the Opposition, I intend to go on and deal with the rest of them. Let us look not at what I or the Treasurer are saying about the Budget; let us look at what a few independent commentators have said about it. For example, in glowing terms the editorial of today's *Courier-Mail* talks about the "share tax coup" that has been brought about by this Government. It states—

"Queensland gets the benefit because it had the foresight to grab an opportunity that was going begging."

All we heard from the Leader of the Opposition was some half-smart remark about Kerry Stokes. At no time did he acknowledge the significant financial benefit that will come to this State. The *Courier-Mail* editorial writer has the perception to understand what is going on. He continues—

"The fact that Queensland could take up the financial market challenge because of its strong budgetary position and its negative net financing requirement"—

something the Leader of the Opposition made no reference to—

"is not the accident of history that some—Mr Egan and his Victorian colleague Mr Alan Stockdale apparently among them—seemingly would prefer to believe is the case."

Of course, we have been criticised by New South Wales and Victoria because we had the brains to steal the march on them. They can whinge and complain all they like. That will not do them any good, either; we will be attracting business to this State.

The editorial writer of the *Courier-Mail* continues—

"Competitive federalism is about doing exactly what the Queensland Government has done in this case. It is about creating a competitive edge. It is about attracting new business."

That is what the Treasurer has done by introducing this measure. The editorial further states—

"The decision by Qantas to resume its non-stop Tokyo-Brisbane service is another sign of a future in even higher profile than is currently Queensland's lot."

So the *Courier-Mail* thinks that we are doing well.

But that is not all. An article in today's *Courier-Mail* by Laurie Cox refers to the State

Government's slashing of stamp duty on share transactions. He is another independent commentator. In referring to whingers from Victoria and New South Wales, the article states—

"Pain of this type has been expressed over the past 24 hours . . . because they see a looming revenue loss from the Queensland Government's decision to halve the rate of stamp duty on share transactions.

Their reaction is understandable—no government likes giving up revenue—but there has never been a more straightforward case of the pain being worthwhile.

. . .

At present, the Australian Stock Exchange estimates that as much as \$30 billion in trading in Australian shares takes place on markets outside Australia every year and this adversely affects the liquidity and efficiency of the domestic market.

The major reason for this loss of business is that it is more expensive to trade in Australia because stamp duty is imposed at almost the highest rate in the world.

The rate is double that of Hong Kong or Singapore, for example—not to mention markets such as the US and New Zealand that don't charge it at all.

The decision of the Queensland Government to halve the rate and bring it into line with our major competitors in the region is, therefore, in the national interest."

So that commentator says that this decision by the Treasurer is in the national interest. There cannot be a greater compliment than that! The article continues—

"Premier Wayne Goss and Treasurer Keith De Lacy deserve the congratulations, not just of Queenslanders, but of all Australians for their willingness to forgo an easy source of revenue for the sake of the broader economic interests of the nation.

. . .

The new Queensland duty rate of 0.15 percent for both buyer and seller is, I believe, just low enough to attract a significant proportion of that \$30 billion of off-shore business back to Australia, which means Queensland, unless one or more other states match the reduction.

. . .

I am delighted that the national importance of the Queensland initiative has been widely recognised and that the move has been welcomed across the nation.

It is a measure of our national maturity that we are prepared to make short-term sacrifice such as this for the sake of much greater economic benefit in the future."

Laurie Cox is the executive chairman of Potter Warburg and a former chairman of the Australian Stock Exchange, so he is hardly a Labor Party supporter.

That is not the only support for this Budget. Reports in the *Courier-Mail* reveal that the business community is also supportive of it. Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry principal economist, Carla Gerbo, believes that the State Budget will be generally well received by business. She stated that business would welcome the extra law and order funds because many were suffering financially, and she made other generally supportive comments. We did not hear Mr Borbidge refer to what the business community thinks of the Budget. That is because the business community supports it fully.

Mr Drummond, the general manager of Allgas Energy, is quoted in the *Courier-Mail* as applauding Mr De Lacy's restatement of the commitment to a \$9 billion infrastructure spending package. Mr Borbidge attacked this Government for allegedly having no infrastructure strategy. Here we have Mr Drummond, the general manager of Allgas Energy, applauding the Treasurer for his \$9 billion infrastructure spending package. MTIA executive director in Queensland, Paul Fennelly, stated that the MTIA fully supported the Budget initiatives, particularly the increased payroll tax threshold exemptions. Mr Fennelly stated—

"We've indicated the Government has backed a total winner . . ."

That is hardly a subjective or equivocating compliment to the Government; that is very forceful support for the Government. Ernst and Young taxation manager Karl Schloboham said that the Government had made a clever move in minimising the impact of raising the threshold on payroll tax. The list goes on of people in the business community who support the Government's initiatives. They do so because they are the right decisions for Queensland.

Having dealt with those points, I turn to deal specifically with a number of other

matters. I loved the cheap line that the Leader of the Opposition used about putting Christopher Skase over on our side of the fence. What a joke! When I was Labor Party secretary, Christopher Skase used to throw huge parties here. If one ever went to one—which I never did—one found that it was full of National Party politicians and Liberal Party politicians. Never once would there be a Labor Party politician at a Christopher Skase do. The Leader of the Opposition should not attempt to put Christopher Skase on our side of the fence. Mr Skase is a product of the white-shoe brigade politics of the National Party. He prospered, if I could misuse that word, under the National Party's white-shoe brigade.

I turn to the economy generally. I have dealt with some of these matters, but I want to place some other points on record. The Queensland economy has outperformed that of the other Australian States for some time. We all know that. The forecast economic growth for Queensland is 4.3 per cent for 1995-96 compared with a national average of 3.75 per cent. So we are miles ahead of the national average. We have maintained Queensland's AAA rating and continued financial performance, which will again deliver a Budget surplus and further improve the Government's negative net debt position and lower taxes for 1995-96.

For all the rhetoric we heard from Mr Borbidge, I point out that never once under the former Government was there a negative net debt position. This Government has achieved that. Mr Borbidge is getting long in the tooth. He wants it both ways. He wants to come in here and say that the National Party left a good economic legacy, yet he then wants to turn around and criticise our decisions all the way along the line. The fact is that we have been in Government for six years. We have run very responsible Budgets in this State. It is now quite proper for us to take full credit for the sound economic state in which Queensland finds itself, and that has absolutely nothing to do with Mr Borbidge and his mates.

I turn to health, which is one of the matters that Mr Borbidge tried to make great play about. The Budget allocates a record \$2.7 billion in health spending, representing an increase of 11 per cent on last year's Budget. An amount of \$64m over three years is being planned for an attack on patient waiting lists in Queensland public hospitals, and there is \$40m over two years for implementation of the Metropolitan Hospitals Rebuilding Program. As I have the Royal

Brisbane Hospital in my electorate, I am delighted about that. We now have 3,000 more admissions per week to our hospital system than was the case under the former Government.

The truth about the hospital system is this: the National Party in the late seventies and early eighties underspent on health in this State, and we are now tidying up the mess that we inherited. The Royal Brisbane Hospital in my electorate has not had any major capital works performed on it since Adam was in shorts. We are now rectifying the lack of planning undertaken in the past. In the 1980s, the National Party underspent on patient care and did not spend at all on capital works programs in hospitals. We are rectifying the problem with the public health system—a problem that we inherited from the National Party Government, which in the late 1970s and 1980s allocated a deplorable spending level to that system.

I turn now to law and order. I am always happy to talk about law and order. Let us look at what we inherited. We inherited a Police Service that was underresourced, underpaid and demoralised. The National Party appointed a crook as the head of that service. Members opposite have the hide to talk about law and order! They destroyed the Police Service in this State. Terry Lewis—their Police Commissioner, their man with the voice directly to Joh—is now in gaol doing 14 years for corruption. That is the legacy of the National Party!

How could the ordinary, hard-working police officer in this State ever carry out his or her responsibilities properly when the Police Commissioner was a crook? If one had to feel sorry for someone, one had to feel sorry for the ordinary police officers, who were trying to do their job when in the upper echelons of the service Terry Lewis and his mates were all shonks and crooks. Under what Government did that occur? It was under the National Party Government! That is why it has taken us time to rebuild the service, and we have done so successfully. That is why this year there is a record Queensland Police Service budget of \$541m, which represents an increase of 7.5 per cent over last year's allocation. There will be an extra 500 operational police over the next three years added to the additional 1,500 who are already there. There is growth funding of \$6.8m to ensure that resources match population growth. There are also the latest techniques in policing, and on Tuesday in this House I spoke about how they have benefited my electorate of Brisbane Central.

Of course, the Leader of the Opposition ignored factors such as the \$2.85m allocated in 1995-96 for the new 400-cell \$52m Woodford prison, with plans for a possible expansion to 600 cells, and the \$16.15m to build another 330 cells for correctional centres across the State. The Leader of the Opposition had the audacity to criticise the closure of Woodford. That centre had to be closed not only because it was run badly but also because it had communal toilets and communal showers. By attacking the closure of Woodford, the Leader of the Opposition said in effect that his prison policy means that he wants to see prisoners bashed and raped when they go to gaol. That is in effect what he was saying, because that is what happened at Woodford and that is what happened when there were community toilets and community showering facilities. If that is part of the Leader of the Opposition's law and order policy, perhaps he should tell the people of Queensland about that as well.

This morning we have seen a disgraceful performance from the Leader of the Opposition. We have seen a misrepresentation about corporatisation and a misrepresentation about the Queensland Fire Service, amongst other things. As I said the other day, if the National Party had stayed in office, the debt for the Queensland Fire Service would now have been \$51.3m—that is how badly the former Government ran it. When we took over in 1989, we inherited a level of incompetence which was surpassed only by Idi Amin, and we have had to redress that. The Leader of the Opposition said that we inherited an economy that even the drover's dog could not have got wrong. The truth was that the Queensland economy was strong because of Queensland's growth, not because of the National Party.

Time expired.

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—Leader of the Liberal Party) (12.20 p.m.): What a pity that the defence of the Labor Party Budget is left to Labor's perennial bridesmaid, Mr Peter Beattie. He is obviously the only member of the Labor Party elected to the Parliament who is capable of doing so, yet he is constantly ignored by the Premier and left to sit on the back bench. Of course, Mr Beattie did get many things wrong, including the fact that, from my understanding of what the Treasurer said, the increase in tobacco tax revenue was to go into hospitals. Mr Beattie says that it is going into schools. That is fairly indicative of the total confusion that reigns throughout Labor on where the taxpayers' money really is supposed to be going.

If this Budget before the House today was a pizza, Queenslanders would get it for free. I say that because this Budget does not deliver. It does not deliver because it will not fix the health problems, it will not fix the police problems, it will not fix the ambulance problems, it will not fix the fire service problems, it will not fix the transport problems, it will not fix the education problems and it will not deliver real tax cuts to Queenslanders. But, unfortunately, the people of Queensland will have to pay, and pay dearly, for the promises in the 1995-96 State Labor Budget.

The Budget before the House today is definitely a Labor Budget. There are few things on which I agree with the Premier or the Treasurer, but this time I must concur—this is a Labor Budget, and Queensland will be worse off for it. I say that because of the similarities between the Goss/De Lacy Budget and the Keating/Willis Budget brought down in Canberra a couple of weeks ago.

Labor Budgets have several key points which all Australians should look out for. The first key point is that they are big on public relations. The second key point is that they talk about social welfare and families a lot, but never, or rarely, deliver. The third key point is that they always use smoke and mirrors to distort what the Government is up to. The fourth key point is that they always, regardless of what they say, increase taxes on average Australians and lie to them. The fifth key point is that nobody believes them. Ask the doctors and nurses at Princess Alexander Hospital, or the police at Beenleigh, or the firemen across the State—they do not believe the promises made by the Treasurer on Tuesday. I need refer only to the demonstration outside this Parliament on the same day and the letterbox dropping by police in the Premier's own electorate of Logan. Queenslanders reading the Goss/De Lacy Budget before the House today will be able to tick off all five of these points, just as those who read the Keating/Willis Budget were able to two weeks ago.

Today, I wish to focus on two key aspects: the massive growth in the "rat taxes"—sneaky, underhand taxes which have gone up incredibly under Labor—and the extremes to which the Premier and the Treasurer are going to hide what they are up to by moving everything possible off Budget and hence off scrutiny. So much for accountability! I want to talk about these two points in the overall context of the collapse in services for Queenslanders under Labor. These are not the stories the Labor public relations machines

are churning out this week, but they are the real stories from this Budget.

Rat taxes sum up those taxes, fees, charges and fines which this Government sneaks through the back door while the floor show is going on to distract everyone from what is really happening.

Mr Elliott: They are very good at that.

Mrs SHELDON: Yes, they are. These taxes are very evident in the set of papers brought down by the Treasurer on Tuesday. Rat taxes are highlighted by the so-called regulatory fees. These fees charged by the Government have jumped 197 per cent from \$412.1m in 1989-90 to \$1.2 billion in 1994-95. If that is not bad enough, according to the Treasurer's own figures for next financial year, they will have jumped 214 per cent by the end of the 1995-96 financial year.

That is an unprecedented jump in secret taxes on every Queensland family and every Queensland small business—every Queensland. Overall, taxes, fees and fines have jumped from \$2.3 billion in 1989-90 to \$4 billion in 1995-96—a hike of 76 per cent in just six years. There will be a \$200m increase in taxes, fees and fines from 1994-95 to 1995-96, and there was a \$300m increase the year before. This means that every Queensland man, woman and child will pay \$1,260 each in State taxes, fees and fines in 1995-96 compared with only \$790 in 1989-90. This is yet another massive jump of 60 per cent, or \$470 for every man, woman and child over the six years of Labor power. Queensland families do not need to be paying out an extra \$470 for each and every family member in 1995-96 compared with 1989-90. Queensland small businesses do not need these extra taxes, fees and fines when they are already being body-slammed by Federal taxes.

The Treasurer tries to say that tax increases have been caused by the rapid population growth in the State over the last six years, ignoring of course the rapid population growth of the six years before Labor came to power. Over the last six years, Queensland's population has increased by only 10.3 per cent, and average weekly earnings have increased only 19.5 per cent—that is the point that the Treasurer always forgets—and inflation has averaged only about 3 per cent a year. So, the Treasurer's claims that Queensland has been a low-tax State are, quite frankly, absolute rubbish. He will compare Queensland to the other States, just as he has, and say that we have lower taxes, but that is only because the other States increased their taxes so much under their own

mismanaged Labor Governments and because their wage equivalent is so much higher.

This Treasurer gives with one hand while he takes with the other. In the election document *Strength to Strength* the Premier promised to cut State taxes by \$40m—what a fraud! About a month later, the Budget is released and we see that payroll tax will increase to more than \$1 billion—cracking the billion dollar mark for the first time—while stamp duty will increase to \$941.2 billion. Instead of less tax, as the Premier promised, payroll tax has increase by \$49m and stamp duty has increased by \$16.7m. What is worse is that, for four years, the Treasurer has been promising to rewrite the payroll tax and stamp duty legislation.

We all know what happens when this Treasurer rewrites existing taxes; we saw it with the debits tax. The Treasurer promised the people of Queensland that the rewriting of the debits tax would be revenue neutral. The Treasurer must have had his fingers crossed when he said that, because the debits tax was anything but revenue neutral and, in fact, these changes have brought about a 10 per cent increase in revenue from the debits tax, which has meant that thousands of Queenslanders who previously were exempt are now paying the tax. The debits tax is a relatively small tax compared to the billions of dollars we are talking about in payroll tax and stamp duty.

The people of Queensland are not as easily conned as this Treasurer would like to think. The people of Queensland know that, even if the Premier and the Treasurer stand before the cameras and say that there will be no new taxes, every day they are paying more for basic Government services. That is where the rat taxes come in. That is where the secret taxes hit average Queensland families and small businesses—the secret taxes, charges, fees and fines which hit every Queensland through the back door and every Queensland small business.

As the Jelacic family of Brisbane stated in the *Courier-Mail* yesterday, "There doesn't seem to be much in it to assist average families." How true that is. There is nothing in this Budget to assist average Queensland families. The big problem the Queensland Labor Government has is that people do not believe its promises any more. They do not believe that this Budget will do what the last five Labor Budgets could not, that is, fix the health system, the law and order system, the education system or the transport system. The

Government cannot fix them because it does not know how.

Not only is this Government failing to cope with the day-to-day issues of Government, it is also adopting the same defence as former Labor State Governments in South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. This Government has adopted a platform of deceit. We have already seen how Labor in Queensland has castrated the freedom of information process. Just look at what it is doing to the Indy balance sheet. We will not be able to see that because under FOI we cannot find out any of the details—they have been taken away from public scrutiny. What an absolute farce!

Now we are seeing how the Treasurer is moving as fast as he can to get everything off Budget. The Treasurer is turning Queensland into the mushroom State, with everything moved off Budget so that real scrutiny is impossible and accountability is dead. We have already seen the corporatisation of the Queensland Investment Corporation and the Queensland Industry Development Corporation—the State bank—which removes them from Budget scrutiny. In this Budget, the Treasurer pulls the final rabbit out of his Budget hat with the moving of the Queensland Treasury Corporation, the Queensland Electricity Commission and Queensland Rail off Budget.

This is the Treasurer's debt domino effect. He tries to tell Queenslanders that the Government is open to scrutiny, while at the same time removing public debt, the QTC, the QIC and the QIDC off Budget to avoid real scrutiny. This is the mushroom State under Keith De Lacy as he feeds the people of Queensland rhetoric while keeping them in the dark. The domino effect comes into force through the moving of the QTC off Budget. The QTC manages the debt of the QEC and Queensland Rail. So what do the changes mean? Well, the QEC and QR are now off the books as far as scrutiny into the Budget is concerned because they are corporatised, but the Treasurer has still included capital works for these entities in the capital works Budget to lend credence to his claims of providing more infrastructure. That is basically dishonest and deceitful.

That may have been acceptable because their debt was managed by the QTC, so we could always scrutinise the debt through the QTC. But Mr De Lacy's debt domino has now also toppled the QTC as well so that it is no longer on Budget and no longer available for scrutiny by the Parliament at Budget time. Just

like the \$1 billion bank payment to Keating, we will not be able to see how that is managed off Budget. As this Treasurer was prepared to fund Mr Keating \$1 billion so that Keating could get that fake surplus, we will find the management of that debt—and, of course, the QTC has to borrow to pay that debt to the Feds—is off Budget. So we cannot see how much it is really going to cost Queenslanders.

Accountability as far as State debt is concerned is now dead under Labor and under this Treasurer—accountability, the very issue this Labor Government was elected on, and yet the very issue this Government has abandoned, from the restrictions on question time in Parliament to the castration of FOI and now the end to financial accountability as debt is shuffled around and hidden from public scrutiny. To quote the Treasurer: "The public debt program will no longer exist within the Treasury portfolio."

These are the very smoke and mirror tricks adopted by the Governments of Cain, Bannon and Burke to hide gross mismanagement and debt blow-out in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. The big question we have to ask is: why? At no time in the last three days has the Treasurer adequately explained why the QTC and public debt have been moved off Budget. At no time has he explained why the Queensland Labor Government should undertake such a three-card-trick with Queensland's debt.

I cannot reinforce my concerns about this issue enough. With this Budget the Queensland Labor Government has opened the door to gross budgetary mismanagement and an unsupervised blow-out in the overall State debt. The Treasurer will tell the people of Queensland that it is all okay because the QTC will table an annual report in Parliament. That is a joke, as he well knows. We wait for up to six months to see annual reports from this Government in this House. We are still waiting for the annual report into the Lang Park Trust, even though it was due last December and it was supposed to be available for public scrutiny then.

Even the Treasurer's much-vaunted net surplus is seen to be a short-term public relations stunt. Before the Treasurer jumps up and down, I draw his attention to chart 5.2 on page 103 of his own *Budget Overview*. This chart shows that the forecast for Queensland is either big tax rises or expenditure cuts if the Budget is to remain in the black in 1996-97. This chart, and the associated figures, show that Queensland's 12-year record of Budget surpluses will come to an end next year unless

the big-spending, wasteful ways of this Government are reversed. The only alternative to Queensland dropping into the red will be an increase in taxes or a cut in expenditure to stop the shrinking Budget surplus which has decreased from \$1.6 billion in 1993-94 to a forecast \$448m in 1995-96. So much for the short-lived surplus!

I have dealt so far with two of the three major failures of this Budget—the continued increase in secret taxes, taxes by stealth, and the move by the Treasurer to hide Queensland's true debt position by moving the QTC off Budget. Now I wish to deal with the third and probably the most important failure of this Budget—its failure to actually provide the services it promises. Services and infrastructure are the two areas where Queenslanders have again missed out. In this Budget the State Labor Government announced capital works—or infrastructure—spending for 1995-96 of \$3.6 billion, which is about 5 per cent of gross State product. Over the 20 years before Labor came to power in 1989, State Government spending on capital works consistently averaged 7 per cent of gross State product and never fell below 6 per cent.

Yet, for the first five years of the State Labor Government, capital works spending has averaged 5 per cent, and will do so again in 1995-96. Labor is falling behind in providing basic infrastructure in Queensland, and that is evident in every suburb, town and city across the State. Labor is just not keeping up with the growth. The State Government would have to put \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion into capital works just to catch up. And as for the Treasurer's great initiative from last year's state Budget, QIFF, it has proved to be a total dud—D-U-D. Not one QIFF dollar was spent from the much-heralded Queensland Infrastructure Financing Fund in 1994-95, and the only project listed for 1995-96 is \$105m for the road nobody wants—the south east tollway. In infrastructure provision, the State Labor Government has failed, and in services the Government has proved to be a disaster.

To illustrate this point, I will highlight the problems within my own electorate of Caloundra. Caloundra, like so many other areas in Queensland, is growing fast and the need for basic infrastructure planning is essential to the future living standards of all Caloundra residents. I, like all Queenslanders, have listened with interest to the State Government crowing about the buckets of money it is throwing around to try to solve the growing crisis in health, law and order, education and transport. I, like all people in

the Caloundra electorate, waited to see just what the Government would do to solve the myriad problems in these issues. Unfortunately, like those at the Princess Alexandra Hospital and the Beenleigh Police Station and so many others across the State, the people of Caloundra have been left out in the cold by this latest bucket of money.

But, before I point out where the State Government has gone wrong in Caloundra and in the other electorates on the Sunshine Coast, let me also point out where they have got it right. I have campaigned for the last five years to ensure that the Sunshine Coast University College received vital State Government funding to ensure that it could properly cater for students at its opening next year. My latest call, two weeks before the State Budget was brought down, for more than \$7m in funding for a library and basic facilities like computers, a PABX and furniture, was made to ensure that the university was not starved of vital funds. I am happy that the State Government listened to my calls and allocated that \$7m towards the university, and I wholeheartedly support that funding allocation. However, that was about the only good news for Caloundra in this Budget. On the education front, the much-needed primary school at Aroona has again missed out on funding. While primary schools at Caloundra and Currimundi are bursting at the seams and land stands vacant at Aroona, the State Government has again refused to provide funding for an Aroona Primary School. Education is a basic need, and should be a basic provision of State Government.

Another basic need is transport. This State Government promised two years ago to upgrade the entire Caloundra Road to four lanes. Last year, the State Government broke that promise and instead the Caloundra Road is still a dangerous, half-baked section of highway which is totally inadequate to provide the main access to the city. This Budget failed to provide any further funding for Caloundra Road. Public transport in Caloundra is a disaster, as indeed it is in the entire Sunshine Coast, and this has also failed to be addressed in this week's Budget. So the Budget has failed in education and in transport not only for my electorate but for the whole Sunshine Coast region.

The Caloundra Hospital is failing to provide many basic services for the people of the city and the outlying towns because of lack of funds. I have fought for funding for essential specialist services and sessions for the day surgery unit, and increases in staff, resources and equipment for this unit, but

there was nothing in this Budget. It makes commonsense to make the most of satellite hospitals and, indeed, a hospital must be put at Noosa so that satellite hospitals can take some of the pressure off the main base hospital at Nambour, because this hospital is currently at 100 per cent bed capacity and cannot cope.

The Caloundra Hospital also needs a specialist physician—a paediatrician—and there is now a two-and-a-half year waiting list for non-emergency dental services and a big problem with optometry and optical services. None of these things has been fixed in this Budget. Until these basic items are provided, the Caloundra Hospital will still be little more than a branch centre for Nambour, and Caloundra residents will still be forced to go to Nambour for many basic medical services. And, of course, many of these Caloundra residents will be forced to use the totally inadequate public transport system that I have mentioned to try to get to and from the Nambour Hospital. This creates problems particularly for the elderly and young families in the Caloundra electorate—those who need hospital services more than any others.

In law and order, of course, my electorate is no different from any other. We have the same crisis in that electorate as indeed the Premier seems to have in his own. The so-called 24-hour police stations at Caloundra and Kawana are usually closed by 4.30 in the afternoon. On weekends, the area is served—if it is lucky—by two police on Saturdays and one on Sundays. Caloundra businesses have been forced to employ private security guards to do patrols to protect shopping arcades in the centre of the city from vandals and thieves. There is nothing in this Budget to rectify these problems. So in the basic areas of education, transport, health and police, this Budget has failed my electorate of Caloundra, as it has failed every electorate in this State. And the worst part of all of this is that Caloundra is just one example of this neglect by the Government in providing the basics. It cannot provide the basics. It cannot handle our dollars. Labor cannot handle money. That has been shown federally and in every State, and now we see it happening here.

Right across this State suburbs, towns and cities have been left to fend for themselves because of this Government's basic mismanagement. It does not matter how much money the Premier, the Treasurer, the Health Minister, the Police Minister, the Transport Minister or any other Minister throws at the problem, it means nothing if they

cannot manage the money. The basic flaw in this Budget—and it is a great con—as in the previous five Budgets brought down by this Labor Government, is that the money is wasted, poured down the bureaucratic drain, sucked up by fat cat bureaucracies and middle management instead of providing services at the coal face.

The coalition has taken a responsible attitude to this Budget. I have previously praised the Government for halving the stamp duty on share transactions, and I do so again today. That is a good initiative for this State. It is an initiative which was first tried under the previous State National Party Government and which was supported by me in the past, but it does little for the average Queensland family. It does little for the families who are suffering under the booming tax regime of this Government. It does little for the victims of crime. It does little for those who are suffering a totally inadequate public transport system and it does little for those who are waiting years for basic surgery in Queensland hospitals. This Budget has failed because it has failed to provide what State Governments are elected to provide: basic nuts and bolts services for Queensland families and for Queensland small businesses.

Mr BARTON (Waterford) (12.41 p.m.): I rise to support the Appropriation Bills. In effect, I rise to support this Budget. I think Joan Sheldon was partially right about one point, that is, she recognised that this is a Labor Budget. It is not just a Labor Budget; it is a great Labor Budget. It is certainly one that is bringing home benefits to the community, which is gaining the benefits of the great work that has been done over the past five and a half years by the Treasurer and his team and by the Goss Labor Government in maintaining this State's strong financial position, regardless of the national recession that we had and regardless of the drought that we had and from which we are not yet totally free. Despite those issues, this Government and this Treasurer have been able to maintain this State's low-tax position and its strong financial position, achieve a position of negative net debt and finally—and I must congratulate the Treasurer and his team for this—bring home the benefits to the community in the areas of social welfare, roads, police and law and order.

It needs to be understood, and it certainly has not been understood by the Leader of the Opposition or the shadow Treasurer that, if the State is in a position in which it does not have the billions of dollars debt faced by the Liberal States, then the money that would have been

used to pay interest can be spent on the community.

Allow me to examine some of those specific criticisms that have been raised by both the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer. They seem to fail to understand that, in making the changes in relation to the QTC and the debt relationships of this State, the Government is acting in a very strong commercial way. I am absolutely amazed that the Leader of the National Party and the Leader of the Liberal Party stood in this Parliament and criticised the Government for operating in that commercial manner. At times in the past, when the labour movement was saying that the Government should not operate in that way, it seemed to me that it was the Liberals and the Nationals who were pushing for a strong commercial position to be adopted. I am absolutely amazed that they can criticise that the operations of the QEC and Queensland Rail, to use two examples that were mentioned earlier, can be shifted off Budget.

For a start, let us consider the people who are associated with the QTC. The chief executive, Stephen Rochester, leads a strong management team. The Chair of the QTC, Sir Leo Hilscher, is the same Sir Leo Hilscher who was the Under Treasurer for decades when members opposite were in Government. He leads a strong board. If honourable members opposite are criticising the activities of the QTC, inherently they are criticising the people who are associated with the QTC and the QEC, the electricity boards and the Queensland Rail board. It must be recognised that in every case they are very strong commercial boards. They are answerable to nominated Ministers and, in an overall way, they are scrutinised by Treasury and are required to have a commercial agreement on an annual basis about their performance—an annual performance agreement—which is scrutinised as part of the accountability process for all of those commercial bodies that have come out of the Government's corporatisation program.

It seems to me that the Opposition has misunderstood the whole question of the \$1 billion of debt being shifted from the Federal Government. It was answered by the Treasurer in question time two days ago, but it was still raised again today in their speeches during this debate on the Budget, which shows that they fail to understand the fact that it is a commercial decision to allow the QTC to borrow a bigger volume of money which, along with their already brilliant AAA rating, allows them to obtain even lower rates of interest for

QTC borrowings. As a result, the State of Queensland receives the benefit of those lower interest rates when it needs borrowings for the motorway, hospitals, power stations and rail expansion. Only last week, along with the previous Government speaker, Mr Peter Beattie, the member for Brisbane Central, and others, I looked at a number of the rail projects that are proceeding throughout Queensland. Those major capital structures can be put into place at lower cost because this Government has taken steps to increase borrowings through the QTC. Although they were not mentioned today, other major State bodies that operate in a similar vein are the Queensland Investment Corporation and the strong Government superannuation boards.

I am quite amazed that the shadow Treasurer made a venomous attack on Mr Beattie. Before I proceed onto more important matters, I say in a light-hearted way that when Mr Beattie's wedding takes place, I will be pleased to be there. The shadow Treasurer seemed to spend more time talking about electorate issues than she did about State Treasury issues. It is absolutely amazing to me that a shadow Treasurer would come into this place and spend such an amount of time on electorate issues as if she were a backbencher who is struggling to hold her seat. Perhaps she is feeling uncomfortable about the Labor candidate who is running against her, Don Wilson, and I suggest that she should be. She also spoke about the fact that Logan and Beenleigh police officers are letterboxing. They have employed contractors to do that job at high cost to their fellow union members, but I will talk in depth about that later if I have the time.

I make a point about what the shadow Treasurer calls "rat taxes"—increases in fees, charges and fines. She is looking at the gross figures that are received from those taxes and equating them to increases in the taxes themselves. She fails to understand that there have not been huge percentage increases in those taxes. The massive volume of increased economic activity and population growth that Queensland has achieved in this past five and a half years of Labor Government have resulted in a greater volume of revenue, which can be expended on behalf of the community.

She also referred to ordinary weekly earnings being increased by only 19.5 per cent. I used to be involved with the union movement in this State. The unions have shown restraint during this time of low inflation, because the union leadership know that, if we can keep wage rates down in this State, that restraint will equate to jobs. We have seen the

strongest job growth in Australia during the period of the Goss Government. Certainly, it would be great if we could have massively increased wages as well as strong jobs growth, and I am sure that now the economy in Queensland in particular is in a much stronger position and will be in a much stronger position as a result of this Budget, we will see greater increases in wages and salaries as more and more enterprise bargains are negotiated. Importantly, those enterprise bargains will be gaining the productivity increases to pay for those increased wages. That is a great flood that is flowing through the system right now.

Comment needs to be made about capital works and I will speak briefly about such works in my electorate. I do not believe the figures cited by the shadow Treasurer. If they are anything like the figures cited by the Leader of the Opposition, which the member for Brisbane Central put the lie to, I am sure that she is either glossing over or missing completely some of the capital works that are occurring in this State. Capital works are taking place where the population growth is occurring—out where it is needed. The capital works projects in my electorate are a good example. They include the widening of the freeway and the construction of new interchanges. Stage IIIA of the Logan Hospital is in the process of completion. Work has commenced on the Waterford bridge—a \$16m project. At the Logan TAFE, \$10m is being spent on buildings and services. That is to cite just four of the many projects in my electorate. I know that all of the electorates in the growth corridor near my electorate and similar electorates on the north coast are receiving capital works funding of a similar nature. So this Government is putting its money where its mouth is. It is providing services where the people live and where the population is growing.

It amazes me that the Opposition criticises the cuts in stamp duty on share transactions, because that means more income coming into Queensland. It also means more jobs for Queenslanders as a result of not only the ASX shifting some of its operations to Brisbane but also stockbroking firms having a greater volume of turnover and, therefore, employing more people. I was very proud to lead a delegation of members to Melbourne to consider a whole range of issues. We had a meeting with Laurie Cox, who was then the Chairman of the Australian Stock Exchange, and many of his senior people who promoted this concept very strongly and told us of its benefits. I know that, some months after, the member for

Mundingburra and other members returned to Melbourne to explore that option. Of course, it has been picked up by the Treasurer, which I applaud, because it will be of great benefit to Queensland as an emerging financial State and to Brisbane as an emerging financial capital of Australia.

The Treasurer has stressed that this cut in stamp duty is not a raid on New South Wales and Victoria. Those States seem to think that it is, but the emphasis is on winning business—growing financial transactions—from South East Asia's growing financial markets. My experience with financial markets tells me that it is also about getting back from New South Wales and Victoria some of our bacon, because for decades they have had a lot of our business in their stock exchanges. We have been missing out on that business because, as Queensland has expanded and people have wanted to engage in larger and larger transactions, it has not always been possible to do that through local stockbrokers. Before I entered Parliament, I attended many meetings with local stockbrokers about this issue. It is now a question of not only Queensland picking up some new business but also the Queensland branch of the ASX picking up Queensland business that should have been conducted in Queensland all along. That business will now move rapidly to Queensland as will a lot of business from South East Asia that is currently being conducted elsewhere. Previously, stockbroking firms traded in stock markets offshore because the fees for stamp duty in Australia were too high. That matter has been addressed by this Government, and it needs to be applauded. I am absolutely amazed that the people who sit opposite, who claim to be the champions of business, are critical of this very strong move.

I turn now to jobs. The Opposition Leader made the comment that job numbers in Queensland are now getting back to the levels that they were at in 1989. What a falsehood! Quite frankly, since the beginning of 1990, Queensland has generated 200,000 more jobs. That means that there are now 200,000 more people working in Queensland than there were when the Goss Government was elected. Importantly, if we adopt a national perspective, that figure represents half of the total jobs growth that has been generated in Australia. In the past 12 months up until last month, the latest ABS figures indicate that 110,000 jobs have been generated in Queensland. That figure represents a growth in jobs of 2,000 a week. That is massive growth! I will repeat the Treasurer's figures—he quoted them on Tuesday but, obviously, the

Opposition did not listen to him—70 per cent of those jobs are full-time jobs. It is not a question of the jobs simply being part-time or casual employment; over two-thirds of the massive number of new jobs that have been created have been full-time jobs. That growth needs to be recognised because, again to borrow the Treasurer's words during question time two days ago, the best social welfare mechanism that we can put in place is gaining jobs growth in this State not only for those people who are unemployed but also for the flood of people who are coming to Queensland from southern States because of our lifestyle and our good Government. Our performance allows them to have jobs and a good income.

Opposition members have not referred to payroll tax. I wonder why. Since I have been a member of this Parliament, the Opposition has said that payroll tax needs to be cut because payroll tax cuts equate with more jobs. I do not see their colleagues in southern States putting into place the mechanisms that have been in place in this State over the past three years, that is, lifting the payroll tax threshold for companies' wages from \$500,000 to \$750,000. This morning, I did not hear Opposition members applauding the fact that the tax threshold will be lifted from \$700,000 to \$750,000 by 1 July next year—during the period of this Budget. If Opposition members were honest, they would have applauded those mechanisms because Queensland is now the low payroll tax State as well as the low-tax State. That initiative is helping to achieve jobs growth in Queensland and it will help to ensure even more jobs growth. It gives the lie to the many people associated with the Liberal Party who run around saying, "Payroll tax is killing small business." I say that if a company has a payroll of \$750,000, it is not small; yet people associated with the Liberal Party continue to create the impression that the small mum and dad business that employs a couple of people is being killed off by payroll tax. That is just another example of the nonsense that is put forward in debates in this place and, dangerously, in the community when the Liberals are campaigning on a totally false premise.

Another initiative that I want to applaud particularly relates to social welfare. I refer to the increase in spending for the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs of 15.9 per cent. That will increase that department's budget to more than \$500m. I can assure members that some areas in the electorate that I represent have massive social problems that, to date, our economic position

has not allowed us to address fully. There are people in low income areas, or who are unemployed, who get into dangerous and precarious financial and personal predicaments. The increase in the budget for the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs is sorely needed. Certainly, I know that I will be doing my best to make sure that a couple of community organisations that are working very hard in my area receive their share of that increased funding.

The increase in funding for social welfare is part of this Budget being a true Labor Budget. We are holding our hand out to the people who need that support and, in some cases, who need it desperately. This is a massive increase in spending for social welfare. For those people who criticise Government spending in this regard, I suggest that they go to areas such as the one that I represent and talk to some of those community organisations, because our strong financial responsibility is now allowing the stronger to help the weaker in a much more effective way.

I would also like to address the issue of police and law and order funding. At the moment, that is a matter that is dear to my heart. Certainly, a person of my background would not criticise the right of any union to protest against something that it believes to be wrong. Currently, I am one of those members who are subject to the police union's campaign. Yesterday much of my electorate was letterboxed with what can be described only as a litany of untruths. It is no wonder that, today, the media reported that the police union is split over the views contained in that letterbox drop. The union has conveniently ignored the Budget that was handed down on Tuesday. It has ignored the fact that the law and order budget is now over \$1 billion. It has ignored the 7.6 per cent increase in the Police Service budget to \$541m. It has conveniently ignored the fact that there will be an additional 500 operational police over the next three years as a result of that Budget. It has ignored the fact that this Budget has made an allocation of \$6.4m for annualised penalty rates—something that was worked through with the police union over a long period. When I was Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council of Queensland, I had at least one officer working with the police union to bring in that annualised penalty rate system and the changes to rosters, which will put more operational police into the field, particularly on Thursday nights, Friday nights, Saturday nights and over the weekends, which is when

most of the problems occur, and which is when we need more police rostered for duty. However, the union has conveniently ignored the \$130m for capital works—in other words, for new police stations throughout the State. The union has ignored the fact that 330 new cells will be constructed. It has also ignored the fact that construction of the new Woodford gaol is about to commence. It has ignored the fact that \$16.4m has been allocated in the Budget for juvenile detention centres.

I will not go through the grave disparities between the real police figures for the Logan/Beenleigh areas in comparison with the figures that were quoted in that leaflet. Suffice to say, the figures I have were provided in this House by the Minister for Police. I am afraid I will believe the Minister before I believe Sergeant Gary Wilkinson, because his figures are so far off beam as to be totally incapable of being believed. I also stress that I have problems with the Opposition's support of VETO's alternative to the south coast motorway, because that would have a dramatic effect on my electorate.

In closing, I support this Budget because it is a good Budget. I prefer to debate issues based on facts. If we have a genuine disagreement, we will argue the matter.

Time expired.

Dr WATSON (Moggill) (2.30 p.m.): It is a pleasure to take part in the debate on the 1995 Budget and the associated Appropriation Bills. In the Government's recently released Leading State document, From Strength to Strength, I recall that the Premier acknowledged the vital role of public investment in infrastructure development. This statement was a further development of the 1992 Leading State document and the Queensland Infrastructure Financing Fund—QIFF—announced in the 1994 Budget and documented more fully earlier this year. In the latter document, the Treasurer stated that QIFF had been established to assist in the timely provision of infrastructure in Queensland. Exactly how QIFF would accomplish this and to whom it will be accountable was unclear, even though some 54 pages were devoted to explaining how QIFF would work.

The 1995 Budget concentrates on the expansion of social infrastructure. From Strength to Strength focuses on economic infrastructure. So these two documents, together with QIFF, provide the Government's framework for the provision of infrastructure in Queensland. In this speech, I intend to examine this supposed framework. To do so, I

will refer to the *From Strength to Strength* document, the QIFF documents, the 1995 Budget and its Labor predecessors, and the effect of the Government's past failure to develop appropriate infrastructure.

Over the past five years, the Government has failed to provide an appropriate level of infrastructure, and its proposed solution will not produce the required infrastructure in the future. We are all aware that Governments are elected to develop social and public economic infrastructure. The Goss Government has attempted to demonstrate an awareness of that responsibility through its economic development policy *From Strength to Strength*. As usual, this Goss Government statement presents many promising projections, but it turns out to be just another example of rhetoric with very little reality.

The document's title, *From Strength to Strength*, is perhaps the greatest irony of all. It is ironic when in the past five years in Queensland private and public investment has fallen. It is ironic when we consider that the capital works budget has not increased substantially in nominal terms and that in real per capita terms State Government spending was lower in 1994-95 than it was seven years ago. So it has failed to keep pace with inflation and population growth. It is most ironic that the Goss Government claims that it is meeting the challenge in the provision of public infrastructure, yet all around us we see examples to the contrary, whether it be in our schools, hospitals or the Police Service. The Goss Government's failure to meet this challenge is impossible to miss.

From Strength to Strength is not credible. The Treasurer claims that spending on public infrastructure in Queensland has outpaced that in the rest of Australia. However, the reality is quite different. Capital spending by the Queensland Government is only about 20 per cent higher than the Australian average at a time when projected population growth for Queensland is twice that of any other State. Even more embarrassing—and the Treasurer might like to note this—as detailed in the prestigious Access Economics publication *Investment Monitor*, to which the Treasurer and his Ministers refer from time to time, is that Queensland private and public investment that is under construction, committed, under consideration or possible was worth \$36,122m in 1989-90. However, by December 1994 it was worth only \$14,022m. That means that investment is less than half of what it was six years ago. Less than half! That is not leading State material, is it?

Whether one looks at the raw capital works numbers, whether one adjusts them for inflation and population changes or whether one looks at private and public investment, one sees that Queensland is failing to perform at an adequate level. So-called record public capital works expenditure simply does not stand up to close analysis in terms of what is really needed and does not compare with that of past non-Labor Governments. In examining the Government's poor performance in infrastructure provision, we need look no further than its economic development policy, *From Strength to Strength*. I would like to go through some of the arrangements outlined in that document, because it identifies some interesting patterns—patterns that the Government has followed which have had, and continue to have, major ramifications for investment in Queensland.

As detailed in the Budget papers and the Leading State document, the Gladstone Power Station has been sold to the private sector. The Government also intends to sell the State gas pipeline in 1995. However, the Treasurer should be aware that shifting responsibility for infrastructure funding from the public to the private sector does not remove the State's investment funding problem, neither does the sale of public assets to the private sector. The question that always needs to be faced is the amount of funds used and the expected return from their use. Nor is the issue resolved by transferring the funding problem to GOCs, as Marc Robinson identified in yesterday's *Courier-Mail*.

But what I find of particular interest is that the sale and the sale price of the Gladstone Power Station were crucially dependent on an agreement that the Government would buy back electricity from the power station in the future. However, no details of this agreement were made public. No details of these potential, hidden public subsidies to private sector involvement were released by the Government. Yet the Treasurer was quick to criticise the Queensland Industrial Development Corporation under the former National Party Government because it allegedly provided cross-subsidies to farmers. Is not exactly the same type of cross-subsidy principle involved in the Gladstone Power Station agreement? However, we have no indication of how these subsidies are to be evaluated.

Mr De Lacy: Nothing like it.

Dr WATSON: To justify saying that, all the Government has to do is table the agreements. However, the Government does

not do that, so the honourable member cannot expect his statement to be believed.

Simply developing and then selling off public assets offers no guarantee that this process is an optimal arrangement for infrastructure financing. What seems to be driving this process are the Premier's and the Treasurer's fetishes with fiscal deficits and debt reduction. One can understand the Premier's and the Treasurer's concern. After all, their Labor cousins—Cain, Kirner, Bannon, Burke and now Keating—have left a legacy of debt which will take decades to resolve, although, typically, the Liberals now in these States seem to be making a fair go of it already. However, it was not only the debt which was the problem with these former Labor States. The misuse of the funds raised was equally to blame. And the misuse of funds can occur regardless of whether debt is an issue.

The Treasurer was quick to champion zero net debt by the end of 1993. But at what cost? This has been achieved on the basis of questionable asset sales, private sector subsidies and hidden subsidies in the form of inflated prices to consumers, such as in electricity supply. The Treasurer is resorting to asset sales and private infrastructure provision to keep public debt artificially low. However, not all borrowing is irresponsible, particularly if it is for infrastructure that will benefit several generations into the future. What legacy will this Government leave behind? No net debt for the future, but no stable or well-planned infrastructure that will guarantee jobs, growth or other significant social returns, either! Zero net debt has been achieved, but at the expense of infrastructure provision.

Government members interjected.

Dr WATSON: Honourable members opposite should listen to this.

The Premier and the Treasurer have simply failed to reach an appropriate trade-off between infrastructure development and debt elimination. They have failed to find the fundamental balance. And in doing this they have failed to show any vision for the future of this State. So what is the solution? The Treasurer thinks that the answer is the Queensland Infrastructure Financing Fund. But who would really know? The document itself gives us no indication of what the fund will do, nor does it outline how such a fund would be made accountable to the public. It does not even state the criteria upon which these decisions will be based. All that we can be sure of is that the funding for QIFF will come partly from the further sale of Government assets, such as the nickel

resources in north Queensland. So QIFF is actually just a new name for an old game.

How do we know that the proposed funding arrangement is optimal? We have no indication of how the fund intends to evaluate the potential social returns from Government intervention in infrastructure development. In fact, it would be safe to say that, after reading the QIFF policy statement, we have no indication of anything much at all. The document is essentially a public relations exercise. It says nothing of substance. It manages to skim over the real issues and concerns that surround such a fund, so that at the end of the day we are no wiser about how QIFF will alleviate the State's investment funding problem. But let us be realistic: it was never designed to do so.

We do know that, aside from asset sales, the second source of funding will be provided by the Queensland Treasury Corporation, although we do not know on what conditions or terms this would be achieved. One of the Treasurer's first guarantees in the QIFF policy statement is that—

"The Fund will expand the State's involvement in infrastructure provision, without compromising existing financial management principles."

The Treasurer intends to borrow only for assets that can generate an income stream sufficient to meet debt servicing costs. However, other than vague assumptions, there is no evidence presented to suggest how the Treasurer can guarantee that this will result in an optimal capital fundraising structure. What analysis has been undertaken to assure us that this is the best way of raising funds? Furthermore, how will the Treasurer ensure that infrastructure offering the greatest potential social return in the long run will be pursued? No specific criteria have been announced by the Government.

The Treasurer has failed to address the accountability of QIFF. How do we know that it will not be the Government's own unannounced criteria that determines which infrastructure receives funding? How do we know that the funding allocation will not be based on short-term deals which may not be in the best long-term interests of Queenslanders? What guarantees are there that the funding will not automatically go to buy off pressure groups or to the Government's union mates or allied industry groups? We do not have any guarantee—certainly not from the policy statement, which evades these real issues. This is just another example of the Government's preference to

use smoke and mirrors rather than making the hard decisions that need to be made.

The QIFF is another instance in which political incentives contrast sharply to real public infrastructure requirements. In fact, QIFF may serve to prevent the public sector from raising the resources for adequate provision of infrastructure for employment and economic growth. The QIFF may raise the State's costs of financing infrastructure through inefficient capital allocation or hidden public subsidies to private sector involvement—similar to what was alleged to have occurred with the Gladstone Power Station agreement. This is not a solution; it is merely another manipulation that does nothing to serve long-term infrastructure development.

So why has the Government failed to plan for adequate infrastructure provision at a time when Queensland's population is increasing at twice the rate of that in any other State? Poor infrastructure through reduced capital spending, coupled with large projected population growth, cannot add up to a Leading State—no matter from which angle one looks at it or how many smoke-and-mirror tricks the Government uses. A year after it was first proposed, the QIFF policy statement has not addressed the infrastructure funding problems at hand. It is full of the same false projections and promises that litter the original leading State economic development statement. The Treasurer is delaying the inevitable by failing to make the hard decisions.

The QIFF policy statement is a deliberate evasion of answering the real concerns. Everything that does not appear in the document is not there for a very good reason. It is not there because the Treasurer is aware that the QIFF does not confront the issues that are impacting on the State's investment problems. He is aware that the solution he poses is all rhetoric and that it cannot guarantee an optimal, or even a reasonable, funding of infrastructure in Queensland. The real reason why infrastructure has been inadequate in Queensland has nothing to do with the absence of the QIFF or a similar structure. The fact is that the Goss Labor Government has a different set of priorities. The Government is more interested in increasing the bureaucracy rather than confronting the tough infrastructure investment decisions that need to be made. That is true whether it be in health, in education or in the police force.

Crime is out of control because police are desk bound rather than actively fighting crime

where they are needed. Ask any police officer and they will say that there are not enough of them out on the streets. This same problem can be seen across-the-board. Whether it be in health, education, the police force or infrastructure development, we have a concentration on politically correct processes rather than delivering the services expected by ordinary Queenslanders.

The health industry is just another typical example of the Government's failure to confront the real issues at hand. The Premier claims that Labor inherited a run-down health system, but the real truth lies elsewhere. Labor did not inherit a run-down health system; it ran it down single-handedly. The current state of the health system is a direct result of this Government's slashing of health capital works spending. In 1989-90, health capital works spending was \$64m. At its first Budget opportunity—in 1990-91—Labor slashed that spending to \$38m. It kept that spending relatively low for succeeding years. Although in 1992-93 Labor finally spent as much as the 1989-90 Health budget had allocated, this was only in nominal terms. By 1992-93, Queensland was well behind in terms of inflation effects and population growth. We are now reaping the results of those irresponsible and short-sighted decisions.

There is no question about this Government's responsibility for the state of the health system in Queensland. There are a litany of examples of headline horror stories that are an everyday occurrence. We read that our hospitals are desperately underresourced; that they have growing waiting lists and not enough staff at the grassroots level. We hear that at the Princess Alexandra Hospital's intensive care unit a patient had to be ventilated for 12 hours because there was not a bed available in intensive care. At Easter, the Mater closed its accident and emergency ward due to funding constraints. Staff at the Mater were advised to ask some pregnant mothers to go elsewhere to avoid budget overruns.

It is obvious that the State's health system is crumbling—we all see it; we all hear it. But the Premier continues to pretend that his record financial support for the Department of Health is just what the doctor ordered. The Government is belatedly trying to make up for its previous short-sighted slashing of health capital works spending, but it is doing so at the expense of patient care. We have seen the Government's panic moves with recent record injections of cash into the health system, but this is a ploy to disguise its real blunder in slashing the health capital works budget in the

early 1990s. One cannot put a bandaid on the health system and hope that that will cure the devastating blow that it was delivered under Labor five years ago.

The Government cannot deny that its recently discovered concern over electricity supply originates from its own earlier decisions. In 1984-85, QESI capital works was \$744m. Nearly a decade later—in 1994—it was only \$571m. Who is at fault here? Who failed to make the decision on investment in new generating stations? Who procrastinated without thought for the long-term impact? It was Labor and the Goss Government that failed to plan—a Government that is now having to throw money at revamping technologically deficient power stations in order to ensure future supply. These may be dressed up as new capital works, even with zero net debt, but do these investments really give Queenslanders the greatest returns on their investment dollars? No analysis has ever been provided. Yet it is the Leader of the Labor Government, the Premier, who is very fond of making unsubstantiated claims about moving from strength to strength or taking credit for eliminating debt while failing to acknowledge that this has been at the expense of infrastructure development.

The Goss Government is expert at producing documents that skim over the real issues and proclaim that the Government is meeting the challenge in the provision of infrastructure. But ask any health-care worker whether the Goss Government is meeting the challenge in the provision of infrastructure. Ask the transport industry whether the Goss Government is meeting the challenge in the provision of road infrastructure. Ask business whether the Goss Government is meeting the challenge in the provision of electricity at internationally competitive rates. A consideration of the Queensland State Budget capital outlays reveals that the Goss Government is failing to meet the challenge, failing to think of the future and failing to make the hard decisions that need to be made.

Central to this debate is that we cannot have a leading State with a Government that is too scared to make the hard decisions. The QIFF is a soft option with dubious advantages. Infrastructure provision and its funding is central to maintaining living standards and laying the foundation for future economic growth and development; but this Government has already shown its inability to plan for the future. To appreciate the full impact of the inappropriate and short-sighted funding decisions, one need only look at the

Government's management of the health and electricity industries, to name only two.

The indisputable evidence before all Queenslanders suggests that the Treasurer's supposed application of prudential financial management principles forsakes any real commitment to infrastructure provision. The capital works Budget papers reveal that this Government fails to spend even what it forecasts. Not only has the Government failed year after year to provide the required level of infrastructure; it also fails to complete even what it considers to be essential in any year's Budget. We can only judge the Premier, the Treasurer and the Government by what we see around us. All around we see their failure to exercise foresight; we see their failure to implement sound financial programs, with the correct trade-off between infrastructure development and debt elimination.

The Government cannot genuinely believe, on the basis of its current performance, that it is really moving from strength to strength. In fact, the only safe assumption that can be made on the basis of the Government's current performance and on a reading of the documents is that Queensland will never be a leading State under a Goss Labor Government.

Mr NUNN (Hervey Bay) (2.50 p.m.): It is hard to come back to reality after what I have heard so far from the Opposition. Today, it has been a little bit like a comic. After the previous member's contribution, A. A. Milne would have been really proud of him. The member for Moggill had Hee-haw the donkey off pat, morosely picking his way through the woods, looking for something to be extremely miserable about. I think he found it.

Dr Watson: Remember the old saying: sarcasm is the way of the uneducated, and you don't even meet that criteria.

Mr NUNN: Sans whales' teeth. He followed the member for Caloundra, who gave a reasonable imitation of Mrs Potts, fleshing out her economic philosophy of, "The taxpayer should not pay; the Government should." However, I give the palm to Con the Fruiterer Borbidge, the Leader of the Opposition. He gave his sour grapes speech, and he gave his promise to take a case of the same sour grapes and give it to the electorate at large.

If members of the Opposition are honestly criticising this sixth Budget handed down by the Goss Government—and I do not think they are being honest; I think they are practising the politics of fear and despair—and if they persist in their criticism, then they criticise the results of nearly six years of sound

economic management, six years of savings and six years of disciplined application to making Queensland the leading State with an economy that is the envy of most. To rid Queensland of more than \$4 billion worth of inherited net debt is no mean feat, but to do it while having to rebuild an economy, rebuild Queensland Health, education and our police force from top to bottom, while all the time having to deal with the effect on our economy of years of crippling drought, is a meritorious performance by any standards.

So what we inherited from the Nationals was a facade of hollow logs said to hold the wealth of Queensland, but in reality they hid the dry rot. They hid decaying schools and hospitals and underpaid and underresourced police, nurses and teachers. In 1989, Queensland was an economic disaster waiting to happen. Sure, we had some money, but we had a net debt of over \$4 billion. We had no infrastructure. Our best workers had gone to the southern States to earn a decent living, and all of this presided over by a Government in the last stages of decomposition. Is it any wonder that it has taken almost six years to bring Queensland to the stage where we bring to the State a Budget that Queensland can afford—a people's Budget, a Budget which will deliver services to Queenslanders at a price which is within their capacity to pay?

Let us have a quick look at the Budget. With total outlays of \$11.65 billion, it gives to the people of Queensland an expanded social infrastructure program, with an extra \$800m to be spent over three years, and a 10 per cent increase in recurrent spending for important social programs such as health and welfare, education, law and order and the environment.

Let us examine the Health budget. Health is the biggest ticket item in the 1995-96 Budget. Included in the 11 per cent increase in health spending—which will be a massive \$2.7 billion—is a three-year, \$64m hospital waiting list program. We will spend \$42.1m on a package of incentives to attract and retain medical specialists and nurses, and \$75m for capital enhancement provides \$15.8m to start the 130-bed, first stage of the new Hervey Bay Hospital. I repeat that this is the first stage of a properly planned hospital designed to provide for the health-care needs of the Hervey Bay people until the year 2001, when its population is predicted to reach in excess of 60,000.

For the first time, Hervey Bay will have a hospital properly staffed and equipped to base hospital standard. For the first time, it will have

a maternity unit where Hervey Bay mothers can give birth. No longer will they have to go to Maryborough to have their babies—a system favoured by the Opposition Health spokesman and the National Party candidate. In fact, Mr Horan has stated publicly that this is the hospital that Hervey Bay does not need—a statement that has deeply disturbed the people of Hervey Bay who need the three operating theatres, the modern medical imaging department, the renal unit, the pathology unit, the modern surgical ward, the children's ward and all the things that go to make up this modern hospital that is a benchmark for Queensland.

The earthworks for this hospital have been started and shortly the contract will be let for the actual building. The Hervey Bay Hospital has been properly planned and is capable of being extended to 300 beds. We have planned for the future; this hospital will meet the needs of the people of Hervey Bay well into the twenty-first century.

Mr De Lacy: Why do you think the Opposition is so much opposed to Hervey Bay?

Mr NUNN: Because they hate Hervey Bay. This hospital will not detract in any way from the functions of the existing hospital in Maryborough; rather it will take pressure off that hospital and help to provide a better service to the Hervey Bay/Maryborough health service.

This Government will spend \$2.65 billion on education, and as with funding to the Health Department, the money will go directly into services, not into red tape and bureaucracy. It will go to implement the recommendations of the curriculum review by way of the provision of \$51.3m, including \$3.7m for non-Government schools. We will provide \$8.3m for the management of student behaviour; \$140m will go to providing additional capital works, including four new high schools; and \$30m will be spent over three years on the refurbishment of existing schools.

In southern States, conservative Governments have closed schools and they have sacked teachers. In Queensland, we are building schools and employing more teachers. Nowhere is this more evident than in Hervey Bay, where we have provided three new schools in five years. We have already spent \$22m on capital works in Hervey Bay, and in this year's Budget we are providing an extra \$1.624m in capital works to provide for the education of our children. That we will do this is a further indication that the Goss Labor

Government is sincere in its recognition that our children are our most valuable resource and that they deserve the best education that we can possibly give them.

I have said that we have built three new schools in the Hervey Bay electorate, but we have done the planning to keep pace with the growth which is occurring there. The Education Department has now purchased, or is in the process of purchasing, the land for another four schools, and it is my plan that we will continue to stay ahead of the game by buying more land as we build more schools to cater for our rapidly expanding area.

I move now to law and order. I think it is worth mentioning that the Queensland Opposition has been engaging in a deliberate campaign to instil fear into law-abiding Queenslanders. The two most active members in this campaign have been the member for Crows Nest and the member for Toowoomba South, who I think hold neighbouring seats. A recent report into the effects of fear of crime contained some interesting data. The report on a survey which was done in Toowoomba revealed that, while the level of fear of crime had increased in that city, the incidence of crime had not. It is no coincidence that this happened in a place where the National Party's two chief fearmongers have direct access to both the media and the public.

This state of affairs does neither of those National Party members any credit, but I guess the last thing they will do at night, just before they say their prayers—for they are God-fearing men—is to have a little chuckle at the thought of how many little old ladies they had unnecessarily frightened that day.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: They've got no regard for their sensitivity.

Mr NUNN: They have no sensitivity themselves. On the other hand, this Government, which is not interested in fear campaigns, is committed to a tough, practical, commonsense approach to law and order. For the first time, this Government will increase funds by well in excess of \$1 billion, with \$541m going directly to police.

Operational police numbers will be increased by 500 over the next three years, bringing to 2,000 the extra operational police working in Queensland. The \$6.3m for payments of extra allowances will usher in a new rostering system, and that has been welcomed by the residents of Hervey Bay. This new rostering system will increase operational policing in peak crime periods—at night and at weekends. In other words, when the crooks are at work, so, too, will be the police.

It is worth mentioning that a recent press statement by the inspector of police for the Maryborough district, which includes Hervey Bay, revealed that crime in that area has decreased by 30 per cent. This is due to two factors: firstly, the involvement of the public in community policing initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch, Crimestoppers, police community consultative committees, safety-houses, etc.; and, secondly, the professionalism of our local police officers and their dedication to duty. The clear-up rate in Hervey Bay is excellent. Senior Sergeant Bob Imhoff and Sergeant Dave Dansie of Howard and all their police officers are to be congratulated on the job that they are doing. Funding for capital works, police, corrective services and justice amounts to \$130m. Included in this is an amount of \$750,000 towards a \$1m expansion of the existing police station. This station was built in the time of the previous Government and was never going to be adequate. It was always too small. Under this Government, with an increase from 18 to 31 operational police, it has got to the stage where overcrowding impairs the efficiency of the service.

Whenever I have made representations for more police, I have been told that there is nowhere to put them. The Government has addressed the problem through the funding of the extensions, and the people of Hervey Bay can look forward to obtaining their fair share of the 500 extra police that are provided for in this Budget. The new station, coupled with the new courthouse, which is due for completion in September of this year, adds a new dimension to the areas of policing and justice in Hervey Bay.

I welcome the provision of an extra \$45m for roads. This means that in this Budget the total funding for roads is \$730m. My electorate will benefit by an allocation of \$2,483,000 for roadworks. Whilst this is a sizeable amount, I am not entirely happy, and it is my intention to secure adequate funding for roads in my electorate over the three years of my next term. As I said before, Queensland is in a very strong financial position and this Budget sets the scene for a continuation of strong economic growth that will enable us to meet the service and infrastructure needs of a rapidly growing population. It is a people's Budget, with an unashamed bias towards the delivery of services that also creates an environment that is good for business investment. It creates jobs. After all, the single most important outcome of all is the employment of our people.

In conclusion, I, like all thinking Queenslanders, congratulate the Treasurer on bringing down a Budget which I am able to give my wholehearted support. The long faces of the Opposition tell it all. I do not know why members opposite hate Queensland. It seems that they only brighten up if there is bad news in Queensland.

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Keppel) (3.03 p.m.) I would like to commence today by very strongly supporting the application by the Central Queensland University's Ron Coyle for funding for the proposed sports complex that it is endeavouring to build. This sports complex will need a grant of some \$2m from the State Government. From there, the community, the council and the Federal Government, hopefully, will be able to provide, together with the university, the other \$3m-plus to complete this important project, worth in the order of over \$5m. What this means is that it will become a complex for the joint use of the university and the people of Rockhampton. It will not just be a university sports complex, indoor and part outdoor, it will be a total community university project. The complex will provide many sporting facilities; it will provide for teaching, and it will cater for major competitions in basketball and other sports. Training will be available. There will be all types of sports therapy and, of course, the public will have the opportunity, health-wise, to benefit from the heated pool and other associated activities.

I very strongly support and congratulate the efforts of the coordinator and the manager of that section of the university. I congratulate Ron Coyle for his magnificent efforts here, and I make a call upon the Government for bipartisan support for this project. It will be very, very useful for the people of Rockhampton. It is needed. It is in the community interest and, politics aside, it would be a very useful project all round—

Mr Fenlon: What rot! You have never been bipartisan.

Mr LESTER: Do not start saying, "What rot", when I am talking about such a very important project. I am quite sure that when the people from the university read the comments of the honourable member who is interjecting in a most irresponsible way they will be very upset with him. That was a rather stupid interjection from that backbench member of the Labor Party. I do not interject when he refers to the need for facilities that are important in his electorate—facilities that are for the good of the people.

Mr Fenlon: You're a farce. You're not really standing up for those people. You'll walk

away from it as soon as you've got a bit of cheap publicity out of it. You're not serious about anything.

Mr LESTER: I am not going to waste further time in this debate responding to such irresponsible and stupid interjections that are only going to hurt people.

Mr Fenlon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! I remind the honourable member interjecting that, in the opinion of the Chair, he is attempting to prosecute a quarrel, which is contrary to Rule of Practice 11 of this House. I therefore ask the honourable member to cease interjecting.

Mr LESTER: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. Any comments I made about members opposite do not apply to you.

I want to mention the need for a rescue helicopter in the Rockhampton area. I make it very clear that the Opposition appreciates efforts made to provide in July a fixed wing aircraft for the flying doctor. A lot of people deserve a lot of credit for bringing this about. I congratulate John Bavea and his committee for negotiating with the Government in order to obtain a rescue helicopter for the area. One is available for Cairns and Townsville, and certainly they are available in Brisbane, but one is needed Rockhampton. I understand that some funding has been put aside, but the Rockhampton community will need in the order of \$1.5m so that it can go to industry—indeed, with a substantial grant of money behind it—and say, "Look, the Government has put in some money; will you put in the rest?" The ongoing operational cost of these very important amenities also has to be provided for. Unfortunately we have had a couple of coastal drownings in bad weather when the coastguard had difficulty getting out. As one coastguard officer said to me recently, "You cannot really see over the next swell. It is dangerous." A rescue helicopter with night vision capabilities would have perhaps been able to save some people. It would also be very useful in road accidents and in helping people who are in dire straits in the bush. A fixed wing aircraft will have a role, but a Kingair will be able to land only at the major regional airports of country Queensland. That is an important issue that the public of Rockhampton would like to see rectified. I am sure we are all together in trying to do that.

Recently, the Rockhampton Hockey Association, with which I, together with others, have been involved, has been given a substantial grant of over \$400,000 for the construction of a better playing surface. I

would like to make it very, very clear that this is appreciated because that hard playing surface has been needed in Rockhampton to attract further senior State championships, Australian championships and, indeed, other championships for both males and females. Over the years, we have had a wonderful degree of success with hockey. Kim Ireland, Debbie Callaghan and other very wonderful players have gone on to Australian and Olympic representation. Quite obviously, the Rockhampton Hockey Association works hard and it appreciates the support that it has been given in this Budget.

I am also grateful for the increase in TAFE student contact hours. I visit the TAFE college in Rockhampton quite regularly and I appreciate the work that has been done by the director, teachers and all the other people who are associated with this important level of learning. However, some homework needs to be done on our TAFE system—and I say that in all sincerity—because all does not seem to be well within it. Some of the teachers are frustrated and do not seem to know where they are going because changes seem to be made on a daily basis. I wonder whether we are getting down to the bottom line.

Unfortunately, very often TAFE courses are changed without notice, and courses that one would think are absolutely essential are cancelled. Much of my time is taken up in trying to sort out problems arising from TAFE courses which appear to have vanished. The director of the TAFE college works very hard, as do his senior people. However, from time to time, unnecessary impositions are placed upon them and I would certainly like to see this important area addressed.

The people of my electorate are grateful for the additional 350 student places funded by the Federal Government. However, on a per capita basis, this is still only 60 per cent of the Australian national average, so a lot more work has to be done in that field. We are grateful for what has been achieved so far. Nobody can take full credit for those achievements, because we have all played a role in trying to bring those issues before the various Governments.

Many people have been involved in obtaining a psychiatric centre for Rockhampton. Although we appreciate that centre, psychiatric and specialist therapy is needed for young people. I am continually seeing concerned mothers and fathers who have young children with extraordinary learning difficulties and worse-than-average behavioural problems which cause them to

strike others and become a terrible problem to society. Rockhampton does not appear to have a facility to assist those unfortunate young people. Only yesterday, a mother rang me—I will not mention names—and told me that she has had to have her child taken into foster care because of the difficulties his behaviour is causing for her and her other two children. That is an awful situation to have to face. I ask the Government to do something about providing such a facility if it possibly can.

As to the new Transit Holdings bus service in Rockhampton—I make it very clear that this company is doing its best under very difficult circumstances. Traditionally, the people of Rockhampton do not use buses. It was uneconomical for the Rockhampton City Council to continue to fund the bus service, particularly under the new State Government funding arrangements. Over the next six months, that company will receive a subsidy from the State Government. It is up to each and every person in Rockhampton to get behind that bus company and to assist it. The company has had a bit of trouble with the routes that it is running at the moment, and it is trying to educate people to use buses more.

Recently, a survey regarding that service was distributed, and I call upon the people of Rockhampton and the people of the surrounding areas to get behind that bus service. I am not sure that a subsidy for six months will be long enough, and I ask the Treasurer to investigate the possibility of extending that time period. Brisbane students receive a much better deal by way of subsidies. Even with the subsidy, it costs a student in Rockhampton 90c per trip, and that is pretty expensive. In Brisbane, a student with a six-month ticket pays 75c per day, and that includes an unlimited number of trips in any one day.

Obviously, the students in Brisbane receive a better deal than those in Rockhampton, even with the subsidy. When the subsidy is removed, the price per trip will increase to \$1.30. That is an issue of grave concern to the members of the Students Union who attend the Emmanuel College. I ask the Treasurer to seriously consider extending that subsidy. I do not see how that poor company can encourage everybody to use buses within a short time. An extension of that subsidy would be of assistance to the community. I ask the Treasurer to work with us on that because, although Rockhampton is not a city in which buses are used widely, many people do need a bus service. The buses are not being utilised fully at present, but if we lose that service, one can imagine

the difficulties that will be faced by the school children and everybody else—it will be like World War III. We need to do some work on that issue. I want to support the efforts of Transit Holdings. That company is trying very hard under what are very difficult circumstances. I can certainly vouch for that.

Mr Budd interjected.

Mr LESTER: Yes, I travel on buses quite a bit.

In the Yeppoon area, quite a lot has happened since I have been the local member. I do not take the credit for all of it; the community has worked very hard on a number of issues. We have seen the completion of the Taranganba State School. The list of wonderful achievements in the Yeppoon area goes on and on. We are very grateful for the work that has been done on the Emu Park-Rockhampton Road. I want to compliment my colleague in Emu Park, the councillor, Fay Owen. She works with me very well in order to meet the needs of the residents of Emu Park. We have held a number of meetings, and by leaving politics aside we have been able to achieve a great deal and get on with the job of looking after the people of Emu Park.

The ambulance facility at Emu Park is one project that we were told initially just could not happen—no way. It has happened, and we are very grateful. That facility is doing a great job. We are very disappointed to find that, at this point, there does not appear to be any money allocated in the Budget for the Kinka Beach erosion problem. The Honourable Molly Robson, the Minister for the Environment, has been to look at that site. She has commissioned yet another study. I am not critical of that; a number of studies have been done before. However, when this study is completed, it appears that there will be no money to get on with the job of fixing the problem. The erosion problem has reached the road and, if we get a bad storm, we will be in trouble. Some people's houses could be threatened. If the Treasurer has a bit of spare money kicking about, he should keep in mind Kinka Beach, because that area could need money in a heck of a hurry. We are hopeful that the investigation, which is being carried out in conjunction with the Livingstone Shire Council and the university, will be completed in the not-too-distant future.

I thank the people of Yeppoon. Our railway line was under threat at one stage. We had public meetings and God knows what. To his credit, Tom Burns visited that area and that issue was sorted out—thank goodness. It

would have been much simpler if the Government had not decided to get rid of the railway line in the first place; nevertheless, now we have it back.

The people of my electorate are not happy that no definite commitment has been made that there will be no sandmining at Byfield. The real concern that is held about any proposed sandmining—environmental impact study or not—is that there could be a threat to the Yeppoon water supply. The sand dunes filter the water that goes into Water Park Creek, which supplies the water to Yeppoon and the Capricorn Coast. If that is interfered with in any way, our water will be polluted, and it will probably cost \$60m or \$70m to pump water from Rockhampton. With all due respect, the water supply in Rockhampton could be better. The other aspect is the possibly devastating effect that sandmining could have on our fishing habitats. I say that the Government should forget this jolly sandmining. It should make a commitment here and now that it will not take place.

The people of Keppel would have liked the Government to have taken a more active role in trying to keep the Royal Queensland Bush Children's Health Centre at Yeppoon. They believe that the Government was not definite in its actions. In fact, many of the Government's suggestions resulted in the Royal Queensland Bush Children's Health Scheme committee actually making the decision to move out to the west. I assure the Government that that move is not going to work. The situation was much better when those children could go to Yeppoon for six weeks at a time. Some of them had never seen the sea. They would attend classes in Yeppoon and be medically examined. If the Royal Queensland Children's Health Scheme committee believes that it can retain physiotherapists and paediatricians in the west, I wish it well. However, I do not think that the scheme is going to work.

The Federal Government is taking away the social security services in Yeppoon. Through this Parliament, I ask the Federal Government to reinstate those facilities. The closing of the social security services in Yeppoon is not helping my office, which is receiving an enormous amount of clientele work that the Federal Government should be doing. That work is overloading further an already overloaded office.

Backbenchers really have one hell of a problem in trying to keep up with their work. Any working backbencher—whether he or she

is a member of the Government or the Opposition—needs additional electorate staff support. We are all pretty reasonable about this; we are not going to say to the Treasurer, "Give us another secretary full bore", but we do need additional support. It is very difficult to keep up with the workload. I have heard Labor members say the very same thing. EARC recommended that members be given part-time help, and I ask the Treasurer to provide money for that assistance, because the public are missing out. If members cannot do their work as well as they would like to, in the end the public misses out. I cannot emphasise enough that point. I do not hear anybody from the Government objecting to what I am saying. They know jolly well that this is a heck of a concern to members. Our workloads are getting tougher all the time. We do not go crook about our workload getting tougher, but we do need the extra facilities to cope with it.

I thank the Treasurer for the help that he has given to the people of Keppel in this Budget and in past Budgets. I reiterate that there is still very much more to be done. I will be pursuing those issues very, very, vigorously. I want to thank the community of the Capricorn Coast for the way in which it gets behind me on these issues. The people of Keppel are wonderful people to represent; it does not matter what the issues are about, they get behind me and go like crazy. Between us, ultimately we get there.

Time expired.

Mr BENNETT (Gladstone) (3.24 p.m.): The Goss Government's \$11.65 billion Budget will be regarded as a defining moment in Queensland politics during the 1990s. So often, Budgets are defined in terms of bricks and mortar. Although the Goss Government has embarked on a \$3.6 billion Capital Works Program, this Budget should be judged for what it does for the community. For example, \$21m is being used to tackle the problem of hospital waiting lists. Under the Goss Government, 3,000 more patients per week are treated than there were under the previous National Party Government. Although we realise that more has to be done, if the Nationals were in power, every week 3,000 more people would be added to hospital waiting lists.

The issue of mental health is addressed in this Budget. Although large, new facilities are being built and upgraded at the Royal Brisbane Hospital, the Rockhampton Base Hospital and the Prince Charles Hospital, it is important to inform the Parliament that a major announcement has been made in

relation to the provision of mental health services in Gladstone. A new outreach mental health service will be established in the grounds of the Gladstone Hospital. Commonwealth money has been sourced for the construction of a modular building, which will be situated next to the community health centre and which will be staffed by a consultant psychiatrist, two psychiatric nurses, a psychiatric registrar, an administration officer and a social worker. The service will also be outreached from the mental health unit at Rockhampton and will provide a valuable follow-up service for patients who are undergoing treatment. Patients will be able to be visited at home by staff attached to the unit in Gladstone. I understand that is one of the best ways to provide follow-up treatment for mental health patients. The facility in Gladstone will also provide backup support for the carers of the mentally ill when patients have a turn for the worse and their carers cannot handle the situation.

Attracting specialist medical staff to country areas has always been a problem. However, we are hopeful that we can recruit the staff for that unit as soon as possible. The State will take over the funding of that facility in 1998. Dr Peter Adams, who is the Director of Psychiatric Services for the Central Regional Health Authority, has been prepared to put in a lot of his own time in talking to and providing assistance to the local mental health action group in Gladstone. Mrs Denise Bedsor, her committee and the mental health action group have been working and hoping that the facility will be built and staffed at Gladstone. I applaud all the people involved in the Central Regional Health Authority who have made that facility a reality.

Recently, the Central Regional Health Authority launched the mobile breast screening service for central Queensland, and I applaud the decision to have that bus up and running. It will be visiting centres throughout central Queensland and the central west, and it will be located in Gladstone for several months at a time. This supplements the visiting bus service that operates from Gladstone to Rockhampton, which is supported by the Port Curtis Lionesses. Many women take advantage of that service but, at the moment, the target groups that need to be sourced are not being sourced. That bus service will help alleviate that situation.

The Gladstone community has experienced longstanding problems in recruiting the appropriate full-time specialist medical staff for its hospitals. An amount of

\$10m has been allocated to develop a package of proposals to address the shortage of medical specialists in Queensland and to decrease the current problems related to the distribution of doctors in the workplace. This funding is part of a \$42m commitment over three years to upgrade the medical work force. I support fully the improvements to employment conditions, such as direct, non-salary incentives for medical superintendents, additional infrastructure support, scholarships for new trainee specialists to gain experience in return for service in public hospitals and support for overseas doctors. When a doctor or specialist moves from Gladstone, it is a major blow to the community, and sometimes a considerable timelag occurs until another specialist or doctor can be recruited.

Another Budget initiative for the electorate of Gladstone is the announcement of the construction of the Tannum Sands High School. Early in my term as the member for Gladstone, parents came to me seeking assistance in lobbying for a high school at Tannum Sands. Over the course of the following two years, I approached Pat Comben when he was Education Minister and organised meetings between Pat Comben and parents. Pat Comben was convinced by parents at a meeting at the Boyne Island State School that large numbers of students travelling to Gladstone from Boyne/Tannum and the increasing traffic owing to the expansion project at the Boyne aluminium smelter meant that there was a potential safety problem and that it was not desirable to have such large numbers of students travelling by bus to Gladstone. Pat Comben's successor, David Hamill, also agreed that there was a problem.

I take this opportunity to applaud the role that Pat Comben played in helping me gain approval for the construction of the Tannum Sands High School. I also thank the Treasurer for making the funds available. However, make no mistake; the approval for that high school would not have been given unless Queensland was in the strong financial position that it is in. Were it not for the \$800m Expanded Social Infrastructure Program, the approval for the school would not have happened. That high school is one of four that are planned to open in 1997. Through the Goss Government funding its liabilities and paying off the mortgage, the people of Tannum Sands will have their high school. The siting of the school at Canoe Point is subject to an environmental impact study, and an alternative site is also being considered. I wish

to give special mention to Rod Young and David Lowe, who approached me initially and organised petitions and community support. I congratulate the people of Boyne/Tannum in getting their school. It certainly has been well received by the local community.

Other education facilities earmarked for Gladstone include two science modulars for the Toolooa State High School. This recognises the large student population in the lower school there. Next year, that school's population will be some 1,060 students. Science is an important subject in the Gladstone region because of the Goss and Keating Governments' joint funding of the Gladstone campus of the Central Queensland University—a centre for engineering excellence and environmental science. New buildings are being built at the Gladstone marina. Eventually, when it is completed, the campus will be worth some \$27m. Some \$3m has already been spent, with \$7m allocated for the next two buildings. As I have said before in this Chamber, it is probably one of the most beautiful spots for a university in Australia.

Primary schools are also growing and improving in the Gladstone region, with a new \$260,000 modular building at the Ambrose State Primary School, a \$145,000 modular building at the Kin Kora State School, which my daughter and two sons happen to go to, and another \$24,000 for upgrading facilities at the Gladstone State High School. One program which has been very successful in the Gladstone region is the Schools Refurbishment Program, under the \$150m Jobs Plan. Under that program, Gladstone received some \$1m worth of school refurbishments. I am very pleased to see that that program will continue, with \$10m being allocated this year. That program is a welcome one, because it has provided for some much-needed upgrading work to be done in Gladstone schools.

The Budget allocates some \$51.3m for implementing recommendations arising from the Queensland Curriculum Review. I am pleased that half of the special advisers and teachers in the Capricorn region will be based at the Port Curtis and Callide School Support Centre in Gladstone. I welcome those appointments. As a parent of primary school children, I am looking forward to increased emphasis on the three Rs and the LOTE programs. The Queensland Education budget has risen by some 52 per cent since the Goss Government came to power. The future of the children in Gladstone has been taken seriously by the Goss Government. I know that the

parents in the region have more confidence in the education system than ever before.

Keith De Lacy's Budget also features \$124.2m for public housing. I am happy to say that some \$1.9m will be invested in 23 new public housing dwelling units in the Gladstone electorate. This is a social justice initiative. I fully support it, as low income earners also need a roof over their heads. They should share in Queensland's prosperity.

Roads in Queensland have become a major priority of the Goss Government. I can point to the State Government funded \$950,000 roundabout on the Dawson Highway/Chapman Drive/Harvey Road, which I had the opportunity to show the Treasurer when he came to Gladstone yesterday. That work was undertaken very competently by the Gladstone City Council. This upgrade has led to faster traffic flows along Harvey Road, so we have added a second supervised crossing at the Clinton State School, which is an important safety initiative for the children who attend that school and one that I fully endorse.

Some \$1.35m has been allocated to upgrade the Tannum Sands Road, known as the old Tannum Road. This has been well received by the residents of Boyne/Tannum Sands. One of the big problems with the old Tannum Road is that tourists turning off the highway heading towards Tannum Sands—it is mainly a tourist route—have not been given a very good first impression of what really is a lovely area. I am really pleased to see that that funding has been allocated to that road, because it is a very important tourist road. It will give people a good impression and encourage them to stay longer in the area.

Since my election to this Parliament, some \$2m has been allocated to the Gladstone-Monto road, which has seen some very real improvements. The former National Party Government neglected the people of the Boyne Valley for some 20 years. It was not until the Goss Government came to power that we saw some very real improvements to that road. I am happy to say that another \$200,000 will be spent on that road for further upgrading works. That is on top of the \$2m already spent. The money will provide for floodways and minimum-standard seals. As the local member, I am committed to continual improvements to the Boyne Valley road. That road is used for the transportation of pine logs to the stick-making factory in Gladstone. In addition, the upgrading of that road is a quality-of-life issue for the people of the Boyne Valley. Even though there is not a substantial population in that area, they deserve their fair share of Queensland's resources.

Another important initiative concerns the customer service centre for Queensland Transport, with some \$400,000 being spent on vehicle inspection pits. This will offer greater convenience for vehicle and truck owners in the Gladstone area.

Some of the social objectives in our Budget, such as the \$24m Child Protection Strategy which offers a range of measures to prevent child abuse, deserve our applause. The children of our community deserve the protection of adults. The only people who can protect children are adults. I find it very pleasing that this Government has allocated that money for the Child Protection Strategy. I fully endorse it. To me, it is one of the most important measures included in this Budget.

Another important feature of the Budget with which I wholeheartedly agree is the \$8.7m set aside for the Community Rent Scheme to provide an additional 500 places for women and children escaping domestic violence. As all honourable members would appreciate, from time to time people come to our offices looking for a place to stay, whether it be a refuge or a house. Violence in our community should not be accepted. One of the first measures that we can take to combat this problem is to remove women from violent situations. I fully endorse that measure.

I turn now to economic development. In the State electorate of Gladstone important initiatives have been undertaken and will continue to be undertaken in this Budget. The Premier's From Strength to Strength document and the \$9 billion infrastructure statement will open the resource-rich hinterland, providing resources for Gladstone's port and industries. The Goss Government has already developed the Aldoga industrial development zone, and is currently looking at the transport corridors to the Gladstone port. The Office of the Coordinator-General and consultants are now looking at that project to provide corridors for the 5,000-hectare State industrial development zone.

I also support the Premier's Department and the Premier for pushing the light metals manufacturing concept for Gladstone. The Premier has been visiting the boardrooms of Europe. Recently, he spoke to representatives from Volkswagen. He has visited the USA and Asia to promote the fact that we want to manufacture lightweight car components in Gladstone and take advantage of the light metals that are there already, such as aluminium. We are also looking at a magnesium metals pilot project to be undertaken by the Queensland Magnesium

Metals Corporation. Once the technology is proved, Gladstone will be in the box seat to be the forerunner in Australia as a producer of magnesium metal.

This Budget has allocated some \$7.9m for the expansion of the RG Tanna coal terminal, and \$2m for the redevelopment of the Auckland Point facility. The member for Maryborough would endorse my comments, because plantation pine woodchips from his area are transported through the port of Gladstone. This is a very important contract for the Gladstone port, because it will run over some 10 years. It will use facilities that have been idle for some time. There is some \$11.4m for communication equipment, reclamation works, buffer zones, floating pens for the marina and containerisation facilities.

Containerisation facilities at the Gladstone port will be one of the most important economic facilitators in the area. If we are promoting the manufacturing industries there, we have to have the facilities to transport them to their markets. The Gladstone port has taken a very steady approach to setting up containerisation facilities there. I hope that I will not upset the members of Parliament whose electorates are in Brisbane by saying that we hope to take a lot of business away from the Brisbane Port Authority.

The Goss Government's plan for Gladstone is well under way, with the third potline at the Boyne aluminium smelter due to start construction at the end of June. I had the pleasure of having Keith De Lacy in Gladstone for a post-Budget dinner last night. The businessmen of Gladstone were very impressed with the Budget of the Goss Government, and they applauded our \$1.5 billion negative net debt position.

Mr Briskey: They're very impressed with their local member, too.

Mr BENNETT: I understand that to be the case!

Community leaders have also supported the Goss Government's Budget. When talking to the Treasurer and me, a manager of the NRG power station said that he would like his own country, the United States, or any of its member States to be in the strong financial position that Queensland is in. Many overseas business leaders are very impressed with the way in which the Goss Government is handling the Queensland economy. In my view, that has to stand us in good stead to attract further business to Queensland from overseas and from interstate. The fact that the southern States of New South Wales and Victoria are crying foul over the halving of the stamp duty

on share transactions is a further ringing endorsement of the Treasurer's Budget.

The real bottom line in any Government's performance is job creation. As we know, the best social justice initiative of all is creating jobs. Since the election of the Goss Government, 208,800 people have found employment in Queensland. In addition, this State accounts for over half of all the jobs created in Australia during that time. That represents an average employment growth rate of 2.7 per cent over that period compared with the national average of 0.9 per cent. Another 51,300 jobs will be generated in Queensland over the next year, proving that the Goss Government's record is unparalleled in Australia.

I take exception to the comment by the member for Moggill during his contribution about selling off the Gladstone Power Station. One of the important points he missed in his argument was that that agreement was designed to facilitate the construction of the third potline at the Boyne smelter. That project represents a \$1 billion investment at the Boyne smelter. It will help our balance of trade. As well, 700 jobs will be created at the Boyne smelter during construction and another 300 permanent full-time jobs will be created when the facility is up and running. Those figures were cited to me by the company during a recent briefing. I find it astounding that a so-called professor of economics could miss that vital point. In conclusion—I fully endorse the Treasurer's Budget.

Mr CONNOR (Nerang) (3.44 p.m.): A major issue has developed affecting the Mudgeeraba, Tallai and Bonogin areas of my electorate. It involves the catchment areas of the proposed new Mudgeeraba South school. As members may or may not be aware, the State Government is proposing to site a new primary school on the corner of Hardy's Road and the Mudgeeraba-Springbrook Road. The \$5m-plus funding for that school has been included in this year's Budget, and the project is earmarked for completion in time for the 1996 school year. The issue concerning some residents is the proximity of high-tension electricity wires to the proposed school site.

The school is extremely important to the area because of the substantial growth of the community and the overcrowding of the existing Mudgeeraba State Primary School. On Sunday, 7 May a public meeting was held. The meeting, which attracted approximately 50 people, resolved that a survey should be undertaken of the local residents to determine

their support or lack of support for the siting of the school. It was originally resolved that the Minister, David Hamill, should undertake this independent poll; however, the Minister has failed to reply in a reasonable time to that request. My office wrote to the Minister on the following Tuesday, 9 May. The letter was acknowledged a couple of days later by Mr Hamill's office, but as yet no response has been received. I asked him to respond within the two-week period leading up to the Budget delivered on Tuesday, 23 May so that proper community consultation could occur before the site was purchased.

At that public meeting, I gave an undertaking that, if the Minister was not prepared to undertake a survey, I would—at my expense. Before any such survey can be undertaken that is truly indicative of the attitude of local residents in the catchment area, the residents need to be fully informed of the issues. I am doing my best to stay neutral on the issue until this survey has been undertaken. To properly inform the local residents, a full and proper debate on the points for and against the site needs to be undertaken. For the public debate to ensue, a clear and proper case both for and against the site needs to be disseminated and understood by the local community.

My speech to the Parliament today will clearly set out the for-and-against case. This for-and-against case has not been determined by me but is an amalgam of relevant information from each camp. On the one hand, the for case has been gathered together from a letter from the Minister's office dated 19 May addressed to Ms Sheila Davis. The against case has been put together from information supplied by the Mudgeeraba Progress Association. Once the points for and against the case are distributed to the residents in the area and an appropriate period has elapsed, an independent polling company will take a random sample of the community asking their opinion on whether the school should go ahead on that site.

The case for the proposed site is as follows. As I stated, this information comes from the letter dated 19 May 1995 from the Minister. That letter states—

"The considerations of where to site the school were lengthy, involving the examination of at least six sites and the documentation of their suitability. The considerations were made difficult in the Mudgeeraba locality because of the following matters:

the Mudgeeraba Creek flood plain, in that extensive quantities of fill is required to site buildings and ovals above flood levels;

the existence of two major powerline easements across the locality;

the generally steep nature of land above flood level that is not yet developed for residential or other purposes;

a water pipeline easement crossing the locality.

In addition to these items it was necessary to site the school in a location that would be close enough to the existing Mudgeeraba residential area and be able to function effectively as a 'relief' school ie. the new school must have the capacity to attract students by virtue of its location.

The chosen site was considered to be the most favourable option of all those considered because:

it is flood free;

it is the location most approximate to the Mudgeeraba residential area, having the ability to relieve Mudgeeraba State School; and

electro magnetic field (emf) levels are at acceptable levels.

The most serious of . . . concerns regarding the high voltage powerlines and the effect on the school population has been investigated fully. The school has been designed so that the building zone, the major area of occupancy, is the furthest from the powerlines. The closest classroom will be 170 metres from the powerline and the levels of magnetic radiation have been calculated at 0.8 milligauss and below. These levels approach background levels ie. those regularly experienced in the home. The effect of the magnetic radiation would approximate the effects from everyday household appliances.

The oval has been sited closer to the powerlines. The closest point of the oval will be 105 metres from the powerlines. At that point the emf levels have been calculated at below 1.5 milligauss.

On site measurements have supported the calculated emf values.

A small area of the site will be exposed to emf levels of 3 and 4 milligauss (the levels which suggest a causal link between emf and the induction

of cancer); however no student activity would occur at these locations, because these areas are considerably distant from the school buildings and oval, and occupy an area that is irregular and sloping."

The Minister's letter went on to state—

"While it is not the intention of the Department of Education to enter into the broader levels of scientific debate, it is apparent that there are diverging views on the subject of emf exposure and dangers to child health.

The most recent report from the Scandinavians is from the National Board of Health and Welfare, Sweden which reported its findings in January 1995 that '... the current status of scientific knowledge with regard to the causal connection between exposure to electromagnetic fields and health, concludes that there is no convincing evidence of proving the link between exposure to electrical and magnetic fields and the negative effects on health in the form of cancer and reproductive disorders ...' "

The letter stated further—

"The UK's National Radiological Protection Board ... concluded in November 1993 that the Swedish and Danish studies:

'Do not establish that exposures to electromagnetic fields is a cause of cancer, although they provide weak evidence that the possibility exists. The risks, if any, however, would be very small.' "

The case against the school being located on this site is as follows. As I said, this information has been supplied by the Mudgeeraba Progress Association. It states—

"The research of Dr Ross Adey, an Australian researcher for the US Government, has shown that electromagnetic fields affect foetal development, immune system cell function, regulation of cell growth and tumour formation, and the central nervous system in behaviour and hormonal control. Other findings point to increased cancer risk, particularly for leukemia, lymphoma, brain tumours and breast and prostate cancer.

The Federal Government is still investigating this issue in other locations. Terms of reference include—

'The possible impact of the powerlines and the accompanying land resumptions on the health of people and animals in the surrounding areas, with particular reference to the likely effects of electromagnetic field radiation.'

Les Dalton, a former senior research officer with the CSIRO, writes that 300 metres is considered a safe distance for exposure to transmission lines. Sweden's National Board for Industrial and Technical Development formally announced that from henceforth it 'would act on the assumption that there is a connection between exposure to power frequency magnetic fields and cancer, in particular childhood cancer.'

The European Parliament takes seriously the health hazards from electromagnetic fields. In its recent document titled 'On Combating the Harmful Effects of Non-Ionising Radiation', it said—

'According to an increasing number of studies, even slight exposure to non-ionising electromagnetic fields increases the risk of cancer, can be accompanied by nervous disorders and disruption of the circadian rhythms and seems capable of affecting developing organisms.'

In America, Houston Power and Light was successfully sued in 1986 by a school board for installing high-voltage transmission lines within 60 metres of a complex of three schools. The schools were awarded \$25m in damages."

That is the case for and against.

Quite simply, there are two sides to every argument. I want it to be clear that I will be representing the local community on this issue. If members of the local community determine that they do not want the school on that site, or that they are happy with the school on that site, I will fully support their decision. However, if, following proper consultation and an independent poll, members of the local community determine that they are not supportive of the school on that site, then I will make a commitment that I will do my best to ensure that the site is changed. Irrespective of there being land purchased or designs made for the school, and even if minimal construction is undertaken, I will do my best to have it halted, compensation paid and a new site determined.

This is an opportunity for the local community to have its say on a very important local issue. There is no point in having a school that is not generally supported by the local community. Irrespective of whether or not the arguments of those for or against it are true, if the local community is not generally supportive, then the school will become a white elephant and simply will not be used.

So this is the question that residents have to ask themselves: should I support a school on the existing site, with the circumstances detailed, or should I vote against that school, remembering that if the school site is changed, it is highly unlikely it will be completed in time for the 1996 school year? I guess the question comes down to this: do residents believe that a school should be built on that site—a site that is argued to be within a distance of a high-tension powerline that may be hazardous to children's health, or should they wait and find another site, remembering that the existing Mudgeeraba Primary School is bursting at the seams, with over 1,000 students crowded into the school? That is the question that the residents of the local community must ask themselves.

I turn to the Treasury aspects of the Budget. The Queensland coalition in Opposition can no longer guarantee proper scrutiny of Queensland finances as a result of the removal from the Budget papers of the Queensland Treasury Corporation. Combined with the conversion of the Queensland Industry Development Corporation—the QIDC—to a State Bank, this heads us along the path to Queensland Inc. I want to make it clear that all this has done is put in place mechanisms to ensure that if and when a State Labor Government gets itself into trouble we will not know about it, and even if we suspect it we will not be able to prove it.

Cynics might argue: well, what do we have an Auditor-General and Reserve Bank scrutiny of the QIDC for? I can only remind members of the South Australian circumstance. One may recall the State Bank of South Australia and the \$3.2 billion bail-out of same. It had both Reserve Bank scrutiny and an Auditor-General. As late as early 1990, the then South Australian Labor Government was extolling the virtues of its South Australian management and how wonderful it was that that Government was not in the same dire straits as were Western Australia and Victoria. Within months, the first of the billion-dollar bail-outs occurred. I remind members that some of the architects of the disaster in South Australia were subsequently advising the Premier of this State. We even have the guarantee fee—the

same as the one proposed in South Australia. But whereas Bannon did not have the political will to bring it in, this Government did.

So what is this lack of scrutiny all about? It works this way: the only aspect of the Queensland Treasury Corporation that the Opposition will know about in the future in the Budget papers is a line item. The QTC will become a \$12 billion giant slush fund black hole—a black hole that only the Treasurer and a few insiders will know about. Of course, the Government will argue that an annual report will come out and that that will properly disclose what is going on, but honourable members should remember that the annual report does not come out at the time of the Budget. So while the public of Queensland will be expecting the Opposition to once a year properly scrutinise the finances of the State at Budget time—when the Parliament is giving Supply to the Government of the day—there will be only one line item for all Government borrowings, and it is \$12 billion worth at the moment. We will not have the opportunity to scrutinise and properly present aspects of the biggest part of the Budget, that is, the borrowings, until the Budget of the following year, which of course means that some aspects of the annual report will be almost two years out-of-date.

The Government also argues that the borrowing arms in other State Governments are all off balance sheet—off Budget—and have all been corporatised. That may be. However, they were all done by Labor Governments; and one has to ask: for what reason? Another argument for the removal from the Budget papers of the main borrowing arm of the Government is to put it at arm's length from the political process. I remind members that this process did not help the State Bank of South Australia or, for that matter, the State Bank of Victoria and a number of financial institutions in Western Australia. Simply, a Labor Government merely ensconces a sycophantic board or chief executive, and that is all that is required. It did not stop—as was revealed by a South Australian commission of inquiry—political interference with interest rates rises prior to a South Australian election when the Labor Premier colluded with the chief executive officer to delay home loan mortgage rates increases prior to the State election. That cost the taxpayers of South Australia millions of dollars to compensate the State Bank for keeping interest rates down.

The other aspect of all this is the corporate lending arm of the State, that is, the new Queensland State Bank—the QIDC. The

QIDC may not, by State regulations, call itself a bank in Queensland. However, in New South Wales the QIDC calls itself a bank. It advertises itself quite openly as a bank in New South Wales because it has a federal banking licence; in effect, it is defined by the Federal Government as a bank, and it can operate as a bank. As members would know, it is expanding rapidly into the southern market in much the same way as Beneficial Finance, the corporate finance arm of the State Bank of South Australia, did into Queensland. Members may recall that one of the bigger borrowers from Beneficial Finance was Christopher Skase. They may also recall the luxurious offices on the Gold Coast and the white grand piano that sat in the reception of the grandest finance company of them all, that is, Beneficial Finance.

Last but not least, the Government now has an explicit guarantee of the QIDC. As a result of this gigantic risk, the Treasurer has determined that we are safe because we are charging a guarantee fee—an appropriate rate for the risks, he argued—which, as I understand it, is about half a percent. That flows straight back into consolidated revenue and straight back into the coffers for use for recurrent expenditure. I can think of no other comparison for this figure other than an insurance premium. So in effect, the State Government and the taxpayers of Queensland are insuring the possible losses of the QIDC. But what happens to that money—that insurance premium? Does it go into a trust account? Does it go into a special fund to be able to be used for a potential bail-out some time in the future, as an insurance premium would normally be expected to do? No! It goes straight into consolidated revenue, and it is then used for recurrent expenditure. So we are insuring what could potentially completely unravel the financial management of this State and then simply spending the money on day-to-day expenses.

To sum up the situation—we now have this giant black hole of finance, \$12 billion with the Queensland Treasury Corporation sitting off Budget where the only scrutiny we will have is from an annual report that will only come under proper examination and debate up to two years after the event. We have a new State Bank, which the Premier maintained that there is no argument for.

One might recall the Braddy report and the debate that ensued as a result of the proposed sale of Suncorp. The Premier stood here and argued that there was no excuse for setting up a Queensland State Bank or, for that matter, any similar type of financial or

insurance operation. He stood here and argued that only a couple of years ago. Now we have the Treasurer behind closed doors, without the proper scrutiny, setting up a State Bank. The annual reports from that year will not be available when the Budget Estimates hearing occurs, and all of that is being put in place by a political party that came to power on the simple basis of accountability. Yet, as a result of these measures, the most important accountability—that of the finances of every taxpayer in this State—will simply be subject to no scrutiny or accountability at all.

I put the taxpayer of Queensland on notice. The Opposition will no longer be able to properly scrutinise Queensland's finances. The election that is just around the corner will give the public of Queensland the opportunity to reject these measures. If they choose not to reject them, and accept Mr Goss' assurance of "trust me", then the third term of this Government will be no different from the third term of Mr Cain, Mr Bannon or Mr Burke. Remember what Mr Goss had to say in 1988? He said, "Just as the people of Victoria have nothing to fear from the Cain Labor Government, so the people of Queensland have nothing to fear from a Goss Labor Government."

Mr DOLLIN (Maryborough) (4.03 p.m.) I take great pleasure in rising to join this debate on the sixth consecutive Goss Government Budget—without a doubt the best ever for Queensland. How good it is can be seen in the eyes of the members opposite. They all appear to be in mourning as they witness yet again the death of another opportunity to win Government. Although the members opposite are without a policy, they have desperately tried and will continue to try to win Government by whingeing, knocking and scaremongering, but they will not be successful.

What amazes the Opposition is that this Government has paid off the \$4.2m net debt inherited from the Nationals and is now well and truly in the black. True to our record to date, this Goss Labor Government will yet again balance the books in 1995-96. The Consolidated Fund will achieve a small cash surplus at the end of this year, with outlays of \$11.647 billion that will be funded from a revenue of \$11.609 billion and a carryover surplus of \$41m saved from the 1994-95 Budget. It is a truly remarkable achievement by anybody's measures when one considers that in 1994-95 this Government expects to record a surplus of \$1.2 billion in 1995-96. Another healthy surplus—conservatively estimated at \$448m—is expected to be achieved.

It is expected that, by the end of 1995-96, Queensland will be in net credit by \$1.6 billion. That is quite an achievement when one takes into consideration that this Government inherited a \$4.2 billion net debt from the Nationals in 1989. The Nationals like to accuse us of robbing hollow logs, but the fact is that we continue to stuff these hollow logs with more and more credits—to the Nationals' great amazement! Look at them, Mr Speaker, the few who are here; they appear to be in a state of shock.

A \$1.6 billion net credit means that interest received by the Government will exceed interest paid out. This compares with an average debt servicing burden in other States of 13.4 per cent of their total revenue. This means that Queensland has \$1.8 billion extra to spend each year delivering real services such as police, health, education, housing and drought relief, while other States are kept poor by having to pay off yesterday's bills.

The excellent management of our State resources allows our State many luxuries that other Australian States could only dream about. Public investment activity will provide future stimulus to Queensland's economic growth, reflecting the priority which the Government attaches to enhancement of the State's infrastructure. Both private and public consumption are also forecast to make major contributions to overall economic growth.

In the 12 months to April 1995, trend employment growth in Queensland increased by 6.4 per cent—well in excess of that of the national growth rate of 4.5 per cent. In 1995-96, employment is forecast to increase by around 3.5 per cent, which is broadly consistent with the average rate of growth over the last 10 years and higher than the expected national employment growth rate of 3 per cent. This will mean a further 51,300 jobs in Queensland in 1995-96.

Queensland's unemployment rate has declined significantly during 1994-95, and it is already below last year's Budget forecasts. In 1995-96, the unemployment rate is likely to decline further to around 8 per cent in year average terms and to around 7.7 per cent by June 1996. Beyond 1995-96, the economy is expected to grow by around 5 per cent per annum, with growth differentials over the rest of Australia widening to more traditional levels.

Queensland's rapid economic and population growth, particularly in the Wide Bay region, presents a challenge to Government to provide the necessary infrastructure to

maintain and enhance the momentum of our development. It is a challenge to which the Government has responded strategically and effectively as a result of Budget initiatives over the last few years. Capital spending in Queensland is already some 32 per cent higher in per capita terms than in the rest of Australia. But the Government recognises the need to do more in a planned and responsible manner.

The Premier recently released an economic strategy document titled *From Strength to Strength* which outlines plans for \$9 billion in new economic infrastructure in Queensland, encompassing new power stations, dams, water and gas pipelines, and increased spending on roads, rail and port facilities. The centrepiece of this Budget is the expanded social infrastructure program. It really annoys the Opposition to see money going to the battlers, the workers and the strugglers of this State.

In 1995-96, the Goss Government will commence a new \$800m three-year social infrastructure expansion program. This will be in addition to the existing program. There is the \$1.5 billion 10-year Hospital Rebuilding Program; the \$140m education capital works budget; the Corrective Services infrastructure expansion announced last year; and the previously announced rail and road capital works programs, and so on. This will boost State Government spending on capital works to a new record of \$3.6 billion, with the entire social infrastructure component being funded from the Budget with cold, hard cash—no borrowed money. Most importantly, not a cent of the new social infrastructure in Queensland will be funded from borrowed money. Highlights of the expanded social infrastructure program include the Government's 10-year \$1.5 billion Hospital Rebuilding Program, which will be augmented by an additional \$75m over the next two years to accelerate rebuilding of the metropolitan hospitals and to upgrade hospital equipment throughout the State, and \$140m to be added to the education capital works budget over the next three years.

It is important to note that there are no new taxes, no increases in existing taxes or increases in charges above the CPI. This Budget also provides relief for business people in the area of payroll tax. The threshold is being lifted from \$700,000 to \$750,000, which represents an overall lift of 50 per cent since this Government gained power in 1989. This exempts the great majority of small businesses—of which there are many in Maryborough—from having to pay payroll tax.

Another very popular and important tax concession in this Budget is the halving of the stamp duty applicable to the trading of shares listed on the stock exchange. This has the potential to make Queensland the leading business investment State of Australia, resulting in more jobs and further investment. I congratulate the Treasurer on that move. It has taken the wind out of the sails of the other Australian States. It gives Queensland a competitive edge and puts us in a far better trading position with South East Asia.

I now move closer to home—to the fastest growing region in Queensland, Wide Bay, which in 1994 saw the rural, manufacturing, engineering, tourism and building industries enjoy a solid, profitable year, with building figures reaching all-time records in Tiaro and Woocoo Shires, and in the Maryborough City Council area, though building has steadied in the last few months, as has been predicted for some considerable time by the Treasurer.

We could have done with earlier rain and more of it for the sugar industry in our region, but it will still be a good year if the price holds. Walkers Limited is now employing in excess of 550 workers—when I was elected, it employed 320—and is holding excellent orders: a \$65m tilt train for Queensland Rail and \$100m railcars for Kuala Lumpur, as well as sugar mills for Asia and Mexico. In fact, yesterday, the first railcar left Walkers for Kuala Lumpur. This augurs well for many small engineering companies in Maryborough that subcontract to Walkers. The total number of jobs created through those orders is difficult to estimate, but they are many.

The Hyne and Partners Canterwood chip mill is operational, resourcing culls from the pine plantation forests. It will export chips to the value of over \$10m per annum for the next 10 years. Most sawmills have continued to upgrade their equipment over the past few years.

The Wide Bay region, in particular the Maryborough electorate, has received a major boost from this Budget. The electorate has received a further \$6.4m redevelopment and upgrading of the Maryborough Base Hospital, which comes on top of \$18m invested since 1990 in the new maternity unit, new equipment and upgrading; \$3.398m for the establishment of a regional group laundry service; \$800,000 for construction of a new ambulance station, replacing a long outdated station; \$400,000 for the construction of a heated swimming pool; \$37,000 for the completion of a new \$500,000 manual arts

machine shop at the Maryborough State High School; \$26,000 for the completion of a general learning half block at Mungar State School; \$2,000 for completion of a \$233,000 tuckshop at Tinana State School; \$100,000 for the Gympie-Maryborough Road deviation; \$80,000 for new alignments on the Gympie-Maryborough Road; \$500,000 for an overtaking lane between Curra and Gootchy Creek; \$1.8m for a granular overlay on the Maryborough-Gympie Road; a \$30,000 share for the Maryborough-Gin Gin overtaking lane; \$520,000 for the widening of the Maryborough-Biggenden Road; \$219,000 for the Maryborough-Cooloola Road; and \$219,000 for the installation of traffic lights on the Maryborough-Cooloola Road at Granville. Those lights will greatly enhance the safety of Granville residents and other people who use that road.

This 1995 Budget is good for Maryborough and the electorate. It provides for more police, more money for schools and hospitals and no new taxes. This Budget sees a commitment of another 500 operational police on the streets, and that is in addition to the 1,500 extra police Statewide since 1989. This Budget also recognises that our children are our greatest resource, and that is why we have the record Budget allocation of \$2.646 billion for education. The Budget makes available additional funds to employ more doctors and nurses to help our free hospital system keep up with our enormous population growth as people flee the tory States of the south and head for the State of sunshine and opportunity.

I see the highlights of this Budget as being the record Education budget of \$2.646 billion, up \$215.6m over last year; Environment, a record \$160.9m, an 18 per cent increase; Health, a record budget of \$2.7 billion, the largest ever for Queensland, representing an increase of 11 per cent over last year; most importantly, \$64m over two years to shorten the patient waiting list in our public hospitals and re-equipping of our hospitals; and a \$673m budget for Primary Industries, an increase of \$67m over last year. That big commitment to support rural Queensland has been an ongoing feature of this Goss Labor Government over its term of office.

Finally, I would like to thank and congratulate the Treasurer and all who helped him put this Budget together. I think that it is an excellent Budget. That fact will echo around Australia. I do not think that we will see a better one for a long time to come. I support the Bill.

Mr PERRETT (Barambah) (4.15 p.m.): I take great pleasure indeed in rising to speak in this Budget debate. When it comes to the Primary Industries sector, the Labor Goss Government's final Budget has handed the Opposition a gift. I am very sympathetic with the plight of DPI employees and their clients in the food and fibres industries of Queensland, but I am also pleased to take the political advantage the Government has handed the Opposition with this disgraceful document. Fortunately, the flawed priorities contained in the Budget will not be put into effect until 1 July, and hopefully we will have a State election fairly close to that date. Producers, processors, and the DPI staff who have had to work under this Government's ridiculous supervision will not have to do so for much longer.

What an opportunity this Labor Government has squandered with this poor excuse for a vision for the State's economic management. Corporatisation and all the other means it has used to raid the State's coffers have yielded an ability to provide real service enhancements to Department clients. It is an opportunity that the Government and the Minister for Primary Industries have passed up. I can assure the people of rural Queensland that the incoming coalition Government will soon change the priorities and allow departmental staff to once more deliver meaningful services.

Five previous Labor Budgets have driven the decline of the DPI from a proud department delivering vital services with a high degree of professionalism to the point at which this sixth and last Labor Budget confirms a demoralised department forced to deliver little more than platitudes to satisfy nobody but the politically correct.

It is hard to find measures promising real benefits to industry in the Primary Industries Portfolio Program Statement. There is plenty about natural resource management and ecologically sustainable development, but there is much less about the other "E" words such as economy and efficiency. There is plenty about reviews and plans, and discussions, but there is much less about practical research and field work. There is plenty about information packages and seminars, but there is much less about on-farm assistance to producers who encounter problems. In fact, I can find no mention of such assistance in the Budget papers.

That is not to say there is nothing of worth in the Budget for the DPI. I support moves to assist Atherton Tableland farmers with

diversification options. I support plans to assist the development of native species and hardwood plantations. I support the continuation of drought relief measures. They are necessary commitments, and deserve support, but they are not enough to save the DPI budget. They will continue under the coalition Government, but they will be added to.

The money allocated to the DPI in this Budget will be used after the election to fund a revived focus on practical assistance to the State's food and fibre industries. It will be used to begin the task of catching up with the neglect of the past five Budgets. It will be used to once again provide rewarding careers for scientists and technical staff, for veterinary public health staff, for agronomists and horticulturists, for soil scientists, and for foresters and extension staff. Under the coalition Government, there will be no purges in the DPI as there have been under Labor.

I give a commitment to a refocussing of the DPI's efforts back to real assistance to a productive rural sector. I am aware that many DPI staffers have had no option but to move from their specialised employment streams into management and policy areas—into the committee culture. Gradual refocussing will allow them to move back into real service areas which will allow them to use their research and extension skills once again. We will restore career opportunities. Scientific, technical and service staff will once again be able to get to the top without having to join the administrative stream.

As usual, the Government has provided very little detail about how the Budget will actually work. There is very little of the nuts and bolts information on which we can judge the overall value of programs. That will have to wait for the Estimates process and, going on the lessons from last year, that will be equally unsatisfactory. What we must go on are the broad statements of intent, and they leave me with no confidence at all.

The only good thing to say is that the coalition will soon have the chance to make changes. I will not detail those changes here. Labor will have to summon the courage to call an election before I reveal the full detail of National Party policy and coalition policy directly to the people.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr PERRETT: Mr De Lacy should just wait. I am sure he is in for a pleasant surprise. I know that he would dearly love to know, but he will just have to be patient.

However, I will tell the House that the Opposition's priorities have been worked out with industry. It is the industry that has told the Opposition what it sees as its real needs. It has not been the yuppies with the ink still wet on their degrees who have dictated the direction of the DPI; it has been practical farmers and processors who have sat down with us and identified research and extension needs, legislation and regulatory changes. It is industry that has told us about the pitfalls in Labor-style natural resource management plans. It is industry that has told us on the basis of experience just how far things like that can go without jeopardising the viability of the food and fibres sectors. The Opposition has listened to those people, and I believe that under a coalition Government the new DPI will meet their reasonable expectations. However, that is not the case with the DPI that was revealed by the ideological document the Labor Government calls a Budget.

With something like \$673m available, there will be a real boost to the work of the Industry Services Program. That work will recognise the need for Queensland farmers to stay one step ahead of our competitors for world markets. The program will concentrate on the development and uptake of technologies and practices that will enable us to compete successfully against the subsidised products of our competitors. The program will minimise its regulatory intrusion to the bare necessity for protecting the interests of consumers, both domestic and overseas, and the farmers who want to do the right thing. There will be a rebuilding of the ability of the Industry Services Program to protect the State's livestock industries from the full range of diseases that can threaten viability. The Opposition is well aware of the dangers posed by the large-scale alienation of managed farming and grazing land to make way for national parks and Aboriginal claims. That land will never come back under proper management, and the potential for the harbouring and spread of animal and plant pest species is enormous. The Opposition will rebuild the defences against such pests, and that will be an important priority for the refocused department.

The Product Development and Marketing Program deserves better treatment than it has received under Labor. It will receive that better treatment under a coalition Government. In answers to my questions, the Labor Government has admitted already the decline in quality assurance services. Now we have the ridiculous situation in which a producer or a processor doing the wrong thing can do so

without fear of a Government inspector. It is all very well for the Government to say that it has pushed the onus back onto industry, but that is just a cop-out. Self-regulation will work most of the time, but our reputation in our markets is too important to be left to chance. The new DPI will be capable of deploying sufficient competent people to continually monitor standards and report problems to both the Minister and the industry. In that way we will head off potential problems before they harm the interests of the vast majority of producers and processors.

I turn now to the Government's treatment of forest industries. I must say that in this sector there is a measure of agreement between the Government and the Opposition. I have no hesitation in supporting measures that give the industry guaranteed access to timber on a sustainable basis. Of course, sustainability is a concept that is just about incapable of precise definition; there would be as many definitions as there are people interested in the concept. However, I say to the industry and the public servants working in the area that the coalition has a long history of sustainable use of the State's forestry resource. For decades under coalition Ministers, the industry and the old forest service exploited the resource sensitively and sensibly.

Only the most militant, politically motivated critic would maintain that our native forests and woodlands were damaged by the style of commercial exploitation sanctioned by National Party and coalition Governments. Anyone looking for my definition of "sustainable access" to the native timber resource should look no further than that. A coalition forestry Minister would guarantee continued access to native timber reserves and at the same time support a vigorous program of plantation development to cater for increasing demand for commercial supplies of all timbers.

The current Government's planning for development of native species plantations and for research and development for plantation hardwoods will be supported and enhanced by a Borbidge coalition Government. The coalition firmly supports the view that a sustainable hardwood industry should be guaranteed by giving private land-holders a role in hardwood plantations. I have studied such arrangements in Tasmania and New Zealand, and I have assured my colleagues that such arrangements have real merit. However, I sound a warning note that such schemes can work only if the private land-holders can be convinced that the

Government is fair dinkum. It has taken 17 years for Tasmanian land-holders to be convinced, and that is far too long. For that reason the coalition's policy guarantees cooperative arrangements between the Government and land-holders to produce large quantities of plantation timbers. Under a coalition Government, a land-holder who produces native timbers as a commercial proposition would be able to harvest those trees.

Mr Livingstone: You'll be on the Seniors Card by then.

Mr PERRETT: I hope the member for Ipswich West takes the opportunity to speak in this debate, because it could very well be his last opportunity to speak in this place.

The Opposition regards timber production in the same way as it regards any other crop, but with the recognition that it is a very long-term investment with no possibility of a quick return on capital. No producer can be asked to make that commitment if the possibility exists that public pressure could result in a conservation order on that producer's crop. I hope that the Labor Government is serious about using both native forests and plantations to provide resource security for hardwood millers, particularly in established mill areas. I also hope that Labor's policy is not an election-year wonder to calm the genuine concerns of the conservation groups and the timber industry, which is so important to the State. The Opposition's policy is not an election-year wonder, and its record in Government on forestry management is the proof of that.

We can grow all the trees we like but still do the wrong thing if that timber is not released into the market in an orderly fashion. That is why the utmost care must be taken with the commercialisation of the Forest Service. Logs taken from State Forests and Crown plantations must be processed in Queensland. A coalition Government would ensure that that would be the case. As has been shown clearly by the conditions applying to a massive sale of plantation pine now on offer, under a Labor Government the industry cannot have that certainty. Sale 22/94 is for hoop, kauri, slash and caribbean pine plantation final crop and thinnings material from plantations in northern and central Queensland.

I was shocked by the statement on page 35 of the sale offer that domestic processing "is not a requirement" under the sale. The only concession to the local industry was that where "proposals are of equal merit

preference will be given to the proposal involving the highest degree of domestic processing." Such a provision would allow the Government and the Forest Service to sell out the State's timber industry by allowing sales of unprocessed timber to overseas buyers. The Government could legally betray millers and timber workers by exporting their jobs to cheap labour mills overseas. That is a valid interpretation of such a condition and one which must be removed from future sale offers. The basic problem is that, because of wage and other cost advantages that our competitors enjoy, local mills might not be able to match overseas processors on price. It would be the ultimate hypocrisy for Labor to grandstand on the woodchipping issue and then effectively deny domestic access to plantation timber. Before that resource is allowed to be sent overseas for value-adding processing, the Goss Government should reflect on the fact that it was grown with the taxes of generations of Queenslanders. The benefit of that investment by Queenslanders should stay with Queensland millers and their workers.

I mentioned the form of corporatisation of the Forest Service. There must be real safeguards in the corporatisation charter. That charter must make it clear that the timber grown by the Crown belongs to the people of Queensland—grown with the taxes of Queenslanders and held in trust for the benefit of future generations. That includes a healthy Queensland economy, and that cannot benefit in any way by the export of logs. There must be no way that a Government strapped for cash can pressure a corporatised Forest Service to flog off its timber to the highest overseas or interstate bidder.

I have paid little attention to the detail of the proposed budget for the DPI for two very good reasons. The first is my disagreement with its fundamental focus on anything but assistance to productive industry. The second is that this program has little chance of being implemented. It is a wish list that is dependent on the re-election of a Labor Government, and that is not very likely.

Before I complete my remarks, I want to comment on the Budget as it affects my area in the South Burnett. Those effects flow directly from the Labor Government's cynical determination to use the Budget to prop up its own desperate position in its marginal seats. After listening to the contribution of the member for Maryborough, who spoke just prior to me, it is easy to see how that is happening. Like many rural areas, the South Burnett has largely missed out on consideration of its

needs in favour of spending in Labor areas. For example, the only sop to the South Burnett in the capital works budget is a fire station at Kumbia—not a very impressive fire station, just whatever we can get for \$45,000. I reckon that might buy a pre-fab steel shed on a concrete slab.

The public works budget pretends to give a few other things, such as a new ambulance station at Kilcoy and a new home economics block at the Kingaroy State High School. The trouble with those projects is that they were part of last year's Budget boasts. They were promises not carried out then, and that is so typical of this Labor Government. The Treasurer has a bad habit of repeating himself. I hope that he is suffering only from memory lapse because the alternative is that he is trying to take the people of the South Burnett for a ride.

Another recycled announcement—and this one is from earlier this year—is the project to pipe water to the Tarong Power Station from Caboonbah in the Wivenhoe area. That is a worthwhile project, and I commend it. I have spoken before about the need to get that pipeline up and running. It is needed not just for Tarong but to assure water supplies for farm, domestic and irrigation use. The project is under way, but I fear that it may be too late to be fully effective in keeping Tarong at full power production. The Labor Government's dithering about on the project has forced impossibly tight time lines, and work is already behind schedule. I am told that the construction crew has struck unexpected problems with rock, and that is even before it encounters the Blackbutt Range.

The South Burnett needs a range of Government projects that the Government has turned its back on. We need a boosted police presence in Kingaroy and the reopening of the watch-house in Cherbourg. Murgon has the only 24-hour police station in the South Burnett and, thus, the only watch-house. That means that police who make an arrest in another centre have to take their prisoner to Murgon, leaving their home area exposed. The Police Minister has flatly rejected the Cherbourg community's pleas to reopen the watch-house. By doing so, the Minister perpetuates chronic overcrowding in the Murgon watch-house. The Minister has admitted that the facility at Cherbourg could handle eight male and four female prisoners, and that capacity could be increased to 20 people. His problem is spending \$100,000 to refurbish the disused watch-house, and finding extra police.

I find it hard to accept that in an \$11 billion Budget that sort of money cannot be found to fix an urgent and ongoing problem. What about the extra police to supplement the two full-time police officers, seven full-time Aboriginal community police, and 11 part-time Aboriginal community police? Perhaps the Minister is simply confirming that the so-called 500 extra police to be recruited on top of the so-called 1,500 so far are just phantoms. The Minister has also refused to consider increasing police numbers at Kingaroy to allow a 24-hour service. Kingaroy has a nominal strength of eight uniformed police officers. The reality is that at least one officer is usually on leave.

Promotions and transfers and associated delays make the problem worse. It is a disgrace that the largest centre in the South Burnett does not have sufficient police available for duty to enable every shift to be covered 24 hours each day. It is also a disgrace that, when something happens, the not-so-local police headquarters in Gympie has to call off-duty Kingaroy police and order them back to work. That is most unfair on those officers, because they deserve time with their families, just as any other citizen does.

The South Burnett suffers, along with most of rural Queensland, from a desperate shortage of local hospital facilities. Too many of our people have to travel to Toowoomba, Brisbane or the coast for services which should be provided at a properly resourced Kingaroy Hospital upgraded to base hospital status. The area is growing and will continue to grow. Our citizens make a disproportionate contribution to the State's wealth and the Government's revenue. Unfortunately, they get a disproportionately small share of the Government's spending. I am sure that the people in the electorate of Barambah will be less than impressed when I circulate documentation showing the money that has been spent in the marginal Government seats in endeavouring to save those seats for a future Government.

Mr PEARCE (Fitzroy) (4.36 p.m.): This year's State Budget is about building a better life for Queenslanders. It has been achieved with no new taxes, which means that Queenslanders can enjoy the sun and sand as well as the benefits of living in the lowest taxed State of Australia. The Goss Government, under the sound financial management of Treasurer Keith De Lacy, has strengthened its reputation as the most financially secure State in Australia.

I am certainly no expert in the field of economics, but I understand enough to know how important it is to balance the books and to pay for essential services such as schools and hospitals from the Budget, that is, from the dollars available through State revenue collection. I know enough to congratulate the Government on its commitment to fully fund long-term liabilities such as superannuation and workers' compensation. In other words, the money is in the bank. It suits me just fine that Queenslanders in per capita terms are paying an estimated \$552 less than those living in New South Wales and \$521 less than Victorian taxpayers.

I would now like to look at the Budget in more detail and examine its overall impact on Queensland and what it means to the people of central Queensland. As honourable members would understand, my first priority is the people of the electorate of Fitzroy, but many of the items that I will highlight are of benefit to people living throughout the region. On many occasions since last Tuesday, the Premier has said that the Budget keeps Queensland as the only State that is debt free with balanced books. This means that the State is like a family which has just paid off its mortgage. I think people understand that analogy. People do not have much money available when they are trying to pay off their house. However, when it has been paid off, they have a lot more money available to do the things that they have not been able to do in the past. That is what this Government is doing.

There is more money in the Budget for the family. Unlike other States, the Government can spend every dollar on services and not on paying off debt. As I said before, this will be achieved without the need for any new taxes. This means that we can invest money where it is needed most—in classrooms and hospitals, for fighting crime, providing emergency services and all of those things that the people of Queensland have a right to expect. When we talk about Budget initiatives, I think it is important that we also look at what has been achieved in the electorate under the sound financial management of the Government in recent years. I will be reflecting on some of those achievements and linking them to this Budget and the future for central Queensland.

One of the major areas of concern for all Queenslanders is health. As a member representing a large rural electorate, I am pleased that for the first time health will get the biggest slice of the Budget cake. In fact, a record \$2.7 billion Budget allocation ensures

that there will be a determined attack on hospital waiting lists. There will be \$21m this year, and similar allocations for each of the next two years have been committed. Some \$9m will be dedicated to clearing the backlog, and this will target those areas where people have been waiting the longest. Some \$35m will be allocated to a hospital access bonus pool, and this money will provide additional incentives to hospitals to treat people on waiting lists. And \$20m has been allocated for the development of community-based health services to support the acute hospital system. That is the path that we are heading down and it is one that I support.

The Fitzroy electorate has three hospitals—at Dysart, Blackwater and Mount Morgan—with the Rockhampton Base Hospital providing health care for a large proportion of the people in my electorate. The Rockhampton Hospital is the base hospital for a region which covers more than 100,000 square kilometres and which has a population of 167,000 people. These hospitals will benefit from funding in the Budget. Funding of \$3.9m has been approved for the new Rockhampton community health centre, which is expected to be finished by mid 1996. Construction of the Rockhampton Base Hospital psychiatric unit is expected to start almost immediately. Some \$4.118m has been allocated in the Budget to ensure that this project goes ahead. I think that people now realise that, when the money appears in the Budget for projects such as the psychiatric unit, it means that the project will go ahead in that financial year. I can assure the people of Rockhampton that they will see progress on that site in the very near future.

The Goss Government knows that a lot of work has to be done to improve health services, but it cannot be done overnight. However, the important thing is that we are out there tackling the problems head on. As a measure of service delivery improvements effected by the Goss Government, public admissions to our hospitals now total 539,000 per year. That is an increase of 165,500, or 42 per cent, on the figures recorded in 1989-90. That means simply that in 1995 an extra 3,000 patients are being treated each week through the Queensland public hospital system than were being treated in 1989. That speaks well for the Government's funding commitments to the health system. The Government has indicated its preparedness to continue to tackle the waiting list problem with the funds that have been allocated for that purpose in the Budget.

I turn to education. This year represents another record Education budget aimed at

providing a high education standard to our young people. Among other things, the budget will help P & Cs purchase basic equipment, and it will provide more computers to prepare our children for the competitive future that they face. There is no doubt that computers are becoming one of the most important tools for our younger people. The Education budget this year is \$2.646 billion—up \$215m on that of last year and representing a 52 per cent increase on the 1989 budget of the previous Government. The level of funding provided by the National/Liberal Government in 1989 is beaten on every score by the funding provided by this Government, which has been prepared to put its money where its mouth is and get on with doing the job.

Some of the funding allocations in education include: \$51.3m to implement the recommendations arising from the Wiltshire curriculum review; \$68.4m for school grants to cover the operating costs of schools; and \$13m for the Helping P & Cs With the Basics Program to provide schools with essential equipment. It is interesting to note that non-Government schools will receive \$164m. I welcome that initiative. Community kindergartens will receive \$16.9m. Another important initiative in this year's Budget is the \$2.5m to assist schools to develop strategies for managing disruptive students. The sum of \$59.9m is provided for school transport, 81 per cent of which goes to rural and regional Queensland. People living in those areas probably do not appreciate the high proportion of the school transport budget that goes into transporting students in those areas to school.

I am happy to see \$22.7m allocated to distance education. My electorate of Fitzroy covers a very wide region, and many students in my electorate receive their education through the distance education program. I know that those students have been looking for assistance, and I am very pleased that the Government has recognised their need by making that additional funding available. The sum of \$23.5m is provided for textbook resources and student allowances. An amount of \$18.7m has been allocated to the Schools Information Management System, which for the first time will link all schools by computer. It is pleasing to see \$3.8m allocated in the Budget to assist students with disabilities. Not enough recognition is given to that problem. I am aware that many parents of such students are concerned about the level of assistance available to them. It is gratifying that the Government has recognised that problem by making that funding available. However, I

believe that in the future we will have to look more closely at this matter, because the problem exists, and it is one that causes grave concern to those parents who have children with disabilities.

The funding provided in this year's Budget for various education initiatives is extremely impressive. There are funds in the Budget to employ 51 more teachers to cater for increased enrolment growth; 20 extra teachers to staff new facilities; 45 more teachers for the LOTE program; 23 teachers for student behaviour management; and 45 teachers to implement the recommendations arising from the Shaping the Future curriculum review. Those teacher numbers are in addition to the 454 teachers appointed earlier this year. Teacher salaries this financial year will amount to \$1.254 billion. Since 1989, teacher numbers in the electorate of Fitzroy have increased from 405 to 407, despite student numbers decreasing by 187 over that period. That is a fair indication of the previous Government's attitude to teacher/student ratios in rural Queensland. I am grateful that under this Government the schools in my electorate are being treated more fairly.

An amount of \$9.2m has been provided for school grants. Since 1993, \$207,300 has gone to P & Cs to help them purchase the basics, including computers, printers, televisions, VCRs, brush-cutters and lawnmowers. After travelling around country schools, it has become evident to me how much those schools appreciate that assistance. Having only a small number of students, those schools do not have the funds to buy a lot of the items that larger schools take for granted. I believe that the Helping P & Cs With the Basics Program has been a big winner for the Government. I know that the students who attend those schools and their parents certainly appreciate that initiative.

In my electorate, \$130,000 has been provided to 33 schools as part of the \$40m plan to provide access to one computer for every 10 upper primary and secondary school students. That is another wonderful initiative that has been welcomed with open arms. Since 1993, \$106,000 has been made available for the purchase of such items as ride-on mowers and water coolers and to complete projects such as tennis courts. Since September 1992, \$858,000 has been spent on refurbishing schools in my electorate under the School Refurbishment Program. Many schools have been able to have painting done and other little odd jobs around the school that have needed attention for years and years. As a result of that program, the schools look

much brighter. All of those small measures make life at school much more pleasant for all students. The School Refurbishment Program has generated 997 weeks of work on projects such as internal/external painting, replacement of floor coverings, replacement or repair of various items of playground equipment, furniture replacement and landscaping.

Capital works since 1990 in the area now covered by the Fitzroy electorate amount to almost \$11m. Some of the latest major projects include a full general learning block at Mount Morgan Central State School worth \$433,000 and an amenities block, two-storey teaching block and preschool at the Port Curtis Road State School worth \$713,000. A new classroom is currently under construction at the Mackenzie River State School. The approval for that project has been welcomed warmly by the school. I was speaking to the students and teachers of that school last week, and they told me that they really appreciate the efforts of the Government to provide them with a school of a reasonable standard.

The Kalapa State School will also receive a new classroom over the coming months. I am pleased that in the Budget \$285,000 has been approved for a new modular classroom at the Valkyrie State School, which is on the northern end of the Dingo-Mount Flora Road. That school is certainly isolated, and I know that the parents are ecstatic that that classroom is about to be constructed for the benefit of their children. I am happy for those parents and students, who have been working hard to have the old tinnie-style buildings replaced. The Mackenzie River and Valkyrie schools are isolated, and as such they act as a focal point for the local community by providing a meeting place for people who live in the area. Those kids deserve the new buildings. Their parents have lobbied hard, and they have won. I am happy to see the old buildings go. They are a disgrace, they are unsafe, and they should never have been put there in the first place. Members opposite should be very careful before they make any adverse comments about the standard of schools, because the types of school building that I have had in my electorate—and in particular the ones at those schools that I have mentioned—are nothing short of a disgrace, and they should never have been constructed.

The Government's law and order budget across a range of portfolios will exceed \$1 billion for the first time. The Police Service budget is \$541m—up 11 per cent on last year's budget. Police numbers have increased

by 1,500 officers since 1989. There are now 6,340 operational officers. An extra 500 police will be appointed over the next three years. A new enterprise agreement will be funded to the tune of \$6.3m, which should put police on the job at night and on weekends. I know that this initiative is welcomed in rural communities in particular, because too often in the past we have had big events on a weekend, such as football carnivals and rodeos, and on most of those occasions police have not been working there. This new initiative should see police on the job when people expect them to be. One issue that we must take on board if we have more police out there arresting criminals is that we must have somewhere to place them when they are convicted. That is why the Goss Government has allocated \$16.5m for another 330 prison cells. As well, \$28.5m has been approved for work on the 400-cell Woodford Correctional Centre, which could have as many as 600 cells.

The Goss Government is taking action to address the law and order problem. It recognises that problems exist in Queensland, just as they do anywhere else in the Western World. We do not have a magic wand, but we are moving forward. With the help of the community, through such programs as Rural Watch and Neighbourhood Watch, we can get on top of those issues. I am proud to say that residents of my home town, Gracemere, are now leading the way. They have started up their own Neighbourhood Watch. Ninety-two per cent of the town responded favourably to setting up the program. Three districts are currently being established and the other two are signed up, ready to go. The residents of Gracemere would like a police station, but this is one great initiative that the community has taken up by itself. It is being pro-active and it is letting the criminals know that they do not want them in their town. I will continue to lobby the Police Service and the Minister for a permanent police presence in Gracemere.

The new Criminal Code is also mentioned, and that provides for increased sentences for serious crimes. It is the first overhaul of the Criminal Code in 100 years. I think that step is a credit to the Government. It shows that it is fair dinkum about crime and law and order in Queensland.

One of the most important infrastructure needs for country Queensland is roads. Roads are the vital link for people living in isolated communities in getting to regional centres such as Mackay, Rockhampton and, to a lesser extent, Emerald. Over the last few years, we have seen major projects completed on the Capricorn Highway, including the

elimination of the last remaining section of the narrow, single-lane bitumen between Blackwater and Emerald, at a cost of \$1.1m; reconstruction of 10.5 kilometres between Gogango and the Gogango Range at \$4.3m; and widening of 5.7 kilometres through Westwood, completed in March 1994, at a cost of \$5.5m. Other works that have improved safety for motorists in central Queensland and in the Fitzroy electorate include upgrading of level crossings at Bunows Street, Stanwell, at a cost of \$202,000; upgrading of the level crossing at Westwood, at a cost of \$223,000; and upgrading of the level crossing at Wycarbah, at a cost of \$85,000.

A major task for me has been to continue to obtain funding for the widening of the Dingo Mount Flora Road, also known as the Fitzroy Development Road. Preparation for the widening of the final 28 kilometre link between Mackenzie River State School and the Middlemount turn-off is now under way. This project will cost about \$4.5m. I was pleased to see that that money was actually allocated in the Budget. I was also pleased to see that \$2m has been approved in this year's Budget for sealing of the Fitzroy Development Road north of Woorabinda, for which a further \$2m will be provided in 1996. That is an important link for the people of Woorabinda who have had to travel over this very rough section of road. Once it is completed, it will give them a good link to the Capricorn Highway and then into Rockhampton. Major work will also be carried out on the Middlemount-Norwich Park mine road, at a cost of \$1.46m.

The Fitzroy electorate, which covers more than 33,000 square kilometres, takes in large areas of grazing and grain growing country. These areas have been suffering from drought for more than four years. I know that we have had some relief rains, but the drought has not broken in central Queensland. For many farmers, there has not been a decent crop-growing season for almost five years. Graziers battle with lack of pastures and limited water supplies. As I have said in this House on numerous occasions, there has been no breaking of the drought in my electorate.

People on the land are doing it tough, in particular those smaller holdings where families run the property and turn over only enough to survive during the good times. Without a cash flow, they are down on their knees. I should not have to remind members that those people must be supported. We have to do what we can to keep them on the land until the seasons come good, whatever the cost.

As the member for Fitzroy and the chairman of the Premier's Northern and Rural Task Force, I am pleased that the Government has given a commitment to supporting the rural sector through this drought. The dollars have been allocated in the Budget. They are there to help our rural producers and small-business people who rely on producers for their livelihood.

Assistance measures for rural producers in the 1995-96 Budget include a \$15m State contribution to the Rural Adjustment Scheme, providing interest subsidies of up to 100 per cent for drought-affected producers; \$12m in drought-freight subsidies, bringing to over \$50m expenditure on these subsidies since 1991-92; \$4.5m over three years in additional funding to address the problem of the spread of noxious weeds; and a total of over \$41m available for rural recovery in the form of the primary industries productivity enhancement scheme, the crop replanting and restocking loan schemes and the small business drought subsidy scheme.

I am very happy to see that those commitments are still in force for those people who are in need. I know that the Treasurer and the Premier have indicated their support and that they will continue to provide that support. I am also very pleased to see funding of \$46.1m allocated in the Budget for the local bodies capital works subsidy scheme.

Time expired.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South) (4.56 p.m.): In addressing this Budget debate, I want to begin by talking about a typical day at some hospitals in Queensland. In mid-December last year at the Royal Brisbane Hospital—the major hospital of this State—a 93-year-old woman sat in a wheelchair for 14 hours, waiting for admission to that hospital. That is how short of beds that hospital is since the Government closed 110 beds there.

Mr Bennett interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Power): Order! The member for Gladstone will return to his seat.

Mr HORAN: Perhaps a more striking story is the one of a patient who, on that very same day, was sent down from Rockhampton. The hospital was given some 18 hours' notice that a bed was needed for this person because he needed particular tests done. He waited all day at the hospital, fully expecting that he would get a bed. By 10 o'clock at night he gave up. He went over the road to Bowen Park and camped there for a few hours. Then he got frightened of being mugged, so at 1

o'clock he caught a cab—at the cost of \$70 return—out to a mate's place at Ipswich. That is what the hospital system in Queensland has come to. Under this Treasurer and this Government we have lost 2,500 beds, we have seen theatres closed, we have seen the number of staff reduced and we have seen misdirected budgets.

I will also cite a few regional cases. A lady from Charleville, who came to Toowoomba Hospital, was prepared for an operation. She was fourth in line to go in and was lying on a trolley outside the theatre. The operation was cancelled because there was not enough money to pay the staff overtime, so she was sent back to her bed and then had to go back to Charleville. In the last few weeks, another provincial person—a young lad from Mackay—needed serious oral surgery. That surgery was cancelled twice in Mackay, so he was then sent down by bus to the Royal Brisbane Hospital for his operation. Once again, the operation was cancelled.

Those examples are all within the past few months or few weeks. But what is happening today? This morning, at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, surgery due to start at 7 a.m. on an abdominal aneurism was cancelled. This is a serious condition in which the aorta could burst and a person could be in grave risk of losing his life. At 7 a.m., the whole list for surgery was cancelled because intensive care at Princess Alexandra Hospital was full. Staff for two entire theatres—specialists and nurses—were standing by, being paid, and ready to operate. This morning, two full theatres were cancelled at Princess Alexandra Hospital simply because there is not enough intensive care at that hospital.

For two years, directors of intensive care throughout this State, particularly in south-east Queensland, have been on their knees, begging the Government and the Health Department to do something about intensive care. But what happens? Nothing! Front-line, emergency, priority services are the services that have been let down by the Goss Government. That is what has brought about this health crisis in Queensland—a health crisis for which the Goss Government is culpable. At the pending election, it will get voted out because of it.

The Treasurer is in the Chamber. He is one of the people responsible for this crisis. He throws out hundreds of millions of dollars and gets no result. It is like the father of a family saying, "Here you are, kids, have as much as you like. We do not care what you do with it."

There is almost \$1.3m extra in the Health budget, yet we are experiencing the biggest health crisis that this State has ever seen.

What are some of the aspects of this health crisis? What is really happening to people? Let us run through a couple of hospitals. The Royal Brisbane Hospital, the major hospital in the State that used to be the flagship, lost 450 beds at a time when it was operating at 100 per cent. So where do the patients go? The other day, when I was delivering a speech in this place, a Labor member interjected and said that beds are not important. What are patients expected to do? Are they expected to lie on the floor or, like the man I referred to earlier, go over the road and sit in the park? That is what it has come to—Third World services.

The Royal Brisbane Hospital has an elective surgery ceiling of 30 per week; it cannot take any more than that. Three theatres have been closed on a rolling basis and there has been a formal strategy of closed theatres, one by one, since last November, when the Government also closed 110 beds. This month, about 150 beds have been lost at that hospital; there is nowhere for patients to go.

An example of how stupid the planning of this Goss Government has been is that it opened about 120 beds at the Caboolture Hospital—and the National Party purchased that land so that there could be a new hospital for the booming population in that area—but it closed 450 beds behind them. What happens to the half a million people or so who rely on the Royal Brisbane Hospital? What happens to all the people from all over the State? Forty per cent of the patients of that hospital come from other parts of the State. Where do they go if they do not have specialist services in their own town? There is absolutely nowhere for them to go. There is just absolutely nowhere for them to go. The same hospital is coping a reduction in cleaning services. Instead of wards being cleaned every day, they are being cleaned two days out of three. On the weekends, the same staff who in their normal daily session are supposed to clean two full wards plus all the toilets and everything else in seven hours, have to do it in five hours. How is that for proper management and proper quality of service at a hospital? The tragedy is that things that are happening—

Mr T. B. Sullivan: There are fewer people there on the weekends.

Mr HORAN: I am talking about the same two wards in five hours. The tragedy of all this is that the surgery that is being cancelled is

not just any surgery, it is right across-the-board. It is cancer, eye and orthopaedic surgery. Across the river at the Princess Alexandra Hospital there is an absolute crisis in intensive care. The Opposition brought this matter up. No-one else can bring it up because of this stupid system of regionalisation and bureaucracy under which no-one on the staff can mention anything any more. The only people they have got to bring it up on their behalf are Opposition members, yet we are the ones who get criticised for scaremongering when we do bring it up.

But what happened this week? A year ago we mentioned the dreadful conditions in the accident and emergency department, the shortage of space and the shortage of staff. Fortunately, by Wednesday, we had forced the Government to announce that it is going to spend \$5.5m on the accident and emergency department. That amount of money was not even mentioned in the budget.

What is wrong with that hospital? Lack of intensive care! Three theatres have been closed every day since last August. Two hundred and fifty beds in that hospital have closed. The radiology department is in absolutely dire straits. There are only four staff left out of nine. In intensive care only two specialists are left, and one of those has submitted his resignation. What is going to happen there? There will be absolutely nothing left. All this has been brought about by this system of bureaucratic management under the Goss Government where, no matter what that hospital calls for, no matter what it asks for on behalf of its patients and on behalf of the staff, it is provided with absolutely nothing.

It reminds me of an experienced Aboriginal health worker who came to me and said, "Under your mob we used to put bandages on people and we used to treat them. Under this mob we put posters on the wall." That is what this Government has been all about—posters on the wall, bureaucracy, all sorts of public relations exercises—but when it comes to front-line services like accident and emergency, intensive care, theatres and beds in the hospitals, that is where it falls down. These are the important things that people need.

The QE II, on the same side of the river as the PA, lost its accident and emergency, intensive care, cardiac care, maternity and medical wards. Again, how stupid was the planning there? The National Party had bought the land for the Logan Hospital and

had built Stage 1 as an additional hospital for the growing population of the southern end of Brisbane. What did the health planners of the Goss Government do? They closed whole wards at the QE II Hospital. What did this Government do in a public relations strategy to try to cover up what it has done? One of the floors at the QE II Hospital was three-quarters empty. At a cost of half a million dollars the Government shifted one whole geriatric ward from the PA Hospital to the QE II, leaving the one at the PA empty, and now it is going to transfer the eye bank. It will then say that the QE II Hospital is full, but at the other end of the scale there are empty floors at the PA.

Other hospitals in growth areas such as the Logan Hospital and the Caboolture Hospital suffer from lack of staff, staff shortages and lack of specialists, but they have nowhere to send their patients. Patients are being sent from Logan to the PA, but there is no intensive care or specialist treatment available at the PA. The Caboolture Hospital had a maternity crisis at the beginning of this year and almost had to close down its maternity section, in which some 90 babies a month were being delivered. An additional \$100,000 was given to that hospital to open a maternity section that delivers 90 babies a month—a budget increase from \$14.3m to \$14.4m, and the Government calls that good planning and good management.

The Mater Hospital is another crucial hospital. It is a large and important hospital. This is how this Government has let down the people on the south side of Brisbane. Every single elector on the south side of Brisbane should vote this mob out because for six years in every single aspect of hospitals it has let them down consistently. The Mater has been put onto bypass for accident, emergency and intensive care. There is a lack of money—\$4.8m short because of the ridiculous decisions made to close down and cut back at the QE II and the PA. The Government has turned its back on Greenslopes Hospital. The Mater has had to bear the brunt of all this. The Government has shortchanged it by \$4.8m. Again, the Opposition stood up and forced the Government to give some more money to the maternity section, but there are going to be radical changes at the Mater Mothers, and people from certain postcodes will not be able to have their babies there. The Mater Hospital is on bypass for accident and emergency and intensive care. Elective surgery there is to be cancelled for four weeks. Once again, it was only Opposition pressure that got the Government on the telephone and reluctantly reopened the Mater. The Government threw a

few more dollars to the Mater. The Government is still trying to cut back to meet this budget shortfall.

The Prince Charles Hospital on the north side is a most important cardiac surgery hospital. The waiting list now is 70 more than it was late last year. The Minister, in one of his usual public relations stunts, announced that there was money available to carry out an increased number of operations. However, it is exactly the same amount that the previous Minister had last year. It comes every year. The Government announced it as though it was some big plan, yet we now have 70 more patients on the waiting list than there were at this time last year.

The Nambour Hospital is 150 staff short. Because it has lost many of its services Gympie Hospital is relying on Nambour Hospital. Some elective surgery at the Nambour Hospital has been cancelled for months and will not recommence until 30 June because it simply does not have the money. At the other end of the coast, the Gold Coast Hospital is experiencing cut-backs in elective surgery around all the school holidays and around Easter for four weeks. Like other hospitals—Townsville is one—the Gold Coast is moving into this new system of what the Goss Government calls quiet days. We have quiet weeks such as the one that was experienced at the Townsville Hospital in May—it is to have another one in June—when the hospital tries to get people to go away on holidays and wards are closed down. Now on the Gold Coast they are not only having quiet weeks but also quiet days. We saw this contraction of services to emergency and semi-urgent, including quiet weeks and the expansion of the closing down of elective surgery around all school holiday periods for up to four weeks at a time.

In Toowoomba, operations are regularly cancelled and beds closed. The hospital even closed the ward that housed the high dependency unit. This hospital does not have enough intensive care beds, but at least it had a small high dependency unit. The Government closed down a ward, but part of that ward was the high dependency unit. The same situation applies all over the State.

Maryborough Hospital, once one of the proudest hospitals in this State, has not even had a staff surgeon and a staff anaesthetist. In Gladstone, because of the Budget blowout, wards have closed, patients sent to other towns, and staff numbers reduced. In the Rockhampton Hospital, probably the worst of all in the State, with absolutely dreadful waiting

lists, there is a dearth of specialists and a lack of nursing staff. Mackay Hospital has had its weekend closures and all the rest of the things we have seen in the other hospitals. The Ipswich Hospital is going through a reduction of some 40 to 50 beds and cut-backs in the cleaning staff are proposed.

During the rule of the Goss Government, and particularly during the height of this crisis during the past year, we have seen unprecedented public protests in Queensland. We saw hundreds of people move out of the Princess Alexandra Hospital, including clerks, nurses, doctors, technicians, gardeners—the lot! They were all disgusted with the Goss Government. We saw major protests at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. Because they were absolutely disgusted with the type of management by the Goss Government of their health system, 1,200 people attended a public meeting on the Atherton Tableland.

What happened when all these protests occurred? The Premier kicked a few unions in the shins. He said, "I want the health crisis off the press, off the front page of the papers." What did we get? We got a memorandum of cooperation. One night here in Brisbane the health unions met and were told that they had to sign a memorandum of cooperation. They all said, "No, we don't want to. We are disgusted with the system." The meeting was closed, the desk was slammed. They were all told, "You will all sign it by the end of the week", and that is what happened. The staff will tell how they feel about the memorandum of cooperation and what a sham it has been. We have even had the Premier ringing around speaking to experienced people from Health saying, "What is wrong with Health?" Why can he not ask his Minister or his senior staff? The place is riddled with people who have not got a clue, people brought from over the border who have never been involved in Health, or who have had very little clinical experience, so there is no-one else to ask. I will tell the Premier what is wrong with the health system, if he does not know. Four things are wrong. Firstly, when the Goss Government took office it got rid of all the good, experienced Queensland administrators who knew about our unique decentralised system and it brought in people from interstate who did not have a clue about the Queensland system and who had very little clinical knowledge.

Secondly, the Premier introduced a system known as regionalisation, which, at the outset, people thought had some potential. It was sold on the basis that it would reduce the bureaucracy and that it would truly devolve responsibility for budgeting and decision

making. It has been an absolute, multimillion-dollar failure. It has cost this State millions of dollars that should have gone towards jobs for nurses and doctors. Regionalisation has removed all of the genuine community input that existed in the past. In its place are 13 mini Health Departments. Fourteen bureaucracies now exist, each with their own glossy newspapers, journalists, policy officers, project officers, secondments, consultants and all the others. Each costs millions of dollars in cash and each imposes millions of dollars in workload and costs on the other levels of administration and operation beneath them—the sectors, hospitals and community health centres.

Thirdly, we have witnessed the misdirected Budgets, and I have given enough examples of what has happened to the hospitals. In spite of all the money allocated to Health—\$2.43 billion last year and \$2.7 billion this year; a \$158m increase over last year—the biggest and greatest health crisis of all time has occurred.

Finally, I turn to the unfunded wage rises—and still they come. The classification remuneration system and the nurses award structure are legitimate wage rises, but they were not funded properly by this Government. It is the greatest con of all time. This year, hospitals will need to find \$38m to cover cash cutbacks, just to fund the unfunded portion of the enterprise bargaining agreement. That is in addition to approximately \$45m dollars of efficiency gains that they have to find. Where are they going to find \$38m cash to fund the unfunded part of the enterprise bargain? They do not sell their services. Everyone who turns up on the doorstep has to be admitted free. Once again, the Premier's policies—the Government's policies—are totally wrong in relation to health.

What else is wrong? The politics of health are wrong. This Government's first priority is not to serve the people in the hospitals; this Government's first priority is to set up a network so that it can stay in Government. This is the Government that spent nearly \$1m on TV ads. How much does it spend on inserts in the local papers around Brisbane? This is a Government that is more concerned with employing journalists and liaison officers than employing nurses, doctors and dentists.

This is the Government that has misplaced planning. I have spoken about the fiasco of the QE II Hospital. The Nationals bought land and built the Logan hospital. What could have been a good scheme has been spoilt by the bad planning of the Government.

Does the Premier know about the dental problems? On the Gold Coast, 16,000 people are on the waiting lists. Virtually every centre has shortages of staff. Talk about our hospital services declining to Third World standards. We now have a dearth of public dentists in the school system, yet this Government plans to expand the service into the secondary school system. Do honourable members know what will happen? Whereas under the Nationals the primary school students were checked yearly, they will now be checked every second year. Whereas a professional dentist was always in charge of the examination and the setting out of the treatment program for the dental technicians, under the new agreement there are no examinations by dentists. In 1989, the Premier wrote to the Dental Association saying that he did not believe that school children should be seen by anything other than professional dentists. Now the kids at the schools cannot even be seen by a professional dentist!

We have witnessed the disgraceful, traitorous act of closing down the Wacol rehabilitation centre and the downgrading of Biala. We will stand up for the unfortunate people of our community. If the yuppies in the Labor Party want to close down those centres, we will reopen them. If they want to forget about the blue-collar workers, we will not. We will think about those people and care for them.

This Budget is a total admission that the Goss Government has it wrong. The most important point that I raise relates to the new \$181m plan. If honourable members see past the hoo-ha and analyse it properly, they will see that the \$15m per year that has been allocated to attack the waiting lists is to be used for about 20 hospitals throughout the State. This Budget is an admission that the Goss Government has failed totally and consistently in hospital and health services year after year for six years. Six years is enough. Queensland people once had confidence in the Queensland health system. Even the Hawke Labor Government review determined that it had the best and most efficient delivery of health services in Australia. Under the coalition, the Queensland hospital system could and did meet demand. We met the demand—not like the mob opposite. Six years of Goss has destroyed all that. In a joint press statement with the Premier, the Health Minister has admitted formally that there is a need to restore confidence. It is time to stop saying "sorry" and put the coalition back in.

Time expired.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN (Chermside) (5.14 p.m.): I rise to support the Appropriation Bills before the House and congratulate the Treasurer on producing a Budget that will benefit all Queenslanders. This is a true Labor Budget.

Mr De Lacy: Why have you got a much more practical attitude than the previous speaker?

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: I think part of the problem is that the members opposite have, in fact, been influenced by their leaders. I do not think that I have seen two more negative people than Mr Borbidge and Mrs Sheldon.

Mr De Lacy: Very negative.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Very negative, very whingeing and very whining. When I debate the Health Estimates, I will comment on some of those traits.

This is a true Labor Budget, because it is one that gives the greatest emphasis to the services for people: health, education, law enforcement and family services. It does that within a disciplined economic framework that is the envy of other States. I will refer to the economic basis behind the Budget. The Goss Government has set these high standards while delivering the increased expenditure in the important areas that I have outlined. We have not had to increase State taxes for that.

I am absolutely amazed that Mrs Sheldon does not know the difference between rates of tax and total revenue. I do not purport to be a budding Treasurer, an accountant or somebody expert with figures, but even a person with a basic understanding of the economy should be able to differentiate between the rates of tax and the growth in total taxation revenue that results from growth within the economy. I have heard the Treasurer try to point this out to Mrs Sheldon on numerous occasions, but the message has still not got through. So, when she sees a growth in total revenue, she says, "Ah! Taxes have increased." She does not understand some of the basics of our economy.

The Government has reduced the State debt and made Queensland's reputation as the most financially secure State in Australia the envy of other States. This will lead to a better life for Queenslanders. This will be achieved through the strongest social infrastructure program in Australia, which has come about through the disciplined approach of previous years. We are now reaping the dividends of that disciplined financial management. Our growth of 4.3 per cent in the coming year, compared with 3.8 per cent

nationally, puts us in a good position for many aspects of this Budget. As much as the Opposition wants to be negative, we are not going to be and Queenslanders will not be. We will have a positive approach to the coming 12 months. After the election, when we return with the third Goss Labor Government, we will continue to implement these policies, which will bring even greater benefits to Queenslanders.

Our growth of GSP in the past three years of over 20 per cent, compared with less than 10 per cent for the rest of Australia, is a stark realisation of the Treasurer's good handling of the economy.

As was pointed out by my colleague the member for Gladstone, the best assistance we can give any family is regular income from a steady job. The creation of over 200,000 new jobs in Queensland since the election of the Goss Government stands as one of the greatest tributes and one of the greatest contributions that we have made to Queensland families. I support the trilogy of financial strength that the Treasurer has outlined to us on many occasions.

As to the comments made by the Opposition spokesperson on Health—it strikes me that the members of the Opposition are like vultures hovering over the sick people of Queensland asking, "How can we feed off their suffering?" I will not go so far as to say that they are political maggots who are feeding off the pain and suffering of Queenslanders, but they may be. The Opposition spokesperson talks repeatedly about fewer beds, and he equates that with less service. He knows that that is not true, but it is an easy statement to make. Beds have been closed in Queensland hospitals, and beds should have been closed. As the former Health Minister pointed out, and as I have seen and experienced myself, many of those beds were on verandas—filled-in verandas.

Mr McElligott: They were in toilets.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: They were in old toilet areas. There is now a much more efficient use of beds. A simple example is that previously, procedures after which the patient's recovery period used to take six to eight days would mean that a single bed in a ward held four patients a month. Because of changes to procedure, improvements in operating procedures or in the operations of the hospital, in terms of a patient's stay in hospital the time taken for many procedures has been halved. So the one bed is now able to cope with six to 10 patients a month. If we maintained exactly the same number of beds there would in fact

not be the capability to more than double the total surgery, operating and on-costs if we maintained the same rate of operations. Improved procedures have been implemented but there is still a significant increase in cost. Although a procedure may now take three to four days whereas previously it took six to eight days—half the time—there are more high-cost, intensive-care days, operation days and testing days. So there is a much greater cost. However, this Labor Government said that it would put in the funds required for those increases, and it has done that over the last five years. The 11 per cent increase in the Health budget is stark testimony to the fact that Queensland hospitals are treating 3,000 more patients a week than when the Nationals were in power. That means that 10,000 to 11,000 people a week are being treated in Queensland hospitals compared with the 7,000 to 8,000 people a week who were treated under the National Party system. If the Nationals were running this State, we would have an extra 3,000 people a week on waiting lists. Thank goodness we do not have the Nationals in Government! A world-class facility such as the Prince Charles Hospital, which I am honoured to have located in my electorate, is treating more people with more complex illnesses, and it is doing so more efficiently and quickly. More people than ever before are being treated for cardio-thoracic and other procedures at the Prince Charles Hospital.

Once I made the comment that some of the wards in the RBH were 20 years out of date. The nurse to whom I was speaking, and who worked there, said, "No, they are 40, 50 years out of date." Why? For 30 years the Governments of the National Party and the Liberal Party did nothing about rebuilding them. They stand as stark evidence of those Governments' lack of regard for people. If Mr Horan was honest with the people of this State he would say, "Yes, there are major problems at the RBH, but let us look at who was responsible for them for the last 40 years." The Opposition had control of them for 32 of the last 40 years. The Opposition let them run down. It allowed beds to be put on filled-in verandas. It allowed the procedures and operations to reach the stage at which they were a disaster.

Mr Littleproud: Who had it before that?

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: The Labor Party did. I will stand by Ted Hanlon's introduction of Queensland's hospital system any time. I say to Mr Littleproud that I do not know of any Queenslander who would not have wanted

that system to have been established by Ted Hanlon.

The metropolitan hospital plan is extremely complex. Three or four of the major hospitals in Brisbane will set the direction of the health system throughout Queensland. Through the work of previous Labor Health Ministers and the current Health Minister, the plan is being put into place, and funding has been made available. Unlike Opposition members, who spoke a lot but did not put their money where their mouths are, this Government is doing that.

The \$21m this year that will be used to attack the problem of waiting lists is welcomed. The Goss Labor Government is proud to be able to treat more patients in the last five years than the Nationals ever did and to have an extra 3,000 people a week receiving assistance in our hospitals. Mental health has been given a great boost. I am pleased to say that the Winston Noble Unit, which is also located at the Prince Charles Hospital and which provides an excellent service to the patients of the northern suburbs of Brisbane, has received over \$367,000 for the upgrading of its facility. I know that the dedicated staff at that centre will use that money well to provide an even better service. As well, the \$4m that will be used to provide extra staff for mental health, that is, for the clinical staff, and an extra \$1m for community organisations that are providing support for people with mental illness, is most welcome.

The amount of \$35m over the next two years which has been allocated to modernise equipment in public hospitals will not solve the problem. However, it is a start, and it is a significant step. It is a step that the National Party and the Liberal Party, when they were in Government, would not and did not take. Mr Horan and other members are only too willing to criticise the equipment that is in our hospitals. They say that it is out of date. However, when they had the opportunity to upgrade that equipment they did not, and they stand condemned by their inaction.

As a parent with a young family—and fortunately a wife who keeps a very close eye on the immunisation program needed for our children—I support the child immunisation program. I would welcome any steps that could be taken to ensure that we have a checking system throughout our Queensland society to ensure that immunisation rates are very high. Since there are key catchment times, such as at preschool or the start of schooling and, with some children, Year 8, I support an extension of that system in

cooperation with the Health and Education Departments so that immunisation rates in Australia can be high enough to eradicate certain diseases.

Again, members heard some whingeing and moaning from the previous speaker about the school dental service. Where was the school dental service under former Governments? It was very minimal. We are now going to have over 80,000 students in Years, 8, 9 and 10 who will be receiving the benefits of the secondary school dental program.

The Opposition spokesperson on Health spoke about the bureaucracy of the Health Department. I would like to take him up on some of his comments which were incorrect and ill founded. Previously, there were about 900 people employed in central office. Now, about 390 are employed in the head office of Queensland Health, with about another 150 staff funded by the Federal Government and about 260 staff in the regions—a total of about 800. That represents an overall decrease of about 22 per cent. In relation to those 260 people who are located in the regions—the Opposition is in a very invidious position. This Government has located decision makers in places such as Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay and Cairns to make decisions for the people of Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay and Cairns. This Government has put the decision makers into the community. They live in regional and remote communities and they make decisions for the people in those communities. For a party that is supposed to have a special kinship with the rural and remote regions of this State, the National Party is an abject failure.

I am only too happy to hear from all those people who work in the bureaucracy of regional health authorities and live in regional and remote areas, because this Opposition spokesperson is going to sack them. This Opposition spokesman is going to say, "We do not want decision makers on health living in our local community." The Opposition wants to centralise them in Brisbane. This is the Joh Bjelke-Petersen, Nazi-Fascist style: bring them all back; let us dictate it from central Brisbane. We will not be doing that. Fortunately, under the next Labor Health Minister we will still have people in regional health authorities providing services close to where people live.

Honourable members opposite have also complained that there are more people on waiting lists. I believe that is correct. Under the Nationals and Liberals we did not have long

waiting lists. That was for a very simple reason: their Governments did not provide the services that this Government is providing and, therefore, there were no waiting lists for services which did not exist. Honourable members opposite wanted the old United States system—in other words, "If you've got the money, come in. If you haven't, you are not having that operation." We now provide those services and operations. There are waiting lists, but people are being treated. Compared with the record under the Nationals, under Labor an extra 3,000 Queenslanders per week are being treated.

As to the advertising that Mr Horan referred to—I am appalled at his lack of knowledge of primary health care and the emphasis put on it by health professionals. Unfortunately, having come from a National Party background, Mr Horan is used to the old Joh Bjelke-Petersen days of self-promotion.

Ms Spence: Queensland Unlimited.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: Yes, Queensland Unlimited; that is correct. The honourable member for Toowoomba South does not understand the benefit of primary health care promotion, which is for the good of everybody.

I will digress slightly to a philosophical point on health. The mission statements of the Department of Health mention helping people to better health and providing a caring health service. Recently, some people in the community have been wrongly saying that the Goss Government, through the Criminal Code and its health system, is actually going to encourage euthanasia. That is an absolute untruth. I am extremely critical of some groups within our society, especially the Right to Life Australia Group. It is an extremist, irrational, intolerant and inherently destructive group which is spreading untruths about this whole issue.

Recently, I was fortunate to attend a seminar held at the Parliamentary Annexe by the Thomas More Society. Experts in palliative care and people who had worked in pain clinics explained very clearly that pain relief is needed for people in severe pain, especially those in the latter stages of their lives. If as a consequence of appropriate pain relief or other necessary medical intervention the patient dies, there is no crime or sin and no blame to be attached. The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away that life. The medical and nursing staff and other carers have provided the best possible and appropriate palliative care. That is a totally different situation from a case in which one person gives another person an unnecessarily high

dosage of medication with the knowledge and intent of deliberately ending the person's life.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: The Opposition spokesperson asked, "Where does the church stand on that?" The major church representatives have spoken with the Attorney-General. People with whom I have spoken have worked in places such as the Mount Olivet Hospital, which would have to be regarded as the pre-eminent hospice for the dying in Queensland. They agree with the legislation and know the difference between proper palliative care and euthanasia.

A group called Queensland Right to Life is a much more reasonable, rational, commonsense group. It is supportive of constructive approaches to looking at human life and it is tolerant in its approach. That group must not be confused with an extremist and irrational group called Right to Life Australia, the Queensland branch of which has been recently circulating material to members. It has been putting forward falsehoods and distortions in an attempt to say that this Government is a supporter of euthanasia. Although the names of those organisations are very similar, they have very little in common and their approaches are miles apart. The proposed Criminal Code has the support of the major churches.

Mr Stephan: You can't debate a Bill that is before the House.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: It is not before the House, it is proposed.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN: It is before the House. The new code will protect in law what is happening in hospices such as the Mount Olivet Hospital. Our health system will continue to work to give palliative care to those in need.

In conclusion, I support the Budget allocations for education, health and family services. I congratulate the Treasurer.

Time expired.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Western Downs) (5.36 p.m.): It is part of the role of members of Parliament to move among their electorates and to take note of how people are going. Obviously, we all do that. Most of us also travel widely around the State. Over recent years, I have not been able to help noticing that the people whom I represent and many other Queenslanders, regardless of their occupation, are doing it pretty tough. Earlier, the member for Fitzroy spoke about the things that he observes in his electorate, which has a

rural base and is not unlike mine. There are also a couple of large towns in my electorate.

Whether one is suffering from the effects of drought, is a wage earner or is a person in small business and no matter where one is in the State, with a few exceptions people are doing it pretty tough. I am reminded that, as members of the Parliament and the Government of Queensland, it is our role to provide the best government and the services necessary for the people of Queensland to enhance their way of life. That is the aspect about which I wish to bring the Government to task over this year's Budget.

After listening to the comments from various speakers representing the Government, I agree that, yes, the Government has disposed of lots of public money—a record Budget. I am mindful of that. At the same time, I am also aware that ordinary Queenslanders are struggling. The Government has plenty of money, yet the families who provide this money are struggling. There is something wrong.

That is certainly true socialism. In fact, the Government has said that this is proudly a true socialist Budget.

More and more people in our community are becoming dependent upon the Government for some sort of income supplement or access to services. More than ever before people are being helped out with rent, child care, family and farm support. That is all part and parcel of socialism. I would imagine that this is probably done by design by some members opposite. I know that some members opposite have a strong concern for the people whom they represent. I give them credit for that. But at some stage there has to be a balance, that is, a point at which we are better off allowing people to look after their own affairs rather than taking so much money from them that they have to depend upon the Government for all sorts of services.

Many people have said that so many people in Australia have their hand out for some sort of Government support—it is almost over 50 per cent—that it is almost locking people into dependency on the Government so that they will vote for socialist Governments. What a sad situation.

Let us examine why families are struggling. The first and foremost reason is that the national economy is being mismanaged. The Queensland Government is not to blame for that, but its colleagues are. The amount of money that is going from the incomes of ordinary Queensland families to the Government is a factor, whether it be

through direct or indirect taxation—the hidden taxes. First, let us address the issue of hidden taxes. My colleagues the shadow Treasurer and the Leader of the Opposition were speaking about all of the things going on through corporatisation. That is a very clever way for a Government to gather more income but not get the blame for it. That issue has already been debated at length in this House.

The next factor is direct taxes—the Government charges, fees licences, fines and so on, be they at a State or Federal level. The Government is talking about serving the people, yet the Federal Treasurer recently came up with a brand-new increase in sales tax on motor cars—\$1,000. Honourable members know how big a struggle it is for the ordinary family to afford a motor car. That increase is another impost on people from the Federal level. I am interested in what is happening at the State level, because imposts are being imposed from that level also. As I move around the State and in my electorate, when I go out socially I cannot help noticing the standard of dress of the sorts of people whom I represent, and the way in which they relate to one another when they go out. Now, most people go to their local show out of a sense of duty—for example, "We must make the local show survive while we are in tough times." In the past, at a social event such as a debutante ball almost everyone dressed up in a suit. And the ladies would have on expensive evening wear. These days, their standard of dress reflects their financial struggle.

Mr Bredhauer interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The member should keep his eyes open. He is out in the bush at Cook all the time. I have my eyes open. The evidence is clear that those people are struggling, and it does Government members no credit to skite that they have lots of money to throw around and to claim that they are really looking after people, when the truth is that they are taking that money off the people in the first place.

I turn to the inefficiencies in the delivery of services through Government departments. One can always point to the wastage of money occurring in that regard. The Government is out there selling the record spending provided for in this Budget. It claims to be providing services. This is being hailed as a social welfare Budget. Government members cannot deny—in fact, they are proud of it—that this Budget is something like \$2 billion larger than the Budget delivered by the Ahern Government in 1989. That is one hell of

a lot of money, but it is the public's money. The Government boasts about the sorts of services that it is delivering, but it has its priorities wrong. The reality is that some people are hurting extremely badly.

Mr Bennett: Have you forgotten there is a drought?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I am aware that a drought prevails, and the people whom I represent are closely allied to all the difficulties that it brings. But it is more than that.

The people of Queensland read the newspapers and saw all the promotional material outlining more money for this and more money for that. They know that the budget for the Family Services Department is up 17 per cent or 18 per cent, but they are starting to ask: are we getting value for money? Research is starting to indicate that National/Liberal Party Governments were good managers; they delivered the services. Under those Governments there were no waiting lists. We had a good education system—as good as any in Australia—that was backed up by high standards of performance. Research is starting to indicate that there is a lot of money there but that we are not really any better off.

The member for Toowoomba South spoke at length about all the difficulties being experienced in the delivery of health services. I can relate stories told to me by teachers in my electorate. They have no job satisfaction. They tell me that there is a lot more money available but the standard of education is no higher. I have an interest in Emergency Services, as that is part of my shadow portfolio responsibilities. Last Tuesday morning, 500 desperate firemen who are dedicated to emergency services had to march on Parliament. Their major concern is the wastage of money occurring in the Queensland Fire Service. The main issue that they identified was expenditure on corporate services. I addressed that delegation and said, "We are going to get rid of the director-general, and we will appoint a commissioner to run the emergency services of each department." Upon hearing that statement, those firemen cheered. Then the Leader of the Opposition said, "We will get rid of the fattest of the fat cats", and they cheered again because they know that the Government is wasting money in that area.

This whole problem has arisen because of the philosophy of the new Labor Party. There is a new elite in Australia, there is a new elite in Queensland, there is a new elite in the Labor Party in Queensland, and there is a new elite in this Government. Those who have now

grabbed the power in the Labor Party in Queensland are the very blokes who, about 20 years ago, went to university and got a degree for nothing. The ordinary old battlers of Queensland paid for those fellows to get their degrees. Those fellows had a desire to become the new rulers; and when they did, they wanted the perks. They are always backed up by their departmental staff, who have the same sort of background. They all got an education for nothing—a free education at the public expense—and now they are the new ruling class. They are the new elite. However, the new elite has forgotten the poor old battler out there—the blue-collar worker, the small businessman, the average old Joe, the bloke who has always battled and always put a few bob in the bucket when the Labor Party fellows went around saying, "We will look after you. We will look after the battlers." Remember good old Tom Burns! All of a sudden there is a new elite, and they are looking after their partners. Many of those partners do not carry the names of their husbands, but they have high-level jobs. It is not really obvious, but they are there. That is the new elite, and the ordinary bloke out there who once supported those people now despises them.

Let me talk a bit more about some of the blue-collar workers who still work for the Government. In my electorate, there were many railway workers who all worked in small towns and lived in houses worth about \$25,000. In came David Hamill, Rhodes scholar. He directed the PSMC to reorganise the railway department. They shifted those blokes here and there, and the poor bloke who once had a \$50,000 house has been transferred to a place where it costs \$100,000 to buy a house. He now has a \$50,000 debt to pay off, and he has only 20 more years to work. The Government claims to have done such people a good turn!

Mr Pearce: You just said, "Sack them."

Mr LITTLEPROUD: This Government has sacked them; plenty of fellows have certainly lost their jobs. They have either been relocated and are now out of pocket or they have lost their jobs. Members should ask the member for Gregory how he gets on with those railway workers in central and far-north Queensland.

Mr Horan: Workshops.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: They love workshops!

Those sorts of blokes, who once joined the public service and said, "I am in for good. I have got a job for good", now find that they

have no job security. They are told that they might be retrenched next week. The Government says, "We will give you a redundancy payment. You are 45. You have a bit of money to pay on your house. We will give you \$10,000 or \$15,000. Go and try to get a job out there." The reality is that there is a long waiting list, and those people cannot find a job. It is no wonder that they despise the new elite! The Government has a lot of money, but the poor old average Queenslander is struggling.

I now want to talk in detail about this Budget and the policy statement that came prior to it titled From Strength to Strength. It has been said previously by members on this side of the House that although this Budget is big on gathering revenue and big on spending, it is lacking in vision. I want to spend a little time talking about that. I turn first to the generation of power. Unfortunately, Governments have to plan for the generation of power 10 years before it is actually needed. In that regard, Governments take a bit of a gamble when they invest in power generation projects, because they cannot force people to sign a contract to say that they definitely will require power in 10 years' time. Governments must read the market to a certain extent.

After its election to office, this Government wound back power generation projects. I can remember Tommy Burns and other Government members when they were in Opposition saying that Queensland had power to burn and accusing the then Government of wasting money. Now it seems that the Eastlink project will go ahead; Queensland will connect to northern New South Wales and buy its power from there. However, no guarantees have been given that that project will proceed, and that points to this Government's general lack of planning.

I would have thought that, given that this is an election year and in recognition of the high electricity demands that this State will face in the future, the Government would have bitten the bullet and announced the construction of a coal-fired power station. However, the Government did not do so because it does not want to put the greens off side. To hell with the power needs of Queensland in 10 years' time; the Government does not want to get the greens off side before the election. The Tully/Millstream project is another power generation option, but the greens also stopped that. Power is needed in north Queensland. The member for Tablelands can tell members about the threat of blackouts and brownouts up there. However, the

Government has removed the Tully/Millstream project from the agenda.

The Government has the opportunity to embrace the new technology offered by gas-fired power stations. That is a positive development, and one would have thought that the Government would commit itself to that cleaner form of power generation, but it has failed to do so. The Government is lacking vision in the areas that really make people sit up, take notice and be proud of Queensland. Because of that lack of vision, the result is that this Budget has been forgotten by the newspapers within 48 hours.

I turn now to the subject of water. A few months ago, Terry Mackenroth took some leading business people on a trip in an aeroplane. They dotted all over rural Queensland and had a talk to people. I read with interest what the ordinary people had to say. They said, "We need water." In places such as Goondiwindi, St George and Emerald—

Mr FitzGerald: And Gatton.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I have excluded the honourable member there, because those three places have water. Those are three of the most prosperous places in Queensland. If we were to conserve water and generate industry around those places, entire communities could be supported. Some people say that there is a multiplier effect; that for every dollar that is spent on water conservation, six or seven more can be created, depending on to what uses that resource is applied. The people out there recognise that they have the potential to grow agricultural products. They have made a request for more water.

The From Strength to Strength statement referred to the construction of a new dam on the Comet River. That part of the statement was well received. However, a closer examination revealed that no real planning has been undertaken for that construction. The intention exists, but there is no real commitment to that project or planning for it; it is merely an idea. The statement also refers to the construction of a dam on the Dawson River at Taroom. I commend the Government for that initiative.

I expected some form of assistance for my part of Queensland—the Darling Downs, which has some of the richest dryland farming country in Australia and perhaps the world. A shortage of water exists in that region. A river flows past that area, and at least two sites in my electorate have been identified as being suitable for the construction of weirs. One is at

Condamine and the other is at Brigalow. The site at Brigalow is associated with a coalmine, and a power station could also be constructed there. However, the Minister for Primary Industries has backed away from that proposal. He does not want to put any money into that project. I inform the House that such a project would aid a part of Queensland that is financially strapped.

As to capital works in my electorate—only \$4m was allocated to a section of the Warrego Highway. But the big news is that that is federally funded because it is part of the National Highway. So the Goss Government cannot take credit for that. My electorate also received \$120,000 for a child-care centre in Dalby, and that creates a lot of jobs. The electorate also got a share of some public housing—full stop. That is it; that is the only funding that my electorate got.

Mr De Lacy: Why don't they change their member?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: No, the member has made representations. I have written to the Premier and I have written to various Ministers, but my electorate gets nothing.

I refer now to roads, and we will start to see some interesting facts. I was talking to some of my colleagues about this. The member for Gregory, who is in charge of Transport, has done a bit of a study.

Mr Budd: No, he's not. He's not in charge of Transport.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: No, he is not, and that is a pity. The member for Gregory has worked out that, of total road expenditure in Queensland, 71 per cent of the Budget is to be spent in Brisbane and the south-east corner. What about the rest of Queensland?

A Government member interjected.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: We are not counting sheep, we are talking about the miles of road and bitumen. The rest of Queensland receives 29 per cent of the total funds allocated for roads while Brisbane and the south-east corner receive 71 per cent. The Government is certainly looking after its city electorates.

The Government can afford to throw in \$135m for koalas. It seems to have taken a new turn and now has the Koala Coast Protection Plan. Let me make a few comparisons. The Government has spent \$135m to look after a few koalas, but can Government members imagine how people with intellectual disabilities feel? They cannot get any respite care, yet the Government can allocate \$135m to help koalas. Forget about

all the people with intellectual disabilities, they get about \$15m or \$16m over three years. I bet they feel good!

I refer now to the cotton industry, which is an industry that booms if it has water. People in that industry see \$135m being spent on koalas. The blokes at St George, who can get about \$700 a bale for cotton and raise billions of dollars, get only \$1m or \$2m. They have to find the rest of the money themselves. It is similar to what happen last year when the sugar industry had to fund its own dam in the Pioneer River. Somehow, the Government can deliver \$135m for koalas and all of Molly's mates from the schools in her electorate.

Parthenium weed is coming down over the range into the Maranoa and the Condamine. We have seen an allocation of \$1m for noxious weeds, but \$135m for koalas. That is just great. It is a good comparison.

The Education allocation in the Budget talks about services. The actual amount of money being made available for teacher aides is down, but the Government can give \$135m to save koalas. Teacher aides are upset. Firstly, the Government has organised a new system of payment for teacher aides by which those with 30 years' experience receive the same pay as those with five years' experience or less. They are cranky about that. When Mr Comben was Minister, people were complaining to me that at special education centres severely disabled children started off with 21 hours of aid time and that that was reduced to 14 hours and then reduced further.

This is supposed to be a Budget that is serving people. The dollars that should be going towards helping the people of Queensland are being chopped up by the new elite, at our expense. The battlers gave the money to them. Those people with a university education are chopping the money up and giving all those jobs, such as for policy advisers, ministerial staff and union organisers, to their mates.

I will refer to unions for a moment. What a battle there is in the United Firefighters Union at the moment. Stephen Robertson, the member for Sunnybank, is as popular as a pork chop. He gave himself long service leave after five years. The firemen put the money in.

Mr Horan: Five years?

Mr LITTLEPROUD: After five years the union passed a motion that he should get long service leave from the United Firefighters Union. They were looking for him at the demonstration. He was hiding behind a sign. He is indicative of the new elite. This Budget is

not serving the real people of Queensland, who despise the way the money is being spent on the Government's mates.

Sitting suspended from 5.56 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr BUDD (Redlands) (7.30 p.m.) I am extremely pleased to be able to take part in today's Budget debate. As was mentioned by the Treasurer in his second-reading speech on Tuesday, this Budget is directed towards building a better life for all Queenslanders. It is unashamedly a social justice Budget aimed at providing better facilities and services for Queensland families. I take this opportunity to speak about how this Budget will provide better facilities and services for the constituents of my electorate of Redlands.

One of the major initiatives in this Budget that will assist my constituents is the establishment of a police station at Redland Bay. The funding includes provisions for land-based police, water police, a four-wheel drive vehicle, a police boat to service the bay islands and a storage shed for the police vessel. This will give a significant boost to the areas' policing needs and will certainly help police to respond quickly, not just on the mainland but to incidents occurring in Moreton Bay. This will be of great assistance to my constituents on the islands of Coochiemudlo, Russell, Lamb, Karragarra, and Macleay. For too many years the residents of these islands had to wait for some considerable time for police to get to the islands. This is no reflection on the police officers. The simple fact of the matter is that the police had to order a boat from the private contractors so that they could get across to those islands. If a boat was not available, this added to the time taken to get to the scene. The availability of their own boat to be stored on site will certainly be beneficial and will assist in achieving a speedier response time for the police to get to the islands. It is not just a benefit for island residents but also for members of the boating fraternity who will undoubtedly benefit from a police vessel being housed at Redland Bay. If they happen to get into any difficulty, the response time will again be much quicker, so that they can get assistance if required.

The police station at Redland Bay will include provision for Juvenile Aid Bureau officers, CIB, general uniform staff, the Dog Squad, a state-of-the-art scientific section and medical room and home environment interview rooms. It will also feature the best technology available to contemporary policing and the latest conveniences. It is interesting to note what the National/Liberal coalition candidate for Redlands said in a press release

about this police station. He welcomed the recent announcement of a new police station at Redland Bay and went on to state—

"I assure Redland residents the police station is a top priority of mine and the National and Liberal Parties will ensure a speedy completion and future expansion when elected to Government."

It is typical of the Opposition and its candidates to jump on the bandwagon. Not only do they not have any policies, they do not have any ideas. The police station at Redland Bay was never mentioned by their candidate until I was successful in getting a commitment from the Police Minister, Mr Braddy, to have the station built. The big difference between this Government and the Opposition is that we do the work and we get the results. We do not make hollow promises; we get the job done.

I was also very pleased to see in the Budget that the Government has confirmed the funding for the Koala Coast Protection Plan. An allocation of \$7.3m will be provided in 1995-96. The plan was developed on the advice of the Koala Coast Secretariat and includes \$20m for the acquisition of koala habitat, \$1.6m for research on koalas, \$2.6m for the minimisation of koala deaths and injuries and \$3m for the development of visitor infrastructure for the Koala Coast. It is estimated that at least 2,000 hectares of koala habitat will be purchased and protected under the Koala Coast Protection Plan. Conservation covenants and planning controls will be placed on other areas of important koala habitat. This acquisition of the land is critical not just for the koala but for all other types of wildlife.

I turn to the \$10m that is to be provided for the Community Facilities Program. This money is for grants to community organisations affected by the south coast motorway. We heard in question time this morning the pathetic attempts by the Opposition to make political mileage out of these grants. Members opposite carried on asking questions of the Minister for the Environment, accusing her of pork-barrelling her electorate. The Minister explained the selection criteria. Members opposite either did not listen or did not want to listen. A lot of letters went to local governments and to members of Parliament in relation to these funds. I will read a part of one such letter addressed to me. It states—

"We are year 7 students at Carbrook State School and are writing on behalf of all of our students. Our school will be losing 30 metres from the front of our school grounds in the near future. This is

due to the widening of Redland Bay Road from a 2 lane to a 4 lane road. This is to take traffic to the tollway that will be built in the near future.

Our school has decided that before all this happens we need to make some improvements to the school grounds. To do this we need help of a financial nature."

They are the types of requests that have been coming through not just to myself but to the Minister for the Environment and to the member for Mansfield, and we have been listening to those requests and acting on those requests. What the Opposition intends to do is to build a highway from hell, a 10-lane Pacific Highway disrupting the lives of residents and business people and not providing any compensation whatsoever. What this Government is doing is giving fair compensation to residents whose properties are affected by the south coast motorway and also giving money to enhance the lifestyles of the remaining community. This money includes \$1m for the construction of the Cornubia Park Leisure Centre, which will be built in conjunction with the Logan City Council. I supported this application from the Logan City Council and I make no apologies for that support. This leisure centre is a tremendous project and should have the full support of everyone because there is nothing like it on the eastern side of the Pacific Highway.

While I am talking about the Pacific Highway, I will address what the Opposition is promising to do with the Pacific Highway. I will quote from a letter from the Leader of the Opposition that appears in the *Albert and Logan News* in which he said—

"Let me make it clear, the Coalition does not oppose the Eastern Tollway.

...

The coalition has a comprehensive plan to upgrade the existing Pacific Highway.

...

In the coming weeks the coalition will release further initiatives for this important traffic corridor."

Again it is just all promises. Let me tell the House what this Government is doing for the Pacific Highway. A major feature will be an amount of \$20m in 1995-96 and \$25.5m over two years to accelerate the duplication of the Pacific Highway between Reedy Creek and Tugun and to construct the link to the Southport-Burleigh road. Also, there will be the

commencement of a major \$25m project for the provision of six lanes on the Pacific Highway between Loganlea and Beenleigh-Redland Bay Road. The work includes construction of an interchange at Beenleigh-Redland Bay Road and is in line with the State Government's commitment to improve safety and reduce congestion on the major Brisbane-Gold Coast link. This Government does not release so-called initiatives, as does the Opposition; it releases funds. In short, again, we get the job done.

I am pleased to see funding to start work on the construction of the duplication of sections of Cleveland-Redland Bay Road to a four-lane median divided road. This includes duplication of a bridge that has been a problem for sometime. The traffic volume in this area is growing each day and the duplication will certainly help alleviate accidents and will assist the flow of traffic in this particular section of Cleveland-Redland Bay Road.

I turn now to the Education budget. This Education budget is a record \$2.646 billion. That is an increase of \$215.6m over last year's budget. It is 52 per cent more than in the 1989 Education budget approved by the previous National Party Government. I am very pleased to announce that a sum of \$5.5m has been set aside for the construction of a high school at Victoria Point. The first stage of this high school will be open for students in 1997. Initially, there will be some 240-odd students, increasing to over 1,000 students by the year 2001. The proposed facilities include an administration block, resource centre, natural science block, home economics block, manual arts block, a covered area with a canteen and amenities, a covered area for students, staff and amenities block, ancillary staff and stores block, field equipment store and a sports oval. I would like to pay tribute to the Education Minister, David Hamill, and make special mention of his predecessor, Pat Comben, for the announcement of this high school. In my maiden speech, I said that a high school at Victoria Point was urgently needed and I am grateful that the work I have done, with the help of the local community, has finally paid off.

It is interesting to note what the Opposition candidate had to say about this high school. He said that he welcomed the announcement but he is wary of it until he sees specific details and a starting date. If he reads the Budget papers, or if his mate Bob Quinn explains them to him, he will find that all that information is in the Budget papers. I

mention Mr Quinn because, in a recent press release, it was stated—

"A future National/Liberal coalition government has committed itself to building a high school at Victoria Point by 1997.

Coalition candidate . . . and coalition Shadow Education Minister, Bob Quinn, said the school would be built on the corner of Cleveland-Redland Road and Benfer Road, a site which had been selected by the previous National Party Government in the late 1980s."

The people of Redlands will not be hoodwinked by these empty promises. It is true that, in the late 1980s, the previous Government had land set aside for a high school at Victoria Point. Do members know what happened to that site? I will tell them what happened. The previous National Party member for Redlands, Paul Clauson, decided to withdraw the funds for that high school and have them transferred to build a high school at Wellington Point. He did that for purely political reasons—to try to shore up his vote in the Wellington Point area. As history has shown, it did not help. My colleague the member for Cleveland, Darryl Briskey, soundly thrashed Paul Clauson in December 1989, and I had the pleasure of repeating that thrashing of Paul Clauson in 1992. The sad aspect is that the families at the southern end of the Redlands Shire and bay islands had to suffer because of this blatant political pork-barrelling done by Paul Clauson and the previous National Party Government. As I said before, this Government does not make hollow promises; it gets the job done.

I thank the Opposition for the great publicity that it gave me last Friday night for my campaign launch, but one would have to question the ethics and morals of any organisation that uses dead native animals for political mileage. The constituents of Redlands saw that stunt for what it was worth. They will go to the polls later this year and re-elect a Government with sound economic policies, a Government that has introduced a Budget that will help all Queenslanders and, in particular, the people of Redlands.

Hon. N. J. TURNER (Nicklin) (7.44 p.m.): In rising to respond to this election Budget, allow me to say at the outset that I believe it to be one of the most visionless, catch-your-vote, buy-your-vote types of Budgets that I have seen in recent times. However, it was not entirely unexpected. It is a typical ALP Budget in the mould of the Keating Budget.

Government members interjected.

Mr TURNER: It does not matter how much Government members sing out; even using mirrors they cannot change the facts. Over the years, the members opposite have made much of the track record of the Government, so their reaction is reasonable; they would be expected to make those remarks. I do not blame them, because that is part and parcel of the political party to which they belong. Let us consider the record—

Mrs Edmond: We're happy to run on Goss' leadership. Are you happy to run on your leadership?

Mr TURNER: Once the honourable member listens to me, I am sure that she will agree with me. The track record is that the Goss Government has cut services throughout Queensland, particularly in country areas, in the Department of Primary Industries, rail, courthouses—one can go on and on because they have been well and truly documented in this place by many other people. The Government has politicised the public service through jobs for the boys. It has made it an art form to an extent that has never before been seen in this State or, I believe, in this nation.

Mr Nuttall: Give us some examples.

Mr TURNER: If the honourable member waits a moment, I will tell him. He must learn patience, because all things come to those who wait. Growth in the bureaucracy and jobs for the boys is one of the greatest growth industries in this State.

Mr Nuttall: Tell us about Terry Lewis.

Mr TURNER: I have been asked to state where the growth in the bureaucracy has occurred. I will cite only one case. I happen to have been the Minister for Primary Industries for over three years. Mr Casey is now the Minister. I had six staff in my ministerial office. Today, I obtained from the Ministers' office a list of his staff at present. He has an additional 12 people, so he has 18 staff; when I was the responsible Minister, I had six staff.

Government members interjected.

Mr TURNER: The members opposite wanted me to state where that growth has occurred, but now they do not want to hear about it. The Minister for Primary Industries has a senior ministerial policy adviser, a ministerial policy adviser, an assistant ministerial policy adviser on policy, an assistant ministerial policy adviser on media, an executive officer, an executive assistant, an administrative officer, an electorate research officer, a ministerial liaison unit with a manager and a staff of three. That is only one Minister. I

am not criticising Mr Casey, but it is indicative of what has happened across the spectrum since this Government came to power. It would not have occurred to me to present those figures if the members opposite had not asked me to tell them where that growth has occurred. He has a strategic policy unit of 53. I do not remember that when I was there—of course, that is nothing! The director-General has a staff of 36. Of course, the Cabinet secretariat has risen from five under Joh, Ahern and Mr Cooper—who would remember that well—to well over 100 at present. The media unit has hundreds of staff. I think I have given a good example of that growth industry in Queensland.

Another growth industry is the knocking down of trees to manufacture paper and to continue the paper war through the production of Green Papers and White Papers. All honourable members are well aware of that growth industry.

As to the power industry—not one brick has been put toward the construction of a power station. The Government's answer to the problem of the State's future power needs is Eastlink—buying power from New South Wales and creating jobs in New South Wales and leaving ourselves open to the possibility of industrial action in New South Wales. The power could be turned off.

The Government has not put one bag of cement towards building a dam. It stopped the Wolffdene dam in the south coast area. At the time it was stopped, the south coast nearly perished. There was about two weeks' water in the Hinze Dam. I am telling honourable members facts that can be substantiated.

Mr Ardill: That is not a fact.

Mr TURNER: It is a fact. I understand that the honourable member who is interjecting believes what he is saying, but he should try the test that I suggested a long time ago—walking down the road and chewing gum to see if he can do both at the one time. He has difficulty with comprehension. The people of the south coast nearly perished at that time and the population has nearly doubled since then, yet nothing has been done to provide dams.

The famous Mr Goss with the gloss has lost the multifunction polis. He lost the space station. He lost the China steel deal, the aircraft maintenance facility in Townsville and developments all over the State and the nation. I do not expect members opposite to interject at this particular point, and it is not my intention to provoke them, but if they were to compare the actions of this Government and

Mr Goss with those of former Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, they would realise that that man was a very visionary thinker—something about which the members opposite know nothing.

Recently, I was in Hong Kong with the honourable member for Mundingburra—I cannot pronounce it, let alone spell it—and the Honourable Matt Foley and others. We did a tour around South East Asia. The wealth in Hong Kong is incredible. One other incredible fact about Hong Kong is that it has a flat rate tax, with the highest rate being 16 per cent—not over 50 per cent. It has no capital gains tax and no death duties, and it is progressing very well.

We also visited Malaysia, which has a population of about 20 million—the same as Australia. In a drive down two roads in Kuala Lumpur, I counted 97 high-rise cranes. I came back here and I do not have to use my two hands to count all the cranes in Brisbane. That is under this great developmental Government in this State! Remember the cranes that were around during the Joh Bjelke-Petersen days? Remember his visionary thinking in removing probate and gift duties, and what that did for the CBD of Brisbane, the south coast, the north coast and for development overall? I turn now to Expo, the Commonwealth Games that were held in Brisbane, the Burdekin Falls Dam and other dams, the power stations that were built—Joh had sufficient vision to go ahead to try to get the space station in north Queensland, the multifunction polis and rail electrification.

A Government member interjected.

Mr TURNER: I would be surprised if the member could spell it. What has the Government done about rail electrification. Absolutely nothing! None of the top-quality railway stations in Brisbane were built during the term of this Government. Joh looked into the future and planned. We had the cheapest electricity in Australia. While I am talking about power, I must say is it not incredible that, having done nothing for power in this State, Government members and so many other people are opposed to hydropower. One would have to say that hydropower is one of the most effective, efficient and cleanest means of generating power ever devised. Government members talk about depleting the ozone layer and the problems with coal-fired power stations. However, they voted against hydroelectric plants and talk about burning up a finite resource. I find that incredible. But then I find a lot of things incredible with the Government. It has policies

for saving the whales, saving the seals, saving the trees and saving the sand dunes, but then it kills the kids. I just do not understand how this Government operates.

In the short time that is available to me, I want to refer to the concern in the community about the effect—and it will be felt—that this green levy will have on small businesses. It amounts to nothing more and nothing less than a straight-out tax on initiative, incentive and small business. Contrary to what Mr Keating says, small business is not booming in Australia today. I would like to touch very briefly on the Keating Budget because these two parties are one and the same. In the *Courier-Mail* on 23 May, Mr Keating said about Mr Goss, "We are Labor people through and through, both of us." That is great. I do not think that Wayne would have liked that.

I will talk briefly about the Keating Budget. Currently, if anything is not nailed down, it is up for sale. Mr Keating has tried to denigrate Tim Fischer, a man of tremendous integrity, ability and character. He said that Tim Fischer cannot put two words together. I say that Mr Keating is partly right. We have tried to teach him how to say, "Australia is the"—I will use another word—"the ass-end of the world", but we cannot get him to say that. We have tried to get him to say, "Australia is a banana republic", and he refuses to say that. As a Vietnam veteran, we have tried hard to get Mr Fischer to say that our honour guard is an embarrassment and that they are a dad's army of bottle-washers and cooks, but he will not even say that. We have not been able to get him to say "scumbag" or some of those other wonderful sayings that have come out of the mouth of the noble Federal leader. Of course, up here we have "tumbling Tommy" Burns, who the other day tried to outdo Mr Keating.

I look back to when the meat scare was on in Australia. We must all confess that it was a real problem.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr TURNER: At that time, the Health Minister addressed that problem by releasing a brochure. The member for Brisbane Central must have accepted and agreed with what she did. When the meat scare was on, she put out this great, descriptive brochure on how to have anal sex. That was her answer to that problem. It cost \$250,000 for that sex guide.

Mrs Edmond interjected.

Mr TURNER: Do not worry about that. The only way I could get heroin or something is if I go out and buy it. God forgive me for the

stupidity of some people—that interjection from the lightweight member! She said I would have to buy it to have a look at it. God almighty! Protect me from her, please!

Mrs Edmond interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Palaszczuk): Order! The member for Nicklin.

Mr TURNER: Mr Deputy Speaker, thank you. I have steel hips. It is a worry because they were tingling when I heard that dynamic interjection from the member—that I had to buy *Cleo* to see this filth that was peddled. The Federal Minister for Health paid \$250,000 for it. What is the member trying to say? That I would have to go and buy heroin or something before I could say that it was a problem, or that we should abolish it? Why does she not wait and speak later on. I will leave her behind. It is absolutely incredible. The member was probably responsible for the Government's mob putting that float in the gay mardi gras, or organising the money to go to the AIDS council to promote the bubble cards.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. The Chair takes the comments made by the honourable member this time to be a personal reflection on the honourable member for Mount Coot-tha. The Chair suggests to the honourable member that he desist from making further comments of that nature.

Mr TURNER: I apologise wholeheartedly if I have offended her in any particular way. However, I cannot help presenting the facts before this House, and that is what I am doing. I can understand that it is hurtful to Government members to listen to what I am saying because they do not like it, but the people out there have to know about these things.

Of course, one must understand that the Opposition will win the coming election. It will not be the first win that the Opposition has inflicted on that mob opposite in recent times. The Opposition beat them on daylight saving and it beat them on four-year terms of Parliament. At present, the major issues about which people are concerned are law and order, health and small business. We can leave all of the other issues aside—the honourable Minister for Environment and her tunnel, or a green levy, or whatever. The Government has tried to steal the Opposition's policy on law and order. The Government cannot get away from the issue; it is a tremendous problem. The Government has thrown money at health, and has done so again in this Budget. However, it cannot solve these problems by throwing money at them. It

has been proved that pelting money at the health services through regionalisation, at the police, at the fire services, at the ambulance services or whatever, just does not work.

One has to look only at the waiting list for elective surgery at the regional hospital in Nambour. People are experiencing problems in being able to see dentists, and there is also a parking problem at the regional hospital. I could go on and on about what is happening with that hospital. However, in the brief time that is left to me, I would like to touch on the issue of the Woodford gaol. I think that this Government's action in closing down that gaol was one of the greatest shames I have ever seen. It paid no compensation whatsoever to the people of Woodford to create employment, which was in need after the closure of the gaol. When the Government ceased logging on Fraser Island and at Ravenshoe, it gave the people in those areas compensation. However, it gave nothing to the people of Woodford. The Woodford gaol was a perfectly good gaol for low-security prisoners, or juvenile prisoners. It should have continued in that capacity, and the Government should have built a maximum security prison. Although the Government did nothing to help the people of Woodford when it closed down the gaol, I make a plea to the Minister for Corrective Services to make sure that, wherever possible, the locals be given an opportunity to work on the construction of that prison, because that would go some way towards overcoming the problems that have occurred there through the prison closure and also through the closure of the cheese factory in that area.

Of course, apart from the funding for the Woodford gaol, very little money in the Budget has gone into my region. Really, very little money has gone to any country region. It is a south-east corner, buy-your-vote Budget for the Labor Party members in that area. However, in the short time available to me, it would be remiss of me to not mention some roads in my electorate. I have continually contacted the Transport Minister in relation to the Beerwah Road, the Obi Obi Road, the Mount Stanley Road, Palmwoods Road, Woombye Road and the Daguiar Highway. I will not go through all the problems with those roads because I lack the time, but I would ask that the Minister do something positive to help in those particular areas.

Earlier, I mentioned regionalisation. Throwing money at the problem will not work. It never worked before. I would like to touch briefly on the Mount Isa strike and the damage that it has done to small business,

workers and the cost to the Government. At the moment, there is a meat workers' strike.

Mr Johnson: Shipping companies.

Mr TURNER: Shipping companies; the honourable member is absolutely correct.

We are told that there is no problem with crime, but the police have embarked on a letter drop in the Premier's electorate. The other day, the firefighters marched on Parliament House. I do not think that they will ever forget the Minister's reaction. They are still stunned by what the Minister said. The shire chairmen of all of the shires in Queensland marched on Parliament House. The Aborigines have marched on Parliament House. The Eastlink protesters have marched on Parliament House. It would be easier to say who has not marched or protested. I should list the ones who have not held a protest march.

Queensland was the leading primary industry State in Australia until members opposite destroyed the Primary Industries Department and its morale. The Budget holds no joy whatsoever for rural and regional Queensland, in particular because of cuts to teacher aides in special schools. About the only support that the Government would get in country areas would be from Ian McFarlane. And he might be looking for a job with the Government or a safe Labor seat! Members opposite should look at genuine decentralisation to give incentive to small business to relocate into country areas. I noticed the Treasurer nodding in agreement with me, for which I thank him. Or was he nodding off to sleep?

Little cottage-type, value-adding industries should be enticed back into these areas. For example, Australians wanting to start a business can do so offshore in places such as Fiji or Malaysia, where they would receive land, be offered low or no interest rates and would pay no tax for 10 years. Their products could be exported to Australia. We should offer some incentive to small business instead of attacking it. The Labor Party's famous Federal leader has said that small business has never had it so good. It is time that the Government did something to help small business. This Budget has not helped it.

As I said before, this Budget is visionless. There is very little in it for Nicklin. I can assure the Treasurer and the Labor Party that the people of Nicklin and the north coast will not forget its broken promises. The Government is on the skids. Its members had better enjoy their remaining time on the Government side

of the House because they will be sitting on the Opposition side after the State election.

Ms POWER (Mansfield) (8.03 p.m.): When the 1995-96 State Budget was delivered by the Treasurer, Queenslanders were shown the priorities of the Goss Government. Our priority is to build a better life for all Queenslanders. This Budget is one that aims at providing better facilities and services for families in my electorate of Mansfield and throughout Queensland. This Budget builds on a record of hard work and commitment to fiscal discipline. We now have a zero net debt, which means that we can continue to increase expenditure on our priorities. Our priorities are not the individuals who are already the "haves" but, rather, Mr and Mrs Average and their families.

There is no more important piece of social justice than that of having a job. This Government is very mindful of that fact. That is why the Goss Government has generated over 200,000 jobs since January 1990. That is over half of the new jobs in all of Australia. This Budget continues to develop a robust labour market and strong jobs growth in Queensland. To date, this has seen the following results in Mansfield. Four unemployed people received some \$24,000 in the form of an interest-free loan to start businesses in the electorate. Some 1,274 weeks were spent, using \$1.1m, under the Schools Refurbishment Program. The Mount Gravatt TAFE was given a job placement officer, who found jobs for 1,099 people and assisted some 481 others.

As well as that, \$752,000 was spent at the Mount Gravatt TAFE on tutors and student places. I must commend the Mount Gravatt TAFE for its excellent work and for reaching out to meet the challenges that DEVETIR has set it. It is responding in a very positive way to both community and business needs. It has just completed the process to become an institute and will include the Bayside Community College. Recently, I visited that institution for the launch of the job-searching folder that was put together by officers there. It details a step-by-step process of going to the CES to find a job. The folder was well received by people in the community and both CES officers and businesses. I was very impressed with it and have taken it to show to the Minister and the director-general as an objective that other TAFE colleges should take up.

I, too, would like to speak this evening about the south coast motorway. The \$3m allocated to the electorates affected by the

south coast motorway is welcomed by the residents of Mansfield. Today, I have the chance to place on record the facts concerning the south coast motorway. After I had given assurances in 1992 that the tollway would not be built, I was very distressed to have to inform my electorate that a road would have to be built. I argued strongly against the proposal and was disappointed when Cabinet made its decision and outlined the route that the motorway would take—right through the heart of rural Rochedale, with link roads onto the Gateway and the freeway, affecting residents in Eight Mile Plains and Wishart.

The most unfortunate part is that this decision and the process that has followed has been so politicised that it has not been about seeking the best outcomes for the area. The main reason for the pain my constituents are suffering is that the coalition failed to ever plan any infrastructure for the future. This Government has met the challenge and makes the hard decisions. Once the decision was made by Cabinet, it was my task to represent my constituents to the best of my ability through the Cabinet subcommittee. I believe my electorate should take heart that it has a member who is prepared to take the time and energy to listen to its concerns.

Rochedale is not a largely populated area, but I have given it as much of my time as it sought over the past few months. I have attended public meetings to which I have been invited, private homes and community meetings. I have answered hundreds of phone calls and letters individually. When the first roadway proposal was released, I acted swiftly to have the link road from the Gateway to the freeway moved away from residential areas closer to the existing Miles Platting interchange. I then fought for a better deal for residents—fencing, vegetation and resurfacing with noise-reducing asphalt.

VETO has offered a solution to the motorway by increasing the number of lanes on the Pacific Highway to 10. But it does not mention that all 10 lanes would be dumped into my electorate at Eight Mile Plains. Its silence in Mansfield is deafening. No wonder it does not address this issue anywhere near my electorate; its solution would only add more traffic to already congested roads, such as Logan Road, the freeway, Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road, Newnham Road, Ham Road and Dawson Road. And the list goes on. Its solution is certainly not the solution for Mansfield.

The Opposition says that its solution is not to build the motorway on the present route. It

wants to have all of the uncertainty revisited and it wants to upset the community further. Its policy is to save one lot of residents but put another on notice. Where will the road be built this time? Will it be in Eight Mile Plains, Wishart, Burbank or Chandler? The road will be built under a Government of either party because it is needed. The tourist industry has said so. The transport industry is crying for it, and business and industry have spoken—not to mention, of course, the illuminating members for Southport and Nerang, who are also on the record as supporting that road.

The concern in the community has always been, firstly and primarily, the uncertainty about the decision making. Question time yesterday and today has shown that the Opposition will take away the Community Facilities Program. It does not believe that communities should be supported when infrastructure must be built. I am proud to stand up for my residents. I am not ashamed to ask for money for my electorate. In relation to the allocation of funds, I make no apology for my actions in seeking funding for my electorate. One of my priorities was the pony club, which is a local community facility that is enjoyed by many residents of Brisbane and Queensland, through which the motorway will run.

During consultation with residents, road safety and beautification of the area were also raised as major issues. Other community groups which believe that they will be affected by the motorway can still submit applications for the second round of community grants. Whether they be schools, scout groups or whatever, I will work with those bodies to support their submission according to the criteria. When I have been doorknocking in affected areas, I have received very positive responses towards community facility grants, because they address the concerns of residents—the visual appearance of the road, the noise, the crossing of roads, exiting from estates and speed.

It is no wonder that my constituents have asked about fencing and vegetation. Travelling on the freeway is a timely reminder of the manner in which the Opposition builds infrastructure—with no regard to its impact on residents. This Government has set about a program of fencing and providing vegetation along the freeway. That has been the result of representations by myself and the members for Greenslopes and Mount Gravatt on behalf of our residents. The noise created by the freeway is incredible. I was pleased to inform residents in MacGregor that \$1.4m has been allocated in the Budget to fence, vegetate and

resurface the freeway between Klumpp Road and Logan Road. If members opposite think that that is pork-barrelling, they should ask the Liberal candidate about his reception in MacGregor last weekend after taking up the cause of residents who live streets away and are experiencing echoes caused by the fencing. No echo could equate to the traffic noise that is experienced by those living in homes located beside the freeway.

Over its last five Budgets, this Government has continually allocated funds to improve the road system in my electorate. Funds have been provided for lights, resurfacing, fencing, breakdown bays, signage—the list goes on—and all those measures have done much to improve traffic control and safety along the major roads that cross my electorate. This year, further funding will see \$2.96m allocated for a four-lane divided carriageway linking Brisbane and the Redlands, \$37,000 for variable signs along the South East Freeway, asphalt overlay on the South East Freeway totalling \$440,000, \$1.8m being spent on further upgrading of the Logan subarterial road, and \$22,000 for breakdown bays on the Gateway Arterial Road from Eight Mile Plains to Murarrie.

Just as this Government has had to make hard decisions about roads, so we have had to respond to other issues of concern, such as health and law and order. This Government takes its responsibilities seriously. It will not bow to the scaremongering of the Opposition or the threats of those with a vested interest or some other agenda. This Budget sees record spending in Health. Twenty-three per cent of the overall Budget will be allocated to Health—a total of \$2,700m, representing an increase of 11 per cent on last year's Health budget.

During this debate, Opposition members have trotted out cases of people waiting for services, but they neglect to mention the increase in demand on those services. I am not disputing that there are waiting lists. However, the Opposition has failed to show the other side of the coin. I acknowledge that some people are waiting for services, but let us have a look at the facts.

Last year, 539,000 people were admitted to our public hospital system. That represents a 42 per cent increase on the number admitted in 1989-90. Over the last six years, the number of treatments administered through our public hospitals has totalled 2.7 million—over 600,000 more than were performed in the last six years of the former Government. I would like to see how long the

waiting lists would be now had this Government continued the abysmal level of spending for which the coalition was famous! Had that occurred, every week approximately 3,000 fewer people would be receiving treatment. That is the side of the equation that Opposition members are not telling the people of Queensland.

This Government is committed to improving the health system and providing services where they are needed—not pork-barrelling and building facilities to prop up members in trouble, but actually providing services where people need them. I have had to wear some pain—and I will come to that in a moment—but I have realised that there are other areas in which a greater need exists. That is why the Government has announced a four-point plan which involves the commitment of an additional \$181.1m over the next three years. That four-point plan includes the three-year \$64m Hospital Waiting List Program to cut the backlog and introduce a systematic method of guaranteeing access to elective surgery according to medical need; a three-year \$42.1m package of incentives to attract and retain medical specialists and nurses, including remote-area nurses; an additional \$40m over the next two years to accelerate the rebuilding of metropolitan hospitals, with particular emphasis on our major flagships, the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospitals; and finally, an additional \$35m over the next two years to introduce a hospital specialist equipment program to upgrade and modernise equipment.

Mr Beattie: That's pretty impressive.

Ms POWER: It is, and I note that members opposite are speechless now!

That commitment will deliver services to the Mansfield electorate. The Goss Government has already announced that services at the QE II Hospital will be expanded so that, for the first time in its 15-year history, all five of its floors will be used. By opening all six operating theatres at that hospital, more surgery will be performed, resulting in reduced waiting times for elective surgery. These improvements are in addition to the 24-hour medical care centre and the specialist and rehabilitation services already provided at QE II.

There were other announcements in the Health budget. They included \$10m to improve employment conditions for the medical work force; \$6.1m over three years to improve the recruitment and retention of remote-area nurses; \$6m over three years for

nurse work force development and training; \$5m for mental health initiatives; \$3.8m to provide for the expansion of school dentistry; and \$1.9m over three years for the development of a new childhood immunisation system.

I recently attended the launch by the Honourable Carmen Lawrence, the Federal Minister for Health, of the latest programs to raise the awareness of the need for women to undergo breast screening to prevent cancer. One of the centres at which that screening is carried out is located in my electorate. On a number of occasions, the staff at the centre have discussed with me the problems they have encountered in coping with the large number of responses since those ads were run. I was certainly very pleased to see further funding allocated to that important preventive health measure. The State contribution to that funding will be increased by 20 per cent to \$7.2m in the 1995-96 Budget.

On Tuesday, I raised the issue of the initiatives that the Government has undertaken for women in this State. Had I had more time, I would have referred particularly to the role that the police play in that field and addressed the issue of law and order. Fortunately, I have the time this evening to take up that topic. The Opposition would have us believe that this Government is soft on crime. I am not quite sure how that equates with the other side of the coin, where we have full watch-houses and full gaols. The Opposition prefers to sensationalise this issue, the media takes up that cause and forgets to examine the other factors. The record of this Government could not possibly be equated with us being soft on crime. Were more time available to me, I could also have discussed the new Criminal Code, but I will have to wait for that legislation to be debated in this Parliament. That is certainly another initiative that is important to my constituents. The Police budget will see an increase of 500 extra operational police on the beat, on top of the 1,500 extra police that we have put on patrol since 1989. I want to talk a little bit about the presence of the police force. I have a reasonably good working relationship with the police force in my electorate.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Ms POWER: Not at all. We have worked very well together. When I have concerns, I take to the police a list of them and I work through it with them. They explain to me the way in which they are operating. I think that many of the problems faced by the community arise because many people do not

understand the changes in the work practices of the police force, regionalisation and the reasons for district police. We have talked about the presence of the police. At different times, people have commented to me that, when they see the police out and about, whether it is on the beat, in shopping centres or on the streets, that is a very positive thing. I do not think police have always understood just how important is their presence in the community as opposed to what they might perceive as good crime fighting in an office with a computer. That does not mean that one of those measures is more important than the other, but certainly, so that people respond to the police in a more favourable way, a balance is important.

The police in my electorate have certainly taken on some of the challenges that have been thrust upon them and they have looked at different ways of fighting crime. I have been very impressed with their figures. At the end of the year, a function held at the district police office informed residents about the CRISP program, how it was working and how it was actually reducing crime in the area. In fact, the last set of figures showed that there were only four break and enters on the south side in that week.

Mr Cooper: Seventy-four.

Ms POWER: Not at all. It was four break and enters in one week—in a community of 70,000 households! So there was a considerable reduction in the figures. The catching of criminals has also increased at the same rate. I say again that members of the Opposition are very good at telling one side of the story; they just do not like telling the other side. I congratulate the Treasurer for his fiscal discipline and for providing this Budget.

Time expired.

Mr COOPER (Crows Nest) (8.24 p.m.): As the coalition's spokesman for Police and Corrective Services, I intend to spend some time tonight on the subject of Police and Corrective Services, particularly in the area of capital spending. I want to go through some of the recycling that has occurred in some electorates for the past four years. It is pathetic. For the past four years, the member for Bundaberg has been racing backwards and forwards announcing the new police station in his electorate, and he is just about worn out. I hope he gets it this year.

Mr CAMPBELL: I rise to a point of order. I remind the honourable member that the National Party gave my police station to Maryborough.

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

Mr COOPER: The member enjoyed his moment. We have been in this place for about the same length of time and I think we know each other fairly well. I feel sorry for him having to announce this police station so constantly. He must be looking rather stupid by now.

Last week, on the Sunshine Coast, the Minister for Police spoke at a community luncheon about the forthcoming Budget. He said—

"Police cannot expect a massive increase because they have already received it."

Those were the Minister's words before the Budget. Actually, for probably the first and last time, he was half right. He said that police would not get a massive boost—and Government members know that—and that they had never really achieved that in the past. That burst of candour was very quickly corrected. All we hear from the Government now are extravagant, fraudulent claims about so-called massive boosts in the Police Service. The Government knows, and so do the coalition and the people of Queensland, that it simply did not happen. The fact is that the Goss Government's 500 police in three years—

Mr T. B. Sullivan: Five hundred extra.

Mr COOPER: I will go through the figures with the member. The Goss Government's so-called law and order budget is a shoddy, shabby concoction of lies, evasions, untruths, fabrications, exaggerations and pious hopes. It is all there. Ironically, the only truth revealed is the damning evidence of appalling administrative failures.

The bottom line in any Police budget is the number of police actually provided. The claim is made that an extra 500 so-called operational police will be provided in the next three years. Let us assess that claim. On Tuesday, in this House, the Minister for Police claimed that the Goss Labor Government had provided 1,562 so-called operational police in the 66 months between December 1989 and June 1995 inclusive. That translates into an average of 23.6 so-called extra operational police a month over that period, with the population rising at about 8,000 a month.

The promise of 500 so-called operational police over the next three years translates into an average increase of 13.8 officers a month in that period. Therefore, on the Government's own figures, the rate of increase in the provision of so-called operational police over

the next three years will be cut by an appalling 41.5 per cent—right at a time when we need them most. We know that the crime rate is through the roof and that people are not safe, yet we have a so-called high spending Budget that cannot even produce the numbers that we need most. Based on the figures that the Minister gave in the House on Tuesday, the Budget has delivered a cut of 41.5 per cent. Crime is almost out of control, and the Goss Government is planning a massive cut in the rate of increase of so-called operational police. That is unforgivable. It is an act of the grossest betrayal of every single Queenslander.

Behind all of that facade about the provision of so-called operational police, the reality is even worse. In this House on Tuesday, the Police Minister stated that, by 30 June, there would be 6,344 sworn police. That represents an increase of 162 on the 30 June 1994 total and it translates into an average 13 to 14 extra police a month in 1994-95. That means that a total of 1,062 extra police have been provided in the 66 months from December 1989 to June 1995 inclusive—an average monthly increase at that time of one-sixth, that is, 16. That is all there is.

It should be remembered that, prior to the 1989 election, Mr Goss promised an extra 1,200 police by 1992, and that promise was a very early casualty. We never even looked liked getting there. So what does the 1995 Budget propose for the next three years? Page 2 of the Portfolio Program Statement for the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services states—

"The Government is providing additional funding of over \$20 million which will release an additional 270 Police officers into operational duties over the next three years. This initiative, combined with the growth funding, will result in an increase of 500 operational police by 1997/98."

Therefore, it is plainly obvious that these 500 so-called operational police will be provided by waving a magic wand over 270 existing police and suddenly redefining them as operational, and by recruiting a net total, after resignations and retirements, of 230 police over the next three years. So for the next three years, the net monthly average increase in actual live police officers will be 6.3 a month. The Government is going well, is it not? Does that not send out a message of confidence to the people? That means a massive cut of 60.6 per cent in the rate of increase between December 1989 and June 1995, which was, as I noted earlier, an average of 16 new

officers a month. That is an absolutely pathetic performance.

On the Government's own figures, there will be 6,574 police by June 1988. That means that the police/population ratio, which was one officer to 476 people as recently as June 1993, will blow out to something in excess of one officer to 540 people, allowing for a reasonable population increase of about 290,000. The Government is having a lot of trouble assessing, or even acknowledging, the police/population ratio.

The Police Minister's portfolio statement claims, on page 2, that by June 1994 the police/population ratio was one officer to 501 people. That is flatly contradicted by the 1993-94 Queensland Police Statistical Review tabled in Parliament by the Minister himself. That document shows that there were 6,182 police on 30 June 1994, with a population of a little over 3 million. That is it. That is the figure and that is the one with which people can be comfortable. Therefore, it is obvious that the police/population ratio is steadily worsening. The 6,344 police claimed by the Police Minister as at June 1995 is actually 33 fewer than the 6,377 in June 1993, despite a soaring population in those two years. That is the bottom line and that is a disgrace.

The current Minister for Police, this self-appointed hands-on administrator, has presided over an actual decline in police strength. What a legacy! Whether we go from education to police or elsewhere, it is a legacy of disaster. While the increase in police numbers is dreadfully minimal overall, the news for most of Queensland is made even worse by the candid admission that only south-east Queensland will get any meaningful increase. To hell with the rest; the Government will look after this little spot down here.

The Minister's portfolio program states bluntly on page 2 that the majority of the extra so-called operational police are "expected to be allocated to south-east Queensland." The north and the west have been abandoned, despite crippling vacancy rates and disgraceful shortages. There is not now even a pretence of giving vast areas anywhere near the adequate protection that they so richly deserve. On the general matter of the Police budget, it should be pointed out that while the Government boasts that its expenditure on the Police Service rose by 70 per cent in the 1989 Budget and the 1994 Budget, the number of officers has actually increased by only 20 per cent. Obviously, there has been gross mismanagement, inept planning, massive

administrative failures and general utter bloody hopelessness brought on by members opposite.

There is no better illustration of this than the Police Service Capital Works Program. In the 1994 Budget, \$47.256m was allocated for this program, yet only \$35.007m was spent. There was massive underspending of \$12.249m or about 26 per cent of the allocated Budget. In 1994, the Budget Paper No. 2 stated on page 65—

"Major projects in 1994-95 include replacement district headquarters and watchhouses at Bundaberg and Mackay, replacement stations, watchhouses and twin dwelling units at Doomadgee and Moranbah, and replacement stations at Surfers Paradise and Wynnum."

Of course, this was announced with a great fanfare as a major commitment. But what has happened? Fundamentally, very little.

In the 1995 Budget, the two biggest single Police Service projects listed are the Bundaberg and the Mackay stations which were promised a year earlier. The 1995 Budget reveals that of the \$8.6m total estimated cost for the Mackay project, an astounding \$5.1m went unspent; of the \$7.7m total estimated cost of the Bundaberg project, an incredible \$5.1m will be spent in the 1995-96 Budget. That is money that was not spent when it was supposed to be and that project will not be completed until some time in 1996-97. We also discovered that the Doomadgee project—estimated to cost \$3.5m and also promised for completion in 1994-95—is so far behind schedule that only \$200,000 was spent in 1994-95. We also learn that a further \$587,000 will be required in 1995-96 to complete the \$1.8m Moranbah project.

So four major Police Service projects promised a year ago and announced with great fanfare are recycled and re-announced this year. Of the \$21.5m total cost of these four projects allocated in the 1994 Budget, only \$6.913m was spent. The Minister might care to explain why those major projects were bungled so badly, despite their urgent need. Next year, if this incompetent Government is still in office, we can expect another allocation to hopefully finish the Bundaberg project promised in 1994. The 1994 Budget Paper No. 2 stated on page 65—

"The Police Beat Shopfront Program which allows for an increased Police presence in shopping centres with easier public access will be extended from the existing target of 30 December, 1995 to

45 by June, 1996 at a total cost of \$1.75 million per annum".

The 1995 Police Portfolio Program Statement reveals that there are now 17 such police beat shopfronts. There is no mention of the December 1995 or the June 1996 targets promised in 1994 and the Minister needs to explain whether those 1994 promises will be kept. A failure to spend allocated fixed capital expenditure in 1994-95 was spread across all programs. The Property Security Program—which includes police beat shopfronts—was allocated \$5.821m capital expenditure, yet spent only \$1.801m. The Personal Safety Program was allocated \$3.118m, yet spent only \$956,000. The Road Safety Program was allocated \$4.148m, yet spent only \$1.262m. The Public Order and Safety Program was allocated \$6.73m yet, spent only \$2.052m, and the Operational Support Program was allocated \$2.697m, yet spent only \$1.049m. Thus the critical failure was not incidental; it was widespread and is the best indication of a major management failure.

The 1995 Budget provides \$59.618m for the police capital works program. In the 1994 Budget, \$47.256m was allocated; an amount of \$35.007m was spent. That was a shortfall of \$12.249m. In the 1995 Budget, \$59.681m was allocated, and only \$12.249m of this 1994-95 shortfall was a carryover. It meant a real budget of \$47.432m, or an actual increase of a bare minimum of \$176,000. The abject failure of the 1994-95 police capital works program hardly inspires any confidence that the 1995-96 program as outlined will be actually delivered. Based on past experience, it has not got a hope.

The 1995 Budget proposed a \$1.5m upgrading of the Brisbane watch-house, yet only a miserable \$30,000 is allocated in 1995-96. On this Government's demonstrated record, God only knows when this upgrading will be completed. It is nothing short of a scandal that the Government is prepared to dawdle over this desperately needed upgrade. The gross and inhumane overcrowding will continue. This is having a direct impact on the administration of justice with one judge remarking that every day a prisoner spends on remand in the Brisbane watch-house will count as a week off his final sentence. There is no real acknowledgment of the hell-hole conditions that will be allowed to persist. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the Minister and the Government simply do not care.

There are other areas of major failure buried in the fine print of the Budget

documents. The Minister and the Government have always been keen to be seen as providing some sort of response to the soaring rate of break-ins. This response is contained in the Property Security Program which includes Neighbourhood Watch, Rural Watch, Commercial Watch and School Watch, amongst other programs. It also includes the Property Crime Squad. I have already dealt with the scandalous failure of the 1994-95 Budget to allocate sufficient funds for capital works under this program. Amazingly, there was even a failure to spend allocated funds in 1994-95 for salaries, wages and related payments.

A total of \$90.127m was allocated in 1994-95, yet only \$88.506m was spent. At a time when property crime is rampant and victims have to wait many hours and often days for police to investigate break-ins and at a time when only 22 per cent of these crimes are cleared up, money provided for police salaries and overtime was not used. Again, the Minister might like to explain. He might also like to explain why, at a time when the road toll is rising, \$937,000 of the 1994 Budget allocation of \$65.249m for salaries, wages and related payments in 1994-95 went unspent. The allocated wages and salaries budget for the Public Order and Safety Program was also underspent by a huge \$1.51m, despite this program including the response to major crime, illegal drugs and prostitution. However, not surprisingly, the Corporate Services Program, which includes the pen-pushers and the people in the think-tank, managed to overspend their 1994-95 allocated salaries and wages budget by a whopping \$6.974m—up from the Budget allocation of \$56.583 to \$63.557. That demonstrates the priorities of this Government.

I turn now to Corrective Services. In the 1994 Budget, there was a big announcement with all the hype that the Government could muster that a \$106.8m three-year prisons capital works program was getting under way. To kick off that program, the Corrective Services Commission, under the inspirational leadership of the hands-on administrator, Mr Braddy, was allocated \$56.801m capital works.

The 1995 Budget papers reveal that of this amount, only \$30.306m was actually spent. The shortfall was a staggering \$27.731m. In other words, an awesome 48.8 per cent of the allocated budget went unspent. What the hell does the commission think it is doing? One would think it would want to create some much-needed space for the

prisoners. It knocks the prisons down, but it cannot even build the damned things. It will not even spend the money that it already has. The money has been allocated but the commission will not spend it. It is all a part of that fiddling around with the figures. That massive failure certainly relegates the failure of the Police Service capital works program into the category of an off-Broadway production. The 1995 Budget provides \$58.037m for Corrective Services capital works, but as \$27.731m of this is a carryover from 1994-95, the real capitals works allocation is only \$30.306m, that is, a frightening \$26.49m less than was allocated in 1994. That is how fair dinkum the Government is.

In 1994, the Budget provided \$7.3m for the new Woodford prison, estimated to cost \$52.6m. The 1995 Budget reveals that only \$800,000 was spent on that project in 1994-95. That is a major failure that raises a question as to whether the announced earlier 1997 opening will be achieved. At the rate the commission is going, it does not have a hope. The three-year prisons capital works program announced last year was supposed to be a full-blooded and well-planned effort to relieve chronic overcrowding. The plain fact that only slightly more than half of the allocated 1994-95 budget was actually spent, despite the acknowledged crisis, is damning evidence of gross incompetence from the Minister down. Based on that performance, there is no guarantee that the capital works program announced in the 1995 Budget will ever be achieved on time. People have been conned for years by the belief in the spending that this Government is supposed to indulge in, but it does not happen. It simply leaves the money on the books.

A further example of the commission's shocking failure is the Townsville prison project. The 1994 Budget stated—

"Redevelopment of the Townsville Correctional Centre is to be completed with \$9.3 million provided in the 1994/95 Budget as the final part of a three-year program. The upgrade involves the total redevelopment of the Centre into a new village concept of offender management and the demolition of the State's remaining unsewered cells."

Again, this is similar to the case of the poor old Bundaberg Police Station that the Government has been announcing for such a long time. It simply has not happened. The members of the Government wonder why there is overcrowding. They wonder why prisoners are being doubled up in cells,

especially in the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre, where the prisoners are being raped like fury. Honourable members will hear more about that tomorrow. It is an absolute disgrace because, although the Government pretends to know solutions to the problems, when given a chance at Budget time, which is time to do something about it, they fail us completely. I say "us" because they are failing all the people of this State. The Government has fooled the people for six years, but it will fool them no longer. As far as the members of the Opposition are concerned, the Government's day of judgment is coming. It is not very far away. I look forward to the massive challenge of putting things right and I look forward to the opportunity of doing so.

Mr PYKE (Mount Ommaney) (8.44 p.m.): The 1995 Budget of the Goss Government is good news for Mount Ommaney: more police, more money for Mount Ommaney schools and Queensland hospitals and no new taxes. In essence, this Budget means more police, more money for schools and more money for health in Mount Ommaney. The 1995 State Budget sees a commitment of another 500 operational police on the street and that is in addition to the 1,500 extra police since 1989. In Mount Ommaney, the local community will benefit from its share of the new operational police as well as a new police station for the Centenary suburbs. The Goss Government's recognition that our children are Queensland's most valuable resource is also reflected in the record allocation to education of one quarter, \$2.646 billion, of the State's total Budget. In Mount Ommaney, Stage 2 of the Mount Ommaney Special School has been funded in this Budget.

The Health budget is also a record amount. A massive \$2.7 billion will be spent on health services. That includes \$64m to shorten waiting lists and \$35m to help re-equip hospitals. Also, the State Government will employ more doctors and nurses to help our free hospital system keep up with population pressure. In essence, this Budget is about spending money where it is needed most—in classrooms, on hospitals and on fighting crime. But it is not just the money; it is how it is used. The 1995 State Budget targets funds straight into services, not expensive administration and red tape.

The increases in the Health budget, which is a record \$2.7m, will go directly to improved health services for Queenslanders. That will be welcomed by residents of Mount Ommaney. The fact that Health is the biggest spending item in the Budget shows the priority that our

Government places on improving the health system. The firm financial footing of this State means that record funding can now go to rebuilding and modernising this State's free hospital system. We have treated 620,000 sick people this year. That is well up from the 380,000 at the end of the 1980s. Clearly, more and more Queenslanders who need medical treatment are getting it and the increased funding is getting through to people. The Health budget was 11 per cent higher than last year's budget of \$2.4m billion, with the key initiatives being \$64m for an attack on waiting lists in Queensland hospitals; \$75m for rebuilding and re-equipping Queensland's hospitals; \$10m to improve pay and conditions for the medical work force and \$5m for mental health initiatives.

The Queensland public health system is growing quickly to cater for the increase in population growth of our State. To cater for this growth, we have allocated \$50m this year in growth funds for new commissionings, service enhancements and expansions. The Budget also pays special attention to nurses, with \$6m to help with the transition to the work force of newly graduated registered nurses, fund a re-entry program for registered nurses who want to re-enter the nursing work force and an accelerated skills acquisition program for existing registered nurses. In addition, \$30m has been allocated to cater for higher hospital throughput.

We are continuing the extension of the School Dental Service to Years 8, 9 and 10, with \$3.8m growth funding in 1995-96 and \$10.4m over the next three years. In addition, a further \$7.5m is to be provided over three years to enhance community-based services to people with disabilities already in the community.

More than \$60m will be spent on specifically targeted programs to address the needs and concerns of Queensland women. The Government's 10-year, \$1.5 billion Hospital Rebuilding Program will be augmented by an additional \$75m over the next two years to accelerate the rebuilding of Brisbane metropolitan hospitals and to upgrade hospital equipment throughout the State. That is good news for Mount Ommaney residents.

As to Education—\$140m will be added to the Education capital works budget over the next three years to fund a range of initiatives; an allocation of \$51.3 provided to support the continued implementation of reforms which focus on enhancing the literacy and numeracy skills of Queensland students; and an

additional 500 teachers are being employed to implement those reforms. Included in that allocation is \$3.7m to assist the non-State sector to implement those curriculum reforms. That will bring total funding for non-State schools to \$164m, including \$16.4m in capital assistance.

In Queensland, we have led the way in developing the national Asian languages strategies in Australian schools, and we will continue to integrate LOTE into the core curriculum for all students across Years 3 to 10, with students studying an average of 2.5 hours per week. A sum of \$14.5m will be provided over the next three years for this purpose.

Funding of \$8.3m has been allocated over the next three years to enhance programs and services that will deal with the behaviour of the minority of students who are unruly or disruptive. That is good news.

Funding for vocational education and training is to grow to \$492m in 1995-96, an increase of 8.7 on the 1994-95 Budget. This will lead to the doubling of the number of student contact hours delivered by the TAFE system since the Goss Government came to power in 1989.

A special \$30m Budget boost for Queensland schools means that the accelerated Schools Refurbishment Program will continue for another three years. The School Refurbishment Scheme Mark II is a special program aimed at addressing the backlog of maintenance work which had built up in schools over many years of neglect by the previous Government. In particular, the scheme will target schools constructed before the sixties in an effort to ensure the older schools are maintained at the high standard of the new schools. Better schools and more jobs are the direct result of this important scheme. These programs are a continuing boost to the local construction and maintenance industry and they create important job opportunities locally.

Almost \$190m will be spent on Education capital works this financial year. A further \$76m is to be made available for the following: a further \$10m for the acquisition of sites for new university campuses; \$36m over two years for the development of a Schools Information Management System to provide our schools with the capability of accessing global information networks such as Internet and also the capability of using interactive technologies.

The Goss Government is also committed to improving quality of life in sectors such as

conservation, recreation and culture. A further \$7.5m over the next three years is to be earmarked for the acquisition of additional national parks. Mount Ommaney residents will be pleased with that. Capital expenditure of \$11.8m will be undertaken over the next three years on a range of other projects associated with the environment. A \$16m, two-year Community Facilities Development Program will also be established to provide greater access to sport and recreational activities in the community and, in particular, to children and young people, primarily through the use of school facilities. That is good news in terms of providing youth with a diversion away from crime.

A priority of the Goss Government is the upgrading and expansion of public transport to provide enhanced services to the general public and to reduce the economic, social and environmental costs associated with an excessive reliance on motor cars. In Brisbane, bus systems, principally in the metropolitan area, will benefit from a further allocation of \$18m over the next three years for the first stages of a network of bus priority works including express lanes on major arterial and critical local feeder road links. Mount Ommaney residents will be very pleased with that. A further \$179m is to be allocated over the next three years to upgrade and expand passenger rolling stock throughout the rail system and to improve the Citytrain network, including enhanced commuter and station facilities and a third track between Yeerongpilly and Salisbury.

As well, the State's Budget will give a major boost to the Police Service, the prison system and the courts. Central to the law and order package will be an additional 500 operational police. For the first time, the Government's law and order budget will exceed \$1 billion, comprising \$541.2m for the Queensland Police Service, \$205.5m for Corrective Services, \$192.6m for justice programs, such as courts and prosecution activity, and \$92.2m for protective services and juvenile justice programs within the Family Services budget. This new spending will go directly towards services for Queenslanders and not on administration. Altogether, there will be more than \$200m in new and expanded programs in the sectors of police, prisons and justice.

As a Government we are providing tough, practical and commonsense policies and programs to tackle law and order issues. We will provide the action that the community is looking for without resorting to the extreme, United States style attitudes of our opponents.

Extra capital spending and additional operational police will build on the Goss Government's law and order record, which is to continually boost police numbers. Already, since 1989 there have been 1,500 extra operational police. Under this Budget, that figure will increase to 2,000. The Government will implement a regime of new, harsh sentences, as outlined in the new, rewritten Criminal Code, and a new specialised Property Crime Squad to hit break and enter offenders hard—with more than 400 people charged in its first few months of operation.

As part of the Government's record \$540m Police budget, a \$2m, 24-hour police station will be built in Endeavour Street in Mount Ommaney. That facility will be a state-of-the-art police station and will have a number of special features. The Endeavour Street Police Station will be built over the next two years, and it will have provision for general uniformed police, C I Branch police, the Juvenile Aid Bureau, a special home environment interview room for young people, and holding cells. That station will be a great boost to local law enforcement, and it comes on top of a massive 39 per cent increase since 1989-90 in the budget for the police district, which includes the Mount Ommaney area. I have worked hard to ensure that on a number of occasions the concerns and interests of the local community have been brought enthusiastically before State Cabinet. However, I must acknowledge the support of the community and the positive campaigning of my community, which did not rely on beat-up crime statistics. We enjoy a low crime rate in our area. We live in one of the safest areas in the State. In the past, that support by the community and its realistic attitude towards people's safety has paid off handsomely, as it has with that new police station.

Although the Opposition has claimed cynically that it would provide a range of unfunded, gimmicky election promises in every suburb in Queensland, it is the Goss Government that is actually delivering services at the grassroots level. It is one thing for the Opposition to make outlandish promises that it does not intend to keep—especially given its abysmal record while in Government regarding the provision of police resources—but in the Mount Ommaney electorate the proof of the pudding is in the eating. That police station is a Budget commitment. It is bricks and mortar that will go ahead. I signal to the Government my intention to push for a fair share of the extra 500 operational police announced in the Budget to be deployed to service the Mount Ommaney electorate.

Let me talk about new initiatives for young offenders. This Budget also includes a \$3m package over three years that targets young offenders and includes \$1.5m over three years to prevent antisocial behaviour in public places. That is something of great interest to the older residents of the Mount Ommaney electorate. That initiative to reduce conflict in public places is part of the Goss Government's juvenile crime prevention program, the Youth and Community Combined Action program, known as YACCA. The aim of that program is to reduce the incidence of conflict involving young people in places such as shopping centres, malls and parks. That is really good news.

As well, the Goss Government will spend \$24m over the next three years as part of its commitment to ensure the protection of all Queensland children. The Government's \$24m Child Protection Strategy involves the prevention of child abuse and neglect, the reform of child protection legislation and measures to overcome the effects of child abuse and neglect. Each year, thousands of children in Queensland are abused. It is the Government's role to provide adequate measures to prevent abuse and, when it does occur, to protect the child from further harm. It is also vitally important to providing counselling services to support children who have been abused. Specialist counselling services will be established for children who have been abused, and parent centres will be established to provide information, advice and support to parents. As a parent, a matter that concerns me specifically is the establishment of a specialist centre for child witnesses of domestic violence—as is my stepdaughter. Specialists will be employed within 11 existing domestic violence services to directly assist those children. Extra funding of \$2.6m over three years will be made available. I have campaigned for that, and I appreciate that initiative. On behalf of all the child survivors of domestic violence, let me thank the Government. In addition, the Community Awareness Program will be established to create an understanding of child abuse and neglect and its impact on family life. Those initiatives will ensure that families can locate services during the early stages of experiencing problems and receive appropriate help.

The Goss Government will also implement a business tax relief package worth \$40m over the next three years. Major features of that package include cuts in payroll tax, stamp duty and land tax. The main feature is the increase in payroll tax exemption. The threshold will

increase from \$700,000 to \$750,000 in two stages by 1 July next year. A consistent theme of our Government is that it enhances Queensland's international competitiveness and creates an environment which is good for business. That is good news for Mount Ommaney residents. There is a high proportion of small-business people in the Mount Ommaney electorate.

This policy is paying dividends. Over the 12 months to the end of April this year, on average Queensland created 2,000 new jobs per week—two-thirds of those being full-time positions. Another important tax concession of this Budget is the halving of the rate of Queensland's stamp duty applying to trading and transfers of marketable securities listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. In the past, large volumes of share transactions have been channelled through other financial centres in regions where stamp duty is much lower than it is in Australia. This initiative will catch business which, to date, has been conducted offshore and will add to Queensland's status as a financial centre.

A further concession that residents of the Mount Ommaney electorate involved in the building industry will appreciate is that from 1 October a reduction in the portable long service leave levy from 0.3 per cent to 0.2 per cent will apply.

Community-based services for the mentally ill will be boosted with new funding announced in our Budget. An amount of \$4m in 1995-96—\$12m over three years—will go towards employing additional staff for treatment, crisis response and case management for the mentally ill who are living in the community. This funding will ensure that adequate services are available for people who have been discharged from psychiatric hospitals and that people with mental illnesses are not unnecessarily admitted to acute hospital care. This funding is a continuation of our Government's work to address the problems identified by Brian Burdekin in his report on the rights of people with a mental illness. To further support people in the community, our Government has allocated \$3m over three years to support the non-Government community sector. Carers in the community do wonderful work in improving the quality of life of people with a mental illness, and we recognise that.

In the Mount Ommaney electorate, more than \$4m has been allocated for the construction and acquisition of public housing. Under the 1995 Capital Works Program, approximately 16 new public housing dwelling

units will be built or purchased in the Mount Ommaney local area. Overall, the Goss Government has committed \$173m to the purchase and construction of new public housing in the coming financial year. In addition, funds totalling \$48.5m have been allocated for the maintenance of existing stock, as well as \$41.9m for upgrading and redevelopment. New housing will play a vital role in addressing the need for affordable housing, particularly for low to moderate income earners in the Mount Ommaney electorate. That is good news.

High on my list of priorities for the electorate of Mount Ommaney for 1995-96 is to work towards the acquisition of Government land for a community centre and the funding of that community centre. I will be looking to the community for some of that funding. I will also be working towards the establishment of a memorial park in the Centenary suburbs to commemorate Australia's war dead. More initiatives of my office and the Mount Ommaney Young People's Council will be put in place to continue to work towards the prevention and eradication of vandalism and graffiti. My office also intends to continue to support other initiatives for which it is directly responsible, including the Mount Ommaney Business Development Association, the Mount Ommaney Education Council, the Mount Ommaney Domestic Violence Action Group, the Mount Ommaney Sexual Assault Support Network and the Mount Ommaney Multicultural Committee.

Mr HOBBS (Warrego) (9.03 p.m.): I am pleased to be able to speak in the debate on the Appropriation Bills. It is time that this Government was brought to account for what it has not done.

Mr Johnson: Tell them a few home truths.

Mr HOBBS: Tonight we should tell a few home truths. This is a Budget with no vision. The Government had an opportunity to lead Queensland, and it has done nothing. All it has done is throw a bucket of money at a bureaucracy that is going nowhere. The Government talks about its social justice Budget. That is all very well and good. We need social justice measures to keep the country going. We accept that. But by the same token, somebody has to pay for those measures. The Government has done nothing to help that sector.

At some stage the Government will find that it does not have the money to continue the lifestyle that it wishes to lead. Until it

understands that, it will not continue to survive. It all boils down to who will pay. There is no vision in what the Government has done. No long-term projects have been put into place. The only projects that the Government has put in place so far are phantom projects, which often cannot be achieved. Until the Government understands that, Queensland will not continue to expand and become the great State that it should be. This Budget is purely an election Budget—nothing more—with recycled projects.

Tonight honourable members have heard about the Government's recycled projects. I will give them a few more examples. In my electorate, the Cunnamulla Aboriginal housing and health centre has had \$790,000 allocated to it in the past four Budgets. For four years the Treasurer has put that project in the Budget, and he has put it in there again. When will the Government build that centre? Is the Treasurer going to put it in next year's Budget—if he gets back into Government? Is that what he is going to do? What about the Toowoomba ambulance centre? It has been in the Budget for years. What about the Morton Vale reticulation from Lake Clarendon? Last year, \$1.5m was allocated for it. And what has the Government spent? It has spent \$500m. So this year the Government put \$4.5m in the Budget for it. Will it spend that money? The whole lot is just being recycled.

Mr Beattie: Oh!

Mr HOBBS: That is true. The member for Brisbane Central knows that as well as I do. If he wants to go through the Budget papers carefully—

Mr Beattie: I do.

Mr HOBBS: I would bet that the honourable member does. Why does he not support what Opposition members are saying?

Mr Beattie: If you've got half an hour later we'll go through them together.

Mr HOBBS: We will. I would like to go through them in detail to find out why these projects that have been promised and promised have not been built. I am from the rural areas of Queensland. Honourable members might not have noticed, but I come from the west. In south-west Queensland I have an electorate one and a half times the size of Victoria. Let us look through the *Budget at a Glance*. I went through the Budget to see what the Treasurer is going to do for rural Queensland. There are about 12 pages in this document, and rural Queensland is not mentioned once. Where is it in the document?

Mr Beattie: There are four programs for drought relief.

Mr HOBBS: Whereabouts? There is nothing at all in that document. The honourable member would not have a clue. The Government talks about social justice measures, but it has forgotten who is going to pay the bills.

Let us look at the DEH. I was a bit surprised that the Government said that it had increased the DEH funding by about 18 per cent. However, in actual fact there is a real cut of about 2.3 per cent. There is a real problem in national parks. We need to have people on the ground to control feral animals, noxious weeds and so on in the parks. If the Government wants to have national parks, that is fine. However, it should look after them. It is not doing that. Do honourable members know what the Government has done? It has reduced the number of working rangers on the ground from 542 to 411. Only 52 of Queensland's 215 national parks have resident rangers. The Government is letting weeds grow in the garden. It is not looking after what it has.

Let me continue with *Budget at a Glance*. I will move on to water resources. This is a very interesting point.

Mr Beattie: \$1m for water catchment programs.

Mr HOBBS: The honourable member should sit back and cop it. Most of us would understand that water resources is something that may generate a few dollars in a community. Honourable members should think about it. Look at what is happening in the Burdekin region. Do honourable members know what the Government is doing? Some \$184m was allocated for it in the 1993-94 Budget. And guess what it is this year. It is \$172m! The figure has been reduced by \$12m. Why is the Government going back—

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr HOBBS: But that does not relate to what is happening here. Water resources is an expanding operation. We have to be able to develop infrastructure. Someone has to pay the bills. The Government cannot keep putting it on the tab. The bills have to be paid from somewhere. Things have to be built to generate the income to do that. That is what the Opposition is trying to get the Government to understand. In the *From Strength to Strength* document, the Government announced a few water programs; it mentioned about \$600m worth. At the time I thought, "That sounds fine. Let's have a look

at it." So I went into it. One of the programs was for a massive dam on the Comet River. That dam was going to cost \$235m. I thought, "That sounds great." Then I found that the Government, two years beforehand, had given permission to the AA company to build a 20,000-head feedlot on that dam site along with a massive irrigation scheme. This is the total focus of that \$200m company. That area is going to be flooded. Where is the Government's planning? If the Government wants to build a dam there, it will have to pay about \$50m in compensation to that company. How can the Government afford to do that?

Mr Beattie: No.

Mr Robertson: No.

Mr HOBBS: I ask honourable members to repeat that; I am interested in their replies.

Mr Beattie: We said, "No."

Mr HOBBS: Did the honourable member say that there would be no compensation to them? I thought he did.

Mr Robertson: What I don't think you understand is proper planning with respect to the infrastructure within this State.

Mr HOBBS: I understand it very well. Unfortunately, the Government does not understand it.

The Government has put up a program, and it does not even know when it is going to build that dam. I will tell honourable members what the Government did. Someone got a dart, threw it on the board, and it landed on the Comet River; so the Government decided to build a dam there. That is what the Government has done. That is an example of how it plans projects.

Mr Johnson: He doesn't have a clue.

Mr HOBBS: He would not have a clue at all.

What a disgrace! It is vital that dams and other water infrastructure projects be constructed in this State. In the future, coal mines may also start operating in those regions. By the same token, the Government must do some planning before it undertakes such projects.

The Government has decided to construct a dam on the Dawson River at a cost of \$180m. That dam was originally projected to cost \$102m. I do not know what accounts for the extra cost now associated with that project. It is probably related to freight.

Mr Beattie: It's heavy water.

Mr HOBBS: It could be heavy water!

It turns out that the Government has proposed that that dam be constructed in the middle of the new railway line to be laid in that location. The new railway line goes straight through the middle of the proposed dam! The Government has planned a railway line from the Central Highlands to Wandoan, and now it is going to build a dam in the middle of it!

Mr Beattie: Who says?

Mr HOBBS: It is in the plan. I have seen the documents.

Mr Beattie: Rubbish!

Mr HOBBS: The member says, "Rubbish." He should have a look at the documents. That is what the Government has proposed.

Mr Stephan: They want to close another railway line.

Mr HOBBS: It seems that the Government wants to close another railway line before it is even opened! There is no doubt about this Government. What a beauty!

I turn to the St George irrigation scheme, which is a good project. I seek a commitment from this Government that it is going to build the St George off-stream storage facility. That is a wonderful project for that region, and it will benefit the area from St George to the border. We hope that those people at the bottom end, particularly those around Dirranbandi, are able to derive some benefit from that dam. I hope that this is not an election ploy. The first two dams are suspect. Perhaps the Treasurer can give a commitment that that dam will in fact be constructed.

A White Paper titled *What Price Water?* has been circulated. It contains a great deal of information, and it provoked many responses. To this date, the Government has not outlined its exact policy on water charges. I wonder why it has not come clean on that issue. I believe that it is not because the Minister has been ill but simply because the Government is not game to come out in the middle of the drought and tell the people that it intends to increase the price of water.

Mr Robertson: That's wrong.

Mr HOBBS: Is that wrong?

Mr Robertson: That's wrong and you know it's wrong, because it's not about the price of water; it's about the contribution to the basic infrastructure that is part of that policy. Now, it makes perfect sense to me that in times of drought you would not bring out such a policy at that particular time. Now come on, be honest. You don't know what you're talking about.

Mr HOBBS: Come in, spinner!

I turn to land matters. All rural Queenslanders are disappointed with the Government's response to various land issues. We saw what happened with the railways. That was a serious matter. The next big haymaker was the tree-clearing guidelines. There are many other land issues that are very important to rural people.

A Government member interjected.

Mr HOBBS: The member has already made a fool of himself. We have him on record, so he should keep quiet.

What has the Government done about pest and weed control? If it were really interested in the environment, the Government would look after the weeds in the garden. It should put some money into pest and weed control. Why did the Government bring home from overseas all those people who were doing biological research into noxious weeds and feral animals? We were spending millions of dollars trying to culture the bugs, rusts and pests that could infiltrate and perhaps eradicate many noxious weeds, including rubber vine and parthenium. However, this Government brought those people home. What a disgrace!

This year, the Government threw a few dollars at that research, but not very much—only a handful of silver. The Government has to pick up the ball and run with it. If it wants to look after the environment correctly, it must do something about rubber vine. It is taking over all of north Queensland. The Government has done nothing about that problem. The people at the Charters Towers research station had to sell their motor cars last year to keep going. The Government knows that as well as I do. Those people had to sell their motor cars to try to pay for salaries and the fuel so that the station could keep going.

Mr De Lacy interjected.

Mr HOBBS: The Treasurer knows that that is the truth.

Mr De Lacy: Life's not so serious. Just calm down. Don't have a heart attack.

Mr HOBBS: I am pleased that the Treasurer is at least taking some notice of what I am saying.

I turn to land titles. The Government really stuffed up in that regard. This State had a very effective land titling system, but the Government really made a mess of it. Why could the Government not have at least put a few extra staff on to cater for the introduction

of the new titling system? The Government knows that the Queensland Titles Office was the laughing-stock of the whole of Australia while that system was being introduced. The Government still does not provide duplicate certificates of title, and until it does so people will not have confidence in the system.

I note that the Land Court is to be closed and moved to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. I ask: at what cost to the Queensland taxpayer? The Government must ensure that a low-cost court is still available in which land-holders and anyone involved in any land matters can have their disputes heard.

Mr Beattie: Tell us about drought.

Mr HOBBS: Going on the record of this Government, it would corporatise drought if it had a chance!

Mr Beattie: Very funny. You haven't got the good grace to acknowledge how much we have increased it.

Mr HOBBS: I think that I might have hit a raw nerve there!

The Government has appointed a referee. I understand that the referee has a very difficult job to do. What is the sense in having the referee if he cannot carry out his duty? If he makes an order for procedures to be put in place and nothing happens—

Ms Robson interjected.

Mr HOBBS: It is. It costs money. The Minister for Environment and Heritage may not realise that the referee does in fact come under the Department of Lands. It is a budgetary item. I hope that the Minister will provide assistance to those people who have some serious concerns about the referee.

I urge the member for Brisbane Central to take note of my next comments. I want to refer now to satellite imagery. Which department will now have responsibility for that activity? Is it the Department of Environment and Heritage? Is it the Department of Lands? The interesting aspect of this matter is that there is not a mention of satellite imagery in any of the Lands budget papers. I can find it in the DEH budget papers, but I cannot find it in the Lands budget papers. Is this merely a case of the Government pumping up the DEH portfolio in an attempt to shore up its environmental credentials? I ask: which department will look after the satellite imagery program? An amount of \$7.7m has been allocated to it. I am not saying that that is not a good thing; I believe that satellite imagery is essential. We must be able to provide information on vegetation controls so that we can plan for the future. However, those

activities should be used only for the purpose of providing information and not for spying, as the Government originally intended.

I turn to land rentals. This is an important issue. It is obvious that Government members know about inflation, because it is out of control when it comes to land rentals.

Mr Beattie: What?

Mr HOBBS: Land rentals, I-a-n-d. In 1990-91, \$14m was received from land rentals. That amount went from \$14m to \$17m to \$20m to \$21m to \$23m—a total increase of 9.52 per cent. I do not think that inflation has run at that level! This Government puts its hands in the pockets of Queenslanders at every opportunity, and increases of that magnitude are not at all reasonable.

I have taken on board the comments that have appeared in various newspapers about this Budget. In one article, it was claimed that the Budget contains no new taxes or charges.

Mr Beattie: That's right.

Mr HOBBS: That is very debatable. I note that the member for Brisbane Central is grinning, and he should grin, because that statement is a farce. Another article stated that State revenue is to increase by 5.1 per cent. One has to have a bit of a laugh at that one! Here is a beauty—the Budget allocates a record \$673m to Primary Industries. The reality is that there will be fewer people in the DPI at the end of next year than there are now. In fact, this Government is going to reduce the number of staff. The Government is only doubling those figures. That does not mean a thing. Government members know that as well as I do. The Government is reducing the numbers in the Department of Primary Industries.

Mr Johnson: Two per cent of the Primary Industries budget was spent west of the Great Divide, where all the agriculture occurs.

Mr HOBBS: The member for Gregory informs me that 2 per cent of the DPI budget is spent west of the Great Divide, where all of the agriculture occurs. So why is all the money spent in south-east Queensland?

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr HOBBS: We should not forget the fruit and vegetables growers. All of this is indicative of this Government. This is a Budget that has totally failed. The Government had an opportunity; why did it not take it? Everyone knows that there is an election pending.

Mr Beattie: Tell us about drought.

Mr HOBBS: I will talk about drought in a minute. Why did the Government not take the opportunity to erect buildings, to do something? All it has done is to prop up old measures. Government members talk about increased police numbers, but they know that they are fibbing. They say that there will be an extra 500 police, when really there will be about 230. They talk about 500 extra teachers, but they know that 400 of those were teachers who could not be employed last year. The Government had those initiatives in the last Budget, and Government members know it. All they have to do is talk to people who work in the departments, which are leaking like sieves. Morale in the departments is very low. We are being told about it. Government members need not look so shocked. They know that as well as I do.

The member for Brisbane Central mentioned the drought. The Government says that it should privatise, or corporatise—

Mr Beattie: What about drought?

Mr HOBBS: Government members must understand that there is ongoing funding for drought, as there should be. The rural industry is a massive industry and it is a sector that we have to look after. It is the same as everything else—housing, health, education—it is important. However, the drought is provided for in only one section of this Budget. It definitely is not a priority.

Mr Beattie: Two hundred and fifty million dollars for drought.

Mr HOBBS: It has been given nowhere near the priority it should be given. The Government is only reducing the time for qualification and reducing the charges.

Time expired.

Mrs ROSE (Currumbin) (9.23 p.m.): It is a pleasure for me to rise and support the Appropriation Bills, which can only be described as good news for Queenslanders and good news for southern Gold Coasters in the Currumbin electorate. Record spending in the social areas of health, education, law and order and transport are indicative of this Government's commitment to all Queenslanders, whether they live in Cunnamulla, Cooktown or Currumbin.

All Queensland children will benefit from the record Education budget of \$2.646m. The Gold Coast region is one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. The strong population growth in the Gold Coast region of course means increased enrolment numbers in our schools, and this has been recognised in the Goss Government's Education budget.

More than \$22.8m has been allocated to new school facilities, with a new primary school for Mudgeeraba and new facilities for the Robina State High School and the Windaroo Valley State High School.

The needs of southern Gold Coast schools in the Currumbin electorate have been recognised and addressed in the 1995-96 Budget, with nearly \$1m allocated for extending, modernising and upgrading our schools. Enrolment numbers at the Elanora State Primary School have grown from 857 students in 1989 to over 1,100 students this year. The increased enrolments have brought additional teaching staff to the school and, inevitably, this has put a strain on administration facilities. The staff at that school will be very pleased that \$250,000 has been allocated to extend the administration block.

The students, parents and staff will also welcome the additional student covered area amenities, for which \$250,000 has also been made available. The Tallebudgera State School is also experiencing rapid growth in enrolment numbers, and the five-year projection is that this growth will continue. An amount of \$395,000 has been allocated to the Tallebudgera State School to complete the general learning block.

Other schools in the Currumbin electorate to benefit from the 1995-96 Budget are the Palm Beach-Currumbin State High School, where \$11,000 will be spent to fully complete the new home economics block, and the Currumbin State School will receive \$148,000 for the completion of the music room. It is more than obvious that not only does this Government recognise the needs of our growing southern Gold Coast schools, but also it does something about them—it comes up with the dollars to provide the additional facilities needed to ensure a good learning environment for our children.

Some of the other programs within the Education budget which are of benefit to all southern Gold Coast children, and to all Queensland children, are: \$25.7m for the Languages Other Than English Program, which gives Queensland children the chance to learn another language; an allocation of \$9.2m for the computers in schools program; \$13m for the helping P & Cs with the basics program to provide schools with essential equipment previously supplied by the P & Cs through fund raising projects; \$95.9m for school transport; \$51.3m for implementing recommendations arising from the Queensland curriculum review; \$34.1m for modernising and upgrading existing State

school facilities; \$10m to maintain existing schools; \$491.8m for vocational education and training and another increase of 4,200 full and part-time Government funded places in 1995; and \$64.2m for the provision of Queensland sport and recreation programs and facilities.

So the Queensland Government's commitment to education and training speaks for itself, although further recognition of this by the Government in the needs for the Gold Coast region is evident in the allocation of \$19.3m to the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE. The staged development of the Gold Coast GCIT will involve the purchase and refurbishment of the Stewarts centre in Southport, which will provide the institute with a capacity for 2,800 equivalent new student places, that is, places for 800 full-time students next semester, and this will expand to almost 2,000 full-time places in the next three years.

In addition to the new Stewarts building and student places, funding has been allocated for more than a dozen new courses, one of which is a certificate in heritage and interpretive tourism, with modules as diverse as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, Japanese and environmental studies. Other new courses include justice administration, digital electronics, applied languages in Indonesian and Chinese and ecotourism. For the first time, the GCIT will be able to offer the diploma in nursing care, and 30 full-time places will be made available for this diploma in the first semester of 1996. The training budget is very good news for the Gold Coast region.

The Health budget is this Budget's biggest spending item, with a record \$2.7 billion to be spent on health services—dollars spent where dollars are needed. That includes \$64m allocated to the shortening of waiting lists and \$35m on re-equipping hospitals. For the Gold Coast Hospital, \$7.3m has been allocated for refurbishment and airconditioning renovations.

Immunisation is the single most effective action in protecting the health of our children and the community as a whole, and the Government has recognised the importance of this with a \$1.9m allocation for the development of a new childhood immunisation system. The importance of the oral health of our children is recognised, with an additional \$3.87m allocated to extend school-based dental services to Year 8, 9 and 10 students, that is, an extra 80,000 Queensland students.

Fighting crime continues to be a top priority for this Government—a top priority with sensible policies that work, increasing police numbers and increasing police patrols and targeted police beats, not scaremongering and hysteria. The Budget provides for 500 more operational police. That means more police on the beat. The new police rostering system which has been brought on line means more police on the beat. The ongoing development of an integrated computer information system frees up police to allow them to be where they are needed—on the beat. This is evident by the announcement this week that police foot patrols will be operating on the streets of Palm Beach from 1 June. This effective policing initiative is in response to business and community concerns that have been raised with me and the Police Minister, Paul Braddy, over recent weeks. The foot patrols are in addition to the increased car patrols. The foot patrols in Palm Beach are a clear, positive response to community concerns. This is a commonsense and serious approach to fighting crime. The sensible answer to fighting crime is having more police on our streets, on the beat, in patrol cars and in business district shopfronts—in other words, smarter policing.

In the 1995-96 capital works program for the upgrading of courthouses, the Southport Court House has been allocated an increased \$7.5m for redevelopment in order to provide for additional magistrates chambers, new accommodation for prosecutors and police prosecutors, enhanced and expanded watch-house facilities, and the refurbishment of existing court facilities. The total project, which will be completed in two years, will provide capacity for an increase in the number of Magistrates Courts from five to 12 and in the number of District Courts from three to five.

The Gold Coast region will benefit significantly from a range of major funding allocations in this year's Budget. Substantial capital investments for road and rail infrastructure that have a direct impact on the Gold Coast region include projects such as the Brisbane to Robina rail link, which has attracted a further funding allocation of \$45m. One major project which has a direct impact on southern Gold Coasters is the four-laneing of the Pacific Highway from Reedy Creek to Tugun. An amount of \$26.5m has been allocated in the 1995-96 Budget for this project. The Minister also gave us the good news a couple of weeks ago that noise barriers will also be put on both sides of the Pacific Highway from the new Tallebudgera

Creek bridge south to the Guineas Creek Road turn-off.

The Transport budget also allows for over \$300,000 to improve traffic signals and lighting along the Gold Coast Highway. I hope that some of that money will be used towards looking at the delay timing on the walk signals, because a number of pensioners and elderly people say that the walk signal is not long enough to allow them sufficient time to cross the road safely. So I hope that some of that money increases the delay times on the walk signals.

The State Government has a responsibility to provide public housing which is not only appropriate but also affordable. The Department of Housing provides thousands of Queenslanders with access to secure and affordable housing. This is an important option for people unable to afford private rental, home purchase or who face other barriers to appropriate housing. Overall, the Goss Government has committed \$173m to the purchase and construction of new public housing in the coming financial year. More than \$1.5m has been allocated for the construction and acquisition of public housing in the Currumbin electorate, which means that 20 new public housing dwelling units will be built or purchased in the local area.

One of the most significant issues for southern Gold Coasters is the Tweed River sand bypass project. This year's Budget allocates a further \$3.8m to the project, a project which would not have gone ahead without the persistence of the Goss Labor Government. The project comprises two interrelated components. The first is the initial dredging of the Tweed River bar and entrance area and the nourishment of southern Gold Coast beaches. The second is an artificial sand bypass system to operate in perpetuity.

The heads of agreement for the project was signed by the Premiers of New South Wales and Queensland at Point Danger on 31 March 1994. The historic heads of agreement marked the successful culmination of negotiations and established the principles for the development and implementation of the project. The project is designed to satisfy the objectives of both Queensland and New South Wales. The New South Wales objective is to establish and maintain an improved navigable entrance to the Tweed River. The Queensland objective is to restore and maintain the recreational amenity of the southern Gold Coast beaches.

The project is unique. Dredging began in the Tweed Bar nearly four weeks ago, on

about 28 April, and since then we have seen the sand being pumped on to our southern Gold Coast beaches—where it belongs. Thousands of Gold Coasters have shown their interest in the project by either visiting the information centre at Point Danger, which has been established for the duration of the works, or visiting the beaches to witness the sand pumping taking place. I was on the beach at Coolangatta on Sunday morning, 7 May, when the first sand was pumped on to that beach. I congratulate the Treasurer for presenting a Budget which reflects sound economic management and yet has achieved record spending on the social needs of more health and hospital services, more schools, improved transport facilities and stepped up police resources to fight crime. I support the Bills.

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly) (9.39 p.m.) This lacklustre Budget has failed to acknowledge the real issues that are affecting the people of Queensland today. The Goss Labor Government, while spraying around money, has failed to address the real law and order issues, the growing hospital waiting lists and the growing class sizes and associated problems in our schools that have reached crisis point in this State. Instead, in this Budget this Labor Government is throwing money in every direction in a bid to win votes and the support of the public for the up-coming State election.

This Government seems to have forgotten that one of its primary roles is to provide the people of Queensland with a safe community in which to live. The crime rate has risen dramatically in the five years that Goss and Labor have been in Government, but still they fail to recognise the severity of the crime problem. What is it going to take before this Government starts to take Queensland's crime problem seriously and to take action to reduce it—to have a real crime prevention program. How much longer do Queenslanders have to put up with Labor's attitude and philosophy of disinterest, of being soft on crime? Under Labor, crime is clearly out of control. One only needs to ask the people of Riverview just how serious the crime problem is or to ask the police in a couple of suburban police stations—if they are open—whether the crime problem in Queensland is being overstated. Alternatively, one could ask the police in Logan, in the Premier's electorate, who are distributing leaflets informing the public that police shortages have reached such a crisis point and that crime has become so rampant that they are no longer able to perform their duties effectively.

Behind all of the rhetoric in this year's Budget lies a cut of some \$37.7m in the forward estimates expenditure over the next three years in law and order and public safety. It is not surprising to see that, in this election year, Goss and Labor are spending \$37.7m more on law and order than they are going to spend in three years' time, in 1997-98, even though there will be a considerable increase in population. This Labor Government has never shown any commitment to law and order in its five years in Government. This year's Budget shows that it is going to continue its soft approach to crime.

One only has to look to some of the crime figures over the past five years. For example, household break and enter offences are up 124 per cent in five years—up 24 per cent in the past financial year alone. If one turns from the Police Department annual report and statistics to the Suncorp annual report, one will find that in that document the Chairman of Suncorp spells out clearly that claims for theft and burglary have increased by 50 per cent in the past 12 months. Those are increases of quite staggering proportions. When one considers the assault rate, one finds that that has increased by 77 per cent in five years. The armed robbery rate has increased by 123 per cent in five years. Those are hardly figures of which any Government can be proud. They highlight the failure of the Government's crime prevention programs.

The member for Mount Ommaney recently advocated that he should become the Minister for crime prevention. He was supporting the Opposition in its claims that crime prevention under this Government is simply not working. He was saying that the whole process is a farce; it is simply not working. His photograph appeared in the local newspaper, as large as life, and he stated that we have reached a farcical situation and that he would take over the job of crime prevention. That is hardly a vote of confidence in the Attorney-General or the Minister for Police in this Government.

With the increase in crime, Queenslanders today face a greater threat of becoming victims of crime than ever before. However, victims are still being left out in the cold while great expense is being incurred to care for convicted criminals. This Budget has provided the victims of crime with only \$250,000 but, considering the thousands of people who fall victim to crime each year, this amount is only a fraction of what is really needed. We must not forget the figure in the CJC report that one in four people never

bother to report the crime that has occurred in their households or to them personally. One could be forgiven for thinking that there is an election coming up but, in view of the forgotten victims of past crime, this sum of money is too little, too late. To date, the Goss Government has done relatively nothing for victims of crime.

In the 1993-94 financial year, the Victims of Crime Association received a grant of only \$76,000 from the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs. This, too, is a paltry sum of money considering the large number of primary and secondary victims and the major trauma and suffering that those people are experiencing. Labor could be doing so much more to help primary and secondary victims and their families. Do Government members not think that they have been through enough and that they deserve a little consideration? Although no-one can compensate for loss of life or the trauma of being a victim, the Government can help by providing them with the support services and counselling that they need.

This Government has neglected to ensure the rights of victims and their families by not providing them with even the same amount of care and concern that it gives to convicted criminals. At the expense of ordinary Queenslanders, this Goss Government is looking after convicted criminals by providing for their medical, therapeutic and emotional needs while the victims of crime and their families are left to pick up the pieces alone. Well, enough is enough! These victims should not be an afterthought. They should be compensated for their traumatic experience, and it is this Government's duty to make sure that that happens.

For the past few years, this Labor Government has been trying to tell the people of Queensland that the number of criminals who are repeat offenders has fallen and that Queensland has had the lowest number of repeat offenders in Australia. It has only recently been revealed that the rate at which criminals are being readmitted to Queensland prisons is a staggering 61 per cent. It is not the 47.7 per cent as reported a couple of years ago in the annual reports. In the 1992-93 annual report it was reported that the figure was down from 47.4 to 46.2 per cent. The rate has now risen to a staggering 61 per cent. No longer can this Government paper over its lack of adequate rehabilitation programs that has led to this disgracefully high number of readmissions to the State prison system.

What members of this House must further understand is that, for example, sex offenders and many other offenders who are in prison for less than 12 months do not take part in rehabilitation programs. For example, the sex offenders program takes 12 months to complete; therefore it is a worthless exercise to send someone on that program if that person is in prison for less than 12 months. What a disgraceful situation that is. The rehabilitation programs that the Government does have in place are simply not working because, if they were, we would not have the great number of repeat offenders being readmitted to prison that we have today. The Government does not have in place any method of measuring the success or otherwise of those programs. These factors show the Government's program of crime prevention to be in tatters.

Not only are the number of repeat offenders rising, but so is the amount that prisoners are paid while in custody in Queensland. According to the Corrective Services Commission, prisoners in Queensland gaols are being paid a maximum weekly wage of \$51.80. However, this figure is once again expected to increase in July, so that prisoners can earn up to \$53.20 per week. In the last financial year alone, that expenditure cost the people of Queensland nearly \$2.7m. Those prisoners are already costing Queensland millions of dollars in food, clothing and shelter costs. They are also provided with medical and other similar services. In addition, each prisoner is given a weekly amenities allowance of \$9. How can this Government tell the people of Queensland that their money is being spent wisely when they pay convicted criminals a weekly wage so that they can afford some luxuries such as magazines and extra food? Why should these prisoners be given money for some luxuries in life when they are already well catered for after having been convicted of harming people or property within our community? Again, the victims are forgotten.

Of course, when one compares that figure of \$2.7m with the amount of funds which the victims of crime will receive under the new allocation of \$250,000 in this Budget, what a paltry figure it is. What a disgraceful performance that is from this Government. I think those figures speak volumes about where this Government's priorities lie. Its priorities clearly lie with the offenders. The victims are totally forgotten and treated as second-class citizens.

Yet another aspect of the judicial system to which the Goss Government has failed to give deserved attention is the overwhelming

amount of monetary penalties that are outstanding. A total of \$88m is outstanding for the five-year period to 30 June 1994. That is nothing but a farce. If people ran their businesses in the same way that Mr Goss and his Government run this State, then all enterprises in the State would be out of business tomorrow.

How can the Government justify having this astonishing amount of outstanding monetary penalties? In this five-year period, warrants were issued for only \$49m of the \$88m outstanding. The sum of \$5.6m worth of fine options was issued in this period and only \$2.6m has been paid. This Government must provide tougher legislation and put into place more stringent and effective methods of obtaining these penalties.

Mr Mackenroth: When I became Police Minister, I found a room with a quarter of a million unserved warrants from the time of your Government.

Mr BEANLAND: I thank the Minister for that interjection, because this Government has a most disgraceful number of unserved warrants. In fact, the Attorney-General has had to come into this House on no fewer than four occasions to amend legislation to enable the serving of warrants. That is one of the reasons we now have millions and millions of dollars in fines outstanding. It is easy for the Minister to throw figures around, but he cannot prove them. I can prove these figures here and now; they are his Government's figures.

Mr Mackenroth: I can prove it.

Mr BEANLAND: The Minister cannot prove it at all. To date, he has not proven it in an annual report. I am citing figures from the department's annual report. It is easy to see how prickly he is. It is easy to see how it is hurting the Minister, and in this regard he has a lot to feel hurt about. The Minister has been found out. In fact, on this matter, he has been found short—\$88m in unserved warrants outstanding. That is dreadful.

I want to outline briefly to this House yet another factor which demonstrates the Goss Government's maladministration. The Public Sector Management Commission report of 30 June 1994 shows that in the 1993-94 financial year the number of senior executive service level positions increased in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General by an alarming 22. What reason does the Attorney-General, Mr Wells, have for increasing those numbers from 25 to 47 in just one year? Of course, all we hear is a deathly silence from the Attorney-General. Only four of those positions are new, and they cost an extra \$356,000 per

annum. The other 18 positions were pre-existing but were incorporated into the senior executive service following yet another one of those PSMC reviews—yet another review—at a cost of some \$77,000 per annum. In total, those 22 positions are to cost an additional \$433,000 per annum.

However, in this year's Budget only \$250,000 is being given to the victims of crime. Yet again those victims are treated as third-rate citizens. The Attorney-General must stop wasting money on the bureaucracy and start putting it where it is needed urgently. This Government has failed to understand that before it spends exorbitant amounts of money on an unnecessary bureaucracy it must start looking after the people of Queensland who, under this Government, are being denied justice. Wherever one looks, under Labor, crime prevention is disregarded totally and soon forgotten.

Another issue that cannot be overlooked is that relating to the Queensland Anti-discrimination Commission. Currently, there is a great deal of unhappiness with quasi-courts, and that is something which this Government must reverse. The Commissioner of the Queensland Anti-discrimination Commission has said that all complaints received by the commission are investigated and that it rejects those considered frivolous, false or lacking in substance. However, in recent times many people have complained that that is not the case and that some cases are going forward whilst still lacking in substance. A prime example is that of a company which was brought before the tribunal to answer a case of unfair dismissal based on discrimination. The company was found to be innocent of the charges, but the commission believed that initially there was insufficient evidence to show that the company had no case to answer.

In many other cases small businesses believe that the odds are stacked against them. They believe that the commission is biased towards the complainant. Another example is a case involving a company from a small north-western country town in this State. In this case it appeared that the processes used for the protection of parties in the conciliation process has failed. On 22 February this year, the company was shocked to see an article about its case on page 3 of the *Courier-Mail*, especially considering that the settlement details of that case were subject to a confidentiality requirement. Owing to the small size of the community in which the company operates, it felt that the article, which came from the commission's annual report tabled in Parliament, could refer only to the company;

that if both the company and the complainant were restrained from a confidentiality requirement, then so should the commission itself. I believe that what has occurred is most regrettable. What confidence will any person have in the commission if it continues to breach confidentiality and proceeds with cases that lack any substance? Those examples that I have given highlight the problems within the Queensland Anti-discrimination Commission. Something needs to be done to fix those problems, and I suggest to the commissioners that they have a close look at these matters. If the Queensland Anti-discrimination Commission is to continue to serve its purpose effectively, it must retain the confidence of the community.

Members of this House have seen at first-hand the time and effort that was put in from all concerned to enable the formation of the recent CJC report into Queensland's Legal Aid Commission and Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. It is unfortunate that the report did not cover other areas of criminal justice in this State, and I will have more to say on that at another time. In the process of the CJC preparing this report, this Government spent an unbelievable amount of taxpayers' funds. The report is now completed and has been furnished with recommendations about both the Legal Aid Office and the Director of Public Prosecutions. The only thing missing is the funds in this year's Budget to implement those recommendations. How can the Government justify spending taxpayers' money on a report that will not be taken seriously or its recommendation implemented in the Budget?

Under this Labor Government, once again the justice system has been found to be inadequate; however, this time it is with regard to the adoption of children. In recent times I have received a number of complaints about this problem. Some children who have been born out of wedlock are being adopted out by the Department of Family Services without the knowledge of their fathers. This is taking place through a loophole in the adoption process. Division 3 of the Adoption of Children Act 1964 states that in the case of a child whose parents are not married to each other at the time of its conception, have not since married each other and have not previously been adopted, when it comes to having the child adopted out, the appropriate person is the mother or the guardian of the child. This Act discriminates directly against fathers of children born out of wedlock. A large number of children have been born into de facto relationships. Through the adoption process, if

those relationships sour, the fathers can end up losing their children because those children can be adopted out without the fathers knowing about it until it is far too late. I ask: what type of justice is this? The Department of Family Services seems to favour adopting out a child to a total stranger instead of spending time investigating whether the father wants custody of the child. It should not be as simple as it is for a mother to exclude the father totally from the adoption process. I understand that 46 newborn babies have been adopted out during the past financial year. I believe the Government must fall into line with other States and ensure that the full adoption process is supervised by the courts to ensure that no party is discriminated against. The Government must also change the legislation so that there is some avenue for appeal against adoptions.

The member for Currumbin referred to police on the beat. I say to the member for Currumbin that there is nothing new in having police on the beat. In fact, in the days of Sir Robert Peel—which is where the term "bobby" comes from—he had police out on the beat in London. At that time, one of the great achievements in law and order was having police out there on the beat doing their job. I say to the member for Currumbin that it is unfortunate that it has taken this Government 150 or 160 years to rediscover that most important aspect of having police on the beat. When it comes to crime prevention, it simply cannot be beaten. If we are going to be really serious about the prevention of crime in this State we should certainly ensure that a greater number of police are on the beat doing their job and not—as seems to be the case today—staying in offices or becoming tied up with non-operational work. Despite many protestations from the Minister, we know that the current Budget will only produce sufficient police to perhaps—if we are lucky—keep up with the population growth over the next 12 months. Most likely, police numbers will fall behind. That is the whole problem with this Budget. It is an uninspiring Budget. It has failed to address the problems within the system in this State. It ceases to deliver the services to the public of Queensland.

Time expired.

Mr SZCZERBANIK (Albert) (9.59 p.m.): As the Goss Labor Government heads into its third term in office, I am proud to put myself forward to my constituents for re-election. I have no doubt that I will be returned to this House to represent them in the seat of Albert. I say that because I have been part of a Government that has delivered real benefits to

all my constituents, and I have continued to work hard on their behalf.

For six years, this Government has worked hard to build a better State for all Queenslanders. In 1989, the people of Queensland elected Wayne Goss as their Premier and rejected a tired, directionless National Party Government. In 1992, the Labor Party asked Queenslanders to vote for a further opportunity to continue the good work that the Goss Government had started in 1989. The people rewarded it again with their support and now, in 1995, the people of Queensland are able to reap the benefits of placing their faith in Wayne Goss and the Queensland Labor Government.

Those benefits are there for all to see, with a record Budget of \$11.6 billion, including record budgets of \$1.6 billion for Environment; \$2.7 billion for Health, and \$2.6 billion for Education—all of this while still ensuring that Queensland is debt free. However, the surplus achieved with this Budget did not come about by accident or at the drop of a hat; it has taken six years of hard, meaningful work by this Government and the people of Queensland. The failure of the Bjelke-Petersen, Ahern and Cooper Governments meant that this Labor Government has had to take the long, hard road to achieve its economic and social justice objectives. With this Budget, we move even closer to our destination.

This Government did not seek simply to become debt free, sit down and pat itself on the back. There is much more that Governments can and should do. Governments are service providers, not just regulators. We seek to provide a safe, secure and happy environment in which people can live and parents can raise their families. We seek to give all Queenslanders the opportunity to live meaningful lives and the capacity to earn a living for themselves and their families. Thirdly, we seek to protect and support those who, through no fault of their own, are unable to help themselves.

This Budget continues to provide the framework that allows Queenslanders to pursue a happy, healthy lifestyle. This Government can be accused of delivering a big-spending Budget—a fistful of dollars, an election Budget—but the fact remains that this Budget is a sign of a smart, well-managed Government doing its job and doing it well. If we borrowed excessively to fund all of the services that we wish to provide, we would be accused of gross irresponsibility and labelled as bad economic managers. We cannot be

accused of presenting big-spending Budgets and, at the same time, of not providing services to people. If we had reduced spending for the sake of some obscure blueprint for economic rationalism, we would have failed to do our best for the people we represent. Instead, we made sure that as much of the revenue base as possible was made available without compromising the economic future of this State and without mortgaging the future of our children.

As a result, our net interest costs will be in the negative compared with the 13.4 per cent of revenue on average being spent by other States on the servicing of debt. Obviously, having a surplus is a good thing because it gives the Government more opportunities to spend its revenue dollar. I do not want to suggest that Government debt is a bad thing. On many occasions it may be necessary, especially in the case of large infrastructure developments. But Governments must seek at all times to use the revenue available to them in the most effective and efficient manner. It is no good having a record \$11.6 billion Budget if we cannot do the most good with that revenue. This Budget targets key areas to ensure that we achieve the best we can.

In Queensland, the Government has had to meet the challenge of a rapidly growing population, especially in areas such as my electorate of Albert. That is one of the reasons why this is a big-spending Budget. We are committed to keeping up with the needs of a rapidly growing population. This means that we must be prepared to spend money and not shirk our responsibilities. If the Opposition wants to think that this is just another election-year Budget, it will have to think again. The Government's spending record over the past six years says it all. Over the past six years, total expenditure has increased on average by 7.5 per cent. It makes sense for the people of Queensland to continue to support this Government. They will continue to support us because we can continue to deliver services to them. This Budget is further evidence of what this Goss Labor Government is able to do.

Let us look more closely at what I am talking about. Health and education are two areas which affect every member in this House and touch almost every Queenslander. The Health budget has increased by 11.4 per cent on last year's budget, with public admissions up by 42 per cent on the 1989-90 year. The strain on Queensland's public health system is obvious. That is why this much-needed injection into the Health budget is so

important. More importantly, this funding includes \$64m for a hospital waiting list program, and \$35m in the next two years to upgrade and modernise the equipment in public hospitals. Also included are funds for the recruitment and retention of remote area nurses, further funding for mental health services and more for school-based dental health—and the list goes on. In my electorate, at Mount Warren Park a further \$473,000 has been allocated towards the cost of a community health centre, which will open shortly, at a total cost of \$4.27m. I have seen that facility. It is worth every dollar that the Government has put into it.

The Education budget is also an extremely large component of Budget outlays—and deservedly so. The allocation of funds for a university campus site in the Logan/Gold Coast region means that the Government will be well positioned to provide for the future education needs of such an important growth region of the State. I believe that my electorate is well placed to be the site of that campus. The distance from Beenleigh to the Mount Gravatt campus is 23 kilometres. From Beenleigh to the campus on the Gold Coast it is approximately 35 kilometres. So we still have a 10-kilometre directional change in that area. I would like to see the campus placed near the Gold Coast rail link. Public transport is a big issue for university students, and public transport needs can be catered for by placing the campus near the rail corridor.

I turn to other issues within my electorate of Albert. I have worked hard to ensure that the people of Albert received their fair share of this record Budget. I am pleased to see that the Government has agreed with me and supported a number of worthwhile projects which will benefit the people of Albert and the surrounding areas. One of the most exciting developments in Albert is the completion of the Gold Coast rail link to Helensvale. The Minister for Transport has announced that this year's record Budget includes \$45m to complete that project. Of course, this is a long-term project of this Government that will meet the public transport needs of a growing population in the Gold Coast-Brisbane corridor. Unfortunately, it means money spent on a rail line that should never have been ripped up in the first place. However, I welcome this Government's further commitment to the people of Helensvale. With the track laid to Helensvale and the overhead electric supply installed, as well as the signalling and the final track work, we can now proceed with the building of the stations at Ormeau, Coomera and Helensvale.

I am also pleased to see funding for 30 modern interurban rail cars to service the Gold Coast line, at a cost of \$75m, as well as the further provision of security at stations, car parks and on the trains. This will provide a safe, secure alternative for people wanting to commute regularly between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Population growth in the Albert region is one of the highest in Australia, if not the highest. It is especially hard in these circumstances to meet the increasing demands for health, education and other essential services.

The announcement of a new ambulance station at Pimpama, at a cost of \$630,000, and a new fire station at Gaven, at a cost of \$700,000, is welcome. Today, Tom Burns and I went to Gaven to look at a preferred site near the entrance to Studio Village. We have to negotiate with the Department of Transport and the Gold Coast City Council. I hope that we can get that fire station up and running as quickly as possible to service the needs of my community.

Also, the Department of Emergency Services is spending \$150,000 on upgrading the Southport station, which will service the southern part of my electorate at Nerang and Gaven. Also, the Gold Coast region will receive nine new fire appliances this financial year and throughout 1995-96, at a total cost of \$3.98m. As the Minister for Emergency Services said today in this House, the appliance at the Gold Coast is a 1966 vintage model. Perhaps the museum in Brisbane will include it in its display after we have finished with it.

Albert's growing population, with its young families, has seen four new schools built in the electorate in the past five years. They are the Windaroo Valley State High School, the Windaroo Valley State School, the Gaven State School and the Helensvale State High School. The Education budget includes a number of new amenities for these schools and others. They include \$800,000 for a new double-storey teaching block at the Gaven State School. As stated in the Budget documents, additional expenditure will be directed towards the provision of further accommodation at schools that are experiencing significant enrolment growth. I am led to believe that on day one when that school opened it had an enrolment of 199, and on day one next year it is expected that over 400 students will be enrolled at that school. That is the sort of growth that is occurring in that part of my electorate.

An amount of \$80,000 is being spent on the modular building at the Helensvale State

High School. There is also \$97,000 to complete the home economics block, \$90,000 for two new art spaces and \$160,000 for a new small amenities block—all at Helensvale State High School. An amount of \$2.7m is being spent on the next stage at the Windaroo Valley High School, which will include a performing arts and music centre, staff and amenities areas, a double teaching block and students' covered areas. In addition, \$384,000 is being spent on a general learning block at the Ormeau and Oxenford State Schools. All of those projects will help serve the future needs of my whole electorate. As can be seen by those capital works projects, growth continues in all sectors of my electorate.

Recently, I have been calling for an upgrade and repair of the Brisbane Road and Helensvale Road. Damage to those roads has made trips over them quite bumpy and unpleasant. The decision to inject just under \$1m for pavement repairs on these roads is greatly appreciated.

I fully support this Budget. It is a big-spending Budget, and those projects that I have listed during my contribution represent only part of the capital works projects being undertaken in my electorate. This Budget is a response to the continued growth that this State is experiencing, and it will provide improved job opportunities for all Queenslanders.

I congratulate the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development, which is spending \$800,000 on the Yatala industrial estate to provide fully serviced blocks of ground to facilitate the establishment of businesses. Recently a representation was made to me by the principal of Swagman Motor Homes. He cannot keep pace with the demand for his services, so he is looking to expand his business. We are looking at a few sites for him. His business has grown so rapidly that he has to find extra space.

Other projects in my electorate or supporting areas include \$7.324m set aside for work at the Gold Coast Hospital for continued airconditioning renovations and refurbishment of the accident and emergency centre, the paediatric ward and—my wife's greatest fear—the obstetric ward, to name a few. The Goss Government is continuing to support the Gold Coast. It is providing capital works and infrastructure in that region. People from southern States are continuing to move to the Albert electorate because they know that under the Goss Labor Government they

will continue to receive benefits. Many people find my electorate to be one of the best places in Australia to live.

Mr GILMORE (Tablelands) (10.15 p.m.): I have to say that this Budget is a disgrace. I have to suggest that the Government that brought it down is also a disgrace. I ask this Parliament: where is the vision in this Budget? Where is the vision from this Government? There is no vision; this Government offers no future to this State. This is a day-to-day, week-to-week Budget. This is a PAYE Budget—living out of the back pocket and hoping to goodness for tomorrow. It offers no future in terms of infrastructure development. Although the Government boasts about providing \$600m for infrastructure development, where is it all going?

Let us have a look at the history of this State and some of the wonderful infrastructure that was put in place—the infrastructure that this Government is using. This is not a Government of development of infrastructure, of construction, of future vision, of wealth creation; this is a Government that is taxing the infrastructure of yesteryear.

Mr Stoneman: Shame!

Mr GILMORE: It is an absolute shame and a disgrace, as I am reminded by the member for Burdekin. Members should recall the construction of the beef roads and what that meant for this State.

Mr De Lacy: Who constructed them—the Federal Government.

Mr GILMORE: Yes, but we were part of that. I am delighted that the Treasurer raised that subject, because right throughout the Budget documents he has claimed that we are spending X amount of money on this and X amount of money on that, but a lot of that is Federal money. How many times did the Treasurer credit the Federal Government with providing that funding? Due credit was given on a couple of occasions, but they were very few and far between. The Treasurer has assumed the credit for Federal spending.

Let us look at what else happened in Queensland in past years with the rail line construction, harbour construction and dam construction that occurred in this State. Where do we go from today? Where is the vision of this Government that says that in the future we are going to have a gas pipeline grid across this State as an alternative energy source that can provide for industry and for domestic consumption so that people have a viable choice between electricity and gas or a

mixture as their source of energy? Where is the vision? There is none.

In terms of power stations, I ask: how many power stations will be built by this Budget? I will not bother asking the Treasurer that question, because he would not know. Not a single brick will be laid by this Budget in terms of power station construction.

Mr Bennett: Tannum Sands High School—they are going to lay bricks up there.

Mr GILMORE: There we go—that is the sort of attitude that we see in this Budget: "We can lay a brick down at Tannum Sands", but we are not building a power station. The Government is laying a few wires, but nothing more than would have occurred under normal planning processes in this State.

Mr Welford: Yes, we are. We are building solar power stations all over the State.

Mr GILMORE: The member for Everton is the goat who was in charge of the Alternative Energy Advisory Group. What did he do with the \$5m provided to that group? Nothing! I visited the Daintree recently. What came out of that whole consultative process? That advisory group spent a bit on airfares; it spent money on the galah opposite walking around the scrub; it set aside four sites north of the Daintree—none of which have trees on them—including a school site and a farm.

How are all of those people living north of the Daintree who have taken advantage of this forest—who have cleared a site only for their house—going to feel about this person arriving up there and saying, "We are going to put in alternative power schemes and this is how it is going to run." It will not work.

Mr Welford: You don't know what you're talking about.

Mr GILMORE: The member for Everton does not know what he is talking about. He spent \$5m on airfares, on glossy brochures, on standing around picking his nose—anything but doing the job, anything but providing the services that he promised two years ago. Yet the member for Everton has the gall to sit in here and say that we do not know what we are talking about! In Boulia, the member's alternative energy scheme would cost \$330,000 per household. How many people could afford that in any case? The whole thing is a farce, but nothing has been done. Nothing is on the ground. Those people still believe that it will happen because they were given a promise.

Mr De Lacy: Calm down! Your face is going red! Calm down. Just take it easy.

Mr GILMORE: I thank the Treasurer for his concern about my health. I will certainly slow down. I become excited about all this stuff, and rightly so.

I want to raise with the Treasurer the manner in which he has juggled these little books so that they are very tricky. The electricity industry pays a considerable dividend and taxation equivalent payment to this State, as does Suncorp. However, we cannot determine who paid what to whom and who is not paying the bills. We do not know, and there is no way we can find out because it has all been lumped into one category. Nowhere in these documents is that information subdivided. That is a disgrace. The people of Queensland are entitled to know the magnitude of the electricity tax being paid to the Government, but the Treasurer is hiding it from them.

I have already said that, as far as the electricity industry is concerned, the Government is not going to lay a brick. It is interesting to note how much is set aside in this Budget for future planning for electricity generation—slightly less than \$35m. How much was projected last year to be set aside this year for future generation planning? No less than \$48m. If the Treasurer would like to suggest that I am wrong, I can demonstrate, from a document that was provided to me by way of an answer at the Estimates committee hearings last year, that I am not. So, in terms of future generation planning, he has duded the electricity industry straight up front by \$13m. Not only is Queensland in a bad situation; things are getting worse. The Minister thinks that is funny and that it does not matter if the lights go out. It is not funny at all.

For a few moments, let us discuss the difficulties that the Opposition has with this Government coming to the conclusion that a new power station should be constructed. Two years ago, it called tenders for the supply of coal to the next power station and three companies tendered, at the combined cost to those companies of about \$10m. There was estimated to be another \$10m spent by the electricity supply industry in respect of those tenders. What happened? The Government cancelled all of that and said, "We did not mean all of that. We want you to go back and retender. Irrespective of the fact that you have already spent \$10m, go away again and retender, and we want somebody to consider gas as a supply option for the next power station." It is no wonder that large business is finding it more difficult to trust what this

Treasurer says and what he does. There is an enormous difference between the two.

Those tenderers will go back, sharpen their pencils some more and spend another \$10m, because they are business people and they hope that the Treasurer will wake up to himself and actually let a tender. The day that the Treasurer signs a contract will be a great red letter day for this State. He can build casinos—one does not need to be smart to do that, as I have said before in this Parliament—but one has to be smart to build infrastructure that means something, and our Treasurer and his Government are incapable of that, and it is a disgrace.

I refer now to the Tarong Power Station. The Boondooma Dam is now down to 9 per cent capacity. It is expected to run out of water in October. That is the Minister's statement, not mine. In the Budget, the Government has set aside funds to construct a pipeline from Wivenhoe across to Tarong. Late last year and early this year, I pleaded with the Minister to build that pipeline. I asked him to make a decision and I told him that I would support it. I said, "If it pours flood rains tomorrow, I will still support you, because it is an investment in the future for this power station", and he could not make the decision. He stood around, wondered about it and prayed for rain. Praying for rain is the business of old men, not Governments.

We are now one month behind schedule. There are 47 excavators working on that pipeline tonight, and they have struck rock, and they have not hit the hard piece yet. They are already one month behind schedule. The problem that we confront is that, if we continue to operate Tarong at its full capacity, utilising the water out of the Boondooma Dam and the storage at the power station, we are likely to run out of water at that power station in October, and this pipeline, by the Minister's own estimate—and the Treasurer's own estimate—will not be completed until November. I wonder what that means to the people of Queensland.

Mr De Lacy: It won't mean anything. We won't run out.

Mr GILMORE: I am glad to see that the Treasurer is delighted about running out of power in south-east Queensland. We are relying on 40 per cent of the power from a pipeline which is a month behind schedule because he and the Minister for Primary Industries prevaricated for more than three months.

Mr De Lacy: All your wishful thinking in the world won't run us out of power.

Mr GILMORE: I hope that the Treasurer is right, because we cannot afford to have this State stood down because he is useless.

Mr De Lacy: Exactly.

Mr GILMORE: I am glad the Treasurer agrees. The truth of the matter is that a pipeline—for which there was bipartisan support—ought to have been built, yet the Government could not make a decision. The Minister prayed for rain, but it did not rain, and now the pipeline is a month behind schedule. We will wait to see the outcome of that.

Mr De Lacy: Why don't you trust us?

Mr GILMORE: How much time have I got? If I could have extra time, I would tell the Treasurer how much I do not trust him.

In terms of Eastlink, money is set aside in this Budget for corridor acquisition so that the Minister can drag a three-point lead across the border into New South Wales to keep the lights on. That is what it is all about. However, there is another problem with that. Prime Minister Keating has signed COAG arrangements that put Queensland into the national grid—the eastern grid—and into a system of deregulated electricity marketing.

Mr Springborg: National competition policy.

Mr GILMORE: My colleague reminds me of the national competition policy.

Mr Springborg: Bad things for rural Queensland.

Mr GILMORE: I will go into that in a few minutes. The Government has made no sensible contribution. It has never called tenders, and it does not know whether Eastlink is competitive with a power station that is constructed and operating in Queensland or whether the whole operation is competitive with an equivalent generator in this State. This Government has not determined that.

All that has been determined is that the lights have to be kept on. So the Government rushes off and drags a lead across the border. The Minister comes into the Parliament and, when I accuse him of duplicity, he says, "You do not understand it. We are only going to have a 330KV line coming in from New South Wales and"—wonder of wonders—"power can go both ways." I am astounded to think that the Minister has come to that conclusion—and he accused me of not knowing that water can run both ways down a pipeline! When I said to the Minister, "With this single powerline of 330KV you cannot indulge in a meaningful trade in electricity between States. We are either committed to COAG and the interstate

trade in electricity or we are not. If we are not, this single wire will suffice to help keep the lights on in Queensland by supplementing Queensland's supply and the share of reserve plant. However, if we are committed, then we are going to have to construct a second line." The Minister denies that regularly and vehemently. He says that we do not need a second line because, as the engineers tell us, we cannot indulge in a meaningful trade in electricity interstate without 1,000 megawatts of constant transfer. I have said this before, and I have reports to prove it. I have told the Minister that, and he stood up in this Parliament and said, "No, you are wrong. There is no intention of building a second line."

Strange as it may seem, today this document came into my possession. It is a plan for a new substation being built in Queensland to receive power from New South Wales. It has a 330KV connection from New South Wales, to increase to 500KV from New South Wales, and a second line of 500KV coming in from New South Wales, and it is being constructed now. Where is the Minister now? He is the one who said that I was wrong. This is his document, not mine. Are we planning to build a second powerline or are we not? Are we planning to trade in the interstate transfer of electric power, or are we simply sharing reserve plant margin? Of course, Government members cannot answer that question. They are dumbfounded at the evidence that is before their eyes.

Mr Bredhauer interjected.

Mr GILMORE: The member should tell me about it. He would know; he would be an expert! He has studied this matter from one end of the State to the other. The member would not know. Once he gets out of Cairns, he is lost. He could not find his hat in a locked room.

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr GILMORE: Of course, Government members do that all the time.

The point I am making is that the Minister has clearly misled this Parliament. He has clearly misled the people of Queensland and he has deliberately misled the people of the Darling Downs and those areas around Warwick that will be affected by the Eastlink proposal. He has lied to them. He said that there would be no second corridor. In fact, 60 kilometres from that substation the corridor is 110 metres wide, and it suddenly disappears into a 60-metre corridor, which indicates to me that there is likely to be a fork in the line at

some time in the future. Nothing is being done and nobody will admit to anything.

This Budget depends very heavily on the revenues from the mining industry, particularly the coal industry. This Government, as I said earlier, cancelled all the tenders that were called for coal for power generation in this State and said, "Go back to the drawing board because for our own power requirements we do not believe that Queensland coal is clean enough to burn." What a message that is to send to the rest of the world when we are planning to open no fewer than six more mines in this State next year to export our clean coal, our beautiful sulfur free coal, to the rest of the world. We say to them, "Please burn it to generate electricity", but we will not use it ourselves. We are not keen enough on doing that. We have to use natural gas that we do not have enough of, but we expect the rest of the world to use our coal.

Mr Welford: How do you know we haven't got enough natural gas? You don't know that.

Mr GILMORE: I have just explained to the Parliament that we have just cancelled \$20m worth of tenders so that we can recall tenders and ask somebody to tender in terms of natural gas or coral-bed methane as an option for power generation in this State. It is an absolute disgrace that this Treasurer and this Government would slap the coal mining industry of this State in the face and say, "We don't want your coal, but you can sell it overseas." I wonder how long we are going to keep the confidence of our trading partners.

I would like to speak for three minutes about the electorate of Tablelands and the things that have not been done in this Budget for that electorate. I would like to start by saying that some of the things that have been done are most welcome indeed. At the head of that list there is \$1.25m which has been set aside to improve the Ibis Dam to put a decent water supply into the town of Irvinebank for the first time. I thank the Treasurer. I am very supportive of that view. I am also supportive of the few crumbs that have fallen off the table into my high schools and other places for extensions that were going to happen in any case.

What did not happen? Why have we not got the extension to the Tinaroo Falls Dam and the Johnstone River diversion? In a minute the Treasurer is going to say to me, "But we have just called for people to have a look at this and we are going to come up with a full study." Irrespective of whether the Treasurer likes to admit it, we have a sugar

industry on the Atherton Tableland—350,000 tonnes this year and 500,000 tonnes next year. Whether we get a mill or not, it makes no difference. But all of that is demanding of local infrastructure now and into the future. We have not got time to wait for the Treasurer to have another committee look at something which is already fact. What we needed was some decision from this Government to get in and assist the local councils with their road infrastructure, to do something about the Tinaroo Falls Dam infrastructure in terms of raising the dam, enabling the storage of extra water in the dam, and doing some much needed emergency maintenance to stop the channels leaking. They are leaking so badly that they are causing salinity in my electorate, and nobody cares.

Because the engineers have not got any money, I cannot convince them that they ought to plug those channels up and reline them. There is no money. As a consequence of that, I have one canefarmer with 100 acres of land that she cannot plough. I have other people who cannot utilise their farms because there are bogs with springs breaking out because of leaking channels. There is nothing in this Budget to resolve that issue, and it is an absolute disgrace.

The Herberton Police Station is the worst police station in north Queensland——

Time expired.

Mr BREDHAUER (Cook) (10.35 p.m.) I think it would be remiss of me if I did not participate in this Budget debate tonight to once again acknowledge what a great Budget has been delivered by the Treasurer, Keith De Lacy, and by the Government, but particularly to acknowledge that there has once again been a significant commitment by the Queensland Government and particularly the Treasurer to provide basic infrastructure and services to the people who live in the rural and remote parts of the Cook electorate. It has been a great opportunity for me as the member for Cook over the last almost six years now to work with a variety of Ministers, to work with the numerous shire councils and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils which exist in the Cook electorate and their communities identifying the vast areas of need that were left by 30 years of neglect by the former National Party and coalition Governments and to see us progressively moving to overcome those areas of neglect in some of the most basic service areas such as the provision of water, sewerage and sanitation, housing, roads and a whole range of other services that I could mention.

As I come into the election period, I have been doing a bit of research on the sorts of things that we have been able to deliver over the last five years to people who live in the rural and remote parts of the Cook electorate and it is with great pride that I now look back on my time in Parliament and the achievements that we have made. I am also pleased to be able to stand here tonight and say that this Budget yet again is delivering the goods—the basic goods and services—to the people who live in the Cook electorate and who, for so many years under the National Party and coalition Governments, were neglected.

Honourable members would know, because I have told this House and all of my constituents on many occasions, that we have put a lot of resources into upgrading health services in remote areas, particularly in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This has been an area of national debate over recent times. I have spoken to Federal colleagues, such as the member for Leichhardt and others who have visited my electorate from time to time, and when I have explained to them the steps that the Queensland Government has taken to try to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, to be quite frank, they are surprised at the amount of resources—the amount of capital—that we have put into buildings, the amount of effort we have put into preventive health programs and the amount of effort we have put into training and providing staffing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Recently, we have had a whole series of new primary health care centres constructed around the Torres Strait and around the communities of Cape York Peninsula. We have also had a community health centre built in Cooktown. For about the last 12 months we have been going through the planning processes for the redevelopment of the Thursday Island Hospital and in this Budget we have allocated \$9.3m to begin that redevelopment process, including the construction of accommodation for nurses, particularly on Thursday Island, which is a very important area of need. We have also funded the community health centre on Thursday Island.

It is with a touch of irony, I guess, that I report to the House that from time to time I have been criticised in my electorate for the fact that the Government has focused on the capital works areas of need in what some people regard as being to the exclusion of other areas of need. But that is not in fact the

case. We have, as I said before, looked at preventive programs, increasing staff and a whole range of other areas. We continue that in this Budget.

The announcement by the Minister for Health that \$6.1m is to be spent on the remote area nurses package is welcome news. We have spent about \$8m on nurses' accommodation in remote areas and now we have put together a package which will provide a range of incentives and compensations, I guess, for the stresses and the isolation that nurses experience when working in remote areas. I have been working with a succession of Health Ministers to try to get recognition for that important need, and I appreciate that that has been funded in this Budget.

We have also put \$6m in this Budget over three years for the employment of 19 Torres Strait Islander health workers or health professionals in the Torres Strait communities and 21 Aboriginal health workers and health professionals in the Aboriginal communities to staff the new primary health care centres. We have also provided \$2.5m in this year's Budget to help cover the operational costs of those facilities. It is one of those things where people say, "You provided the money for the capital works but you have not provided the money for the recurrent expenditure." Obviously, it is only after people arrive on the ground that they need buildings in which to work. Only then is there a requirement for salaries and recurrent operational costs. Now that we have reached the point at which those facilities are there, we have provided an adequate amount in this year's Budget for the staffing and resourcing of those facilities.

Although I do not think that this will solve all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health problems, I think we have to recognise that this Government is committed to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and that we are actually on the ground doing something about it. While talking about this issue, I also mention the announcement made by the Treasurer in his Budget Speech on Tuesday that \$28m has been set aside by the Government for infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This is a program that we have been negotiating with ATSIC and the Commonwealth, and we will be having discussions with the Torres Strait Regional Authority on Thursday Island. Essentially, we are looking to attract matching funds from the Commonwealth through ATSIC or the Torres Strait Regional Authority so we can put together a major package over the next three years to improve basic infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

communities. That will have an important impact on environmental health issues.

Water supplies, sewerage and sanitation, housing and roads are basic services which many of those communities lack. Although we have been improving the supply of those facilities or the availability of those services in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities over the past five years, there are still many areas of need that will be addressed by this program. Once again, I think that that indicates that we do not see the solution to health problems as just one of putting in health workers, nurses or health clinics. Rather, the Government is trying to take an holistic approach to the health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities right across the range of environmental health, preventive health and primary health care and to do our level best to help to improve the health statistics of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

While I am discussing basic infrastructure, I should also mention that \$5.5m has been allocated over three years through the support of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning, Terry Mackenroth, and his department to provide sewerage to Thursday Island. Just a few years ago, Thursday Island had a desperate water supply shortage, and Horn Island had effectively no reticulated water; it had only a couple of bores that provided an irregular and uncertain supply. The Government spent approximately \$10m on providing the dam on Horn Island, the pipeline across to Thursday Island, and appropriate reticulation, in conjunction with the shire council and with some support from the Commonwealth. Now that there is an adequate water supply, over the next three years the Government will spend \$5.5m in conjunction with the council to provide sewerage.

On Tuesday, I tabled a petition in the House. Coincidentally, that was the day that the Budget was brought down. I do not want people to think that because I tabled a petition in the morning, the allocation was delivered in the Budget in the afternoon. It is important to recognise that over 400 people who live on Thursday Island were concerned about the health of the people who live on the island and the nutrient levels in the surrounding waters and the environmental impact. I thank the community on Thursday Island for that support. I think that the Torres Shire Council became a little impatient towards the end, but obviously we were all working in the one direction. I am pleased that we have been able to deliver that Budget allocation.

A whole range of other facilities have been allocated funding in this Budget, including \$600,000 for a child-care centre at Karumba and \$600,000 for a child-care centre at Normanton. Those facilities have been badly needed, particularly in Karumba. I have been working with the community in that area and in particular with a group of women who have young families. They have striven for quite a number of years to try to obtain a child-care centre for Karumba. I mention Lauris Gaffney and Clair Kemeridis, who are two people with whom I have worked. Neither of those people have kids who require day care any more, but the community of Karumba will benefit from their efforts even though they themselves will not benefit. For many years to come, the communities in Karumba and Normanton will benefit from the efforts of those people. The sum of \$1.1m has been allocated for a child-care centre on Thursday Island, and that has been well received. We are currently having some discussions about the site for that centre, and I am hoping that that will be able to be resolved in the not-too-distant future.

A commitment has been made to fully fund the Daintree Rescue Package out of this Budget—\$11.6m over four years, including just under \$2.6m which has been allocated for this financial year. The regular recurrent funding for the Wet Tropics incorporates \$2.6m to Wet Tropics plus an in-kind contribution to recurrent expenditure through the Department of Environment and Heritage and rangers in the area, which brings the Government's contribution to recurrent expenditure for the Wet Tropics to approximately \$4m, which matches that of the Commonwealth.

This year sees a new allocation for capital works in the Wet Tropics area of \$2.2m over three years. Three years ago, the Commonwealth funded capital works for infrastructure in the Wet Tropics, such as walking trails, information and interpretative centres in the amount of \$10m. That budget has now been exhausted, and the Government was faced with the predicament of no specific budget for capital works in that area, even though capital works makes up part of the Daintree Rescue Package. I welcome most certainly the \$2.2m over three years that has been allocated for that purpose.

A sum of \$360,000 has been set aside for modular classrooms at Mossman State High School. Recently, that growing school had a new science block built, and I hope that the Education Minister will accept an invitation

to open that building in the fairly near future. Those modular buildings will help to alleviate space problems at that school.

I make particular mention of the two main regional development organisations in the Cook electorate, namely, the Cape York Peninsula Development Association and the Gulf Local Authorities Development Association. The CYPDA has had an uncertain funding future throughout its history. I was able to secure through a former Minister for Business a grant to assist that organisation to engage its secretariat. Approximately six or seven weeks ago, the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development, Warren Pitt, and I attended a meeting in Cooktown of the CYPDA. The Minister was kind enough to grant them interim funding, but there has been a further allocation in this Budget of \$125,000 for those two organisations. That will be split evenly: \$62,500 each. Recently, I spoke to Ian McKenzie from the CYPDA. He has been employed three days a week as the secretariat, although he has worked many more hours than that. I know that he and the chairperson of the CYPDA, David Hurse, will be very happy with the allocation that has been made. I pay a particular tribute to the Minister for Business, Industry and Regional Development and his predecessor for the support that they have given me.

Before concluding, I briefly mention CYPLUS. Quite a few people—including certain newspaper journalists—have been critical of the Government for what they perceive as its failure to commit ourselves to CYPLUS. Journalists who have been running stories such as that have not bothered to telephone me to check with me. I have had correspondence and meetings with the Premier about CYPLUS, and he has always indicated to me that the State Government remains committed to the second and third stages of CYPLUS. It was in the Budget process. We gave them interim funding to tide them over to 30 June, and in this Budget we have allocated \$250,000 for the implementation of Stage 2 of CYPLUS.

I have tried to draw together a few of the strands of what has been a very good Budget for the Cook electorate. The Budget provides the people in my electorate with a practical manifestation of the sound economic policies of this Government. We have done what we have done because of our sound financial and economic management. We have not hit people with new taxes or higher taxes. We have made important inroads in education, health, law and order, the environment and social and welfare sectors. I could go on in

much greater detail about the things that will have a positive impact on the people in my electorate, but I think it is suffice to say that the cross-section of issues that I have raised shows that this is a very important Budget for the people of Cook, who live in both rural and remote areas, the Douglas Shire, the gulf, the peninsula and the Torres Strait and who for many years have become accustomed to not receiving services. It find it ironic when I sit in this place to listen to members opposite—who claim to be the champions of the bush—talking about services that are being taken away and services that they used to provide in rural and remote parts of Queensland. I assure honourable members that for 30 years they did practically nothing for the people in the Cook electorate. It has taken six years of this Government pouring in resources for basic infrastructure across the spectrum for it to be able to begin to offer people in my electorate a reasonable lifestyle and standard of living. I applaud the Government, and I particularly applaud the Treasurer.

Mr STONEMAN (Burdekin)
(10.52 p.m.): Tonight I want to detail some of the processes that take place under this Government that have led to consistent claims from the Opposition of mismanagement and a lack of understanding of the way in which the bureaucratic processes have become out of hand in this State. The instance that I am going to give tonight is a particularly sad affair and one that I have not raised for some years in the political arena because it should have been able to be contained within the department. Recently, this matter was brought to a head, and it has particular relevance to the way in which the Budget is structured.

It was brought to a head by a question that I asked of the Minister for Primary Industries in relation to some investigations that were undertaken surrounding the operation of the Swans Lagoon Research Station at Millaroo, which is in my electorate. For the benefit of the House, I will detail the question that I asked the Minister, because it is very relevant to the process that I am going to outline and the structures of lies, deceit, mismanagement and downright bastardry. That is the only way I can describe what has taken place.

On 22 March, I asked the Minister for Primary Industries the following question—

"With reference to advice I received from the then head of the Department of Primary Industries, Mr Jim Miller, that following discussions between a

neighbouring property owner to Swans Lagoon Research Station in the Lower Burdekin, and the Northern Regional director of the Department, investigations, both internally and by the Criminal Justice Commission, would take place, I ask: will he confirm?"—

that is, the Minister—

"that such investigations took place?"

The Minister's answer was—

"Yes. The matters raised by the complainant were thoroughly investigated."

The second part of the question was—

"What actions took place as a result of the investigation?"

The answer to that section of the question was—

"The results of the investigations arising from the allegations showed no evidence of wrongdoing."

The third component of my question was—

"What communications have been undertaken between the department and neighbouring property owners following the original allegations which raised concerns of a most significant nature?"

The answer to that component of the question was—

"In view of the lack of substance to the allegations, no further communications with other parties outside of the department have occurred."

The question arises, as subsequent events have shown, that either the Minister has entirely and totally misled this Parliament or, as I suspect more accurately to be the case, the department or components of the department have misled the Minister.

I do not have the date, but it was earlier this year that an article titled "DPI horse theft" appeared in the *North Queensland Register* stating as follows—

"Bowen man, Darryl Valroy young, 32, pleaded guilty in the Bowen Magistrates Court last Thursday to the theft of a horse from the Department of Primary Industries' Swans Lagoon Research Station.

The horse, which was believed to have died in 1991, was spotted in a Bowen-district paddock by a DPI employee in October, 1994.

Mr Young, a former Swans Lagoon employee, was charged on November 22

last year with the theft of the horse. He was also charged on a second count of false pretences for selling a horse known to be stolen.

Mr Young, from West Eurie Creek Road, Bowen, pleaded guilty to the charges last Thursday and was fined \$800. He was also ordered to pay \$600 restitution."

This matter was raised in 1994 with the northern regional director of the DPI, Mr Stewart Wood, in the Clare club. Mr Wood was speaking with Mr Bill Tudehope Junior about a series of events that I will continue on with in a moment. However, as part of that conversation, he asked, "Is there anything else I should know about Swans?" Mr Tudehope then told him about this horse theft. I remind members of the Minister's answer to my question in this House, which was—

"The results of the investigations arising from the allegations showed no evidence of wrongdoing."

Yet here we have confirmation of the incident that was given to Mr Stewart Wood of the north region of the Department of Primary Industries. Let us just go back—

Mr Beattie: Let's get back to the Budget.

Mr STONEMAN: This is about the Budget. This is the way in which members of the Government have allowed the public service to ride roughshod over the people they are supposed to be serving in this State. Let me go back over a little bit of the history. Mr Tudehope wrote me a memo about the situation when discussions were still going on about the agistment of some property. I was in constant contact with the department and, as far as I understood, it was being most cooperative at the senior level. However, further down the line, much was happening. Mr Tudehope's memo stated—

"Over the past six years or more, Landers Creek Pastoral Company has made repeated requests to agist or lease the unused part of Swans Lagoon, referred to as the Lionel Diggings. Every conceivable excuse and obstacle has been used to prevent this from happening. Negotiations in the past have gone as far as the Minister for Lands (Mr Glasson) and our local member Mark Stoneman inspecting the area with ourselves and another interested party, My Hyden."

It continued—

"Mr Hyden made it clear that he had no interest in the area. We were then advised to come to a mutually agreeable boundary with the manager of Swans Lagoon, Mr Laing. This was done and sent in writing to the Department of Primary Industries—both his and our copy of the agreement. We did not even receive the courtesy of an answer. It was through other sources that we heard that negotiations were dropped."

This incident occurred during a drought period. A neighbour was asking another neighbour over a series of droughts if he could use some agistment land that was available. The memo stated further—

"In the past three years of drought, I have pursued this matter and have been deliberately obstructed from getting a commercial agreement for the use of this area when it has been desperately needed.

I assumed the correct procedure for me was to approach the manager of Swans Lagoon with a proposal and he would make the necessary representation to the appropriate people. I have found this a total waste of my time as I appear to be completely ignored. I then asked Mr Stoneman to make a plea on my behalf to Mr Miller, the Director-General of the Primary Industries Department. This was done and I received an immediate response. I was told to ring Les Wicksteed in Townsville to work out the agistment rate and agreement. This I did and I was told by Mr Wicksteed that my only requirement was to work the actual agistment sum out with the manager of Swans Lagoon, Keith Jeppesen. Swans would have the water supply and facilities in place in three or four weeks. On 23rd May 1993 I met with Mr Jeppesen and I agreed to pay \$7500 annually."

The memo goes on and on. Part of the memo states further—

"No doubt the report that went to Mr Wicksteed's 'bureaucratic fools' . . ."

Those are Mr Wicksteed's words relating to the way in which matters were proceeding. The memo went on—

"At my last meeting with the manager of Swans he gave me a document to which . . . I found it quite erroneous and a deliberate misrepresentation of the truth."

In fact, what happened was that the person in charge of Swans Lagoon, a Mr Childs, claimed

that the department had to use a helicopter to muster Mr Tudehope's cattle. The memo stated further—

"Mr Wicksteed suggested that I deal directly with him and the matter would be resolved and the water problem would be rectified. Also that I had to understand that I was dealing with 'bureaucratic fools in Brisbane'."

I have a statutory declaration by Mr Tudehope in respect of his comment that the Brisbane people in the DPI were bureaucratic fools.

I need to make a couple of points about this memo, which states—

"On 27th July 1993, Mr Childs' letter to me read: 'I have been disappointed at the lack of action in developing the Lionels.'"—

that is, this particular paddock—

"I have now been informed that this was, in part, because of concerns about maintaining a Brucellosis and TB free status by retaining the Lionels as a stock free buffer."

Interestingly: On the 29th October 1992 the management of Swans endeavoured to claim cleanskin cattle from the suspect property on behalf of the Department."

I have another statutory declaration here, which reads—

"On the 29th October 1992, Keith Jeppesen and Adrian White on behalf of the Department of Primary Industries made an attempt in the presence of myself and representatives of neighbouring properties to claim half the cleanskin cattle mustered from the Lionel Diggings that day. There was no doubt in my mind that the cattle in question belonged to United Cattle Stations 'Carse O'Gowrie'."

And it is signed further on.

Mr Beattie: Table that.

Mr STONEMAN: Yes, I will table that, with the greatest of pleasure. The quote continues—

"Point two: On the 13th September I met Stewart Wood to discuss the problem. Virtually everything I said in relation to the negotiations between myself, Wicksteed and Jeppesen he knew nothing of. The \$7500 per annum nor the offer to drill, equip and leave the bore and equipment for Swans. It seemed to surprise him."

Point three: the Director-General, Mr Miller, on the second representation, was not aware that the whole matter was not resolved and that I did not have the cattle in the area. Mr Childs, acting on advice received from Swans and Wicksteed, issued a memo . . ."

And that was attached, too, as a matter of correspondence. The quote continues—

"Mr Wood was not aware of virtually any of the fiasco. Mr Childs answer to me was genuine but he obviously has no idea of what happened at Swans."

I could go on and on about this matter. In this case, departmental officers deliberately set out to frustrate the commands of the director-general of the department and other senior officers. They have treated them as fools. They have let a neighbouring property's cattle die for want of going through a neighbour's fence and onto land that has never been used to this day. Yet those statutory declarations state that in the presence of a number of people the local Swans Lagoon management tried to claim cleanskinned cattle that were from a TB-infested property. This is the sort of bungling that we are seeing more and more frequently.

We are talking about cattle being taken from a TB-infested property onto a research station run by the Government. I am sure that the Minister was not aware of that. The problem I have, though, is that Mr Wood, when he finally spoke with Mr Bill Tudehope Junior, went right through this process. I was assured that there would be a full investigation and that the CJC would be involved. Yet the people who advised the Minister have said that there was no evidence of wrongdoing, even though there was a court case. They have said that there was a lack of substance to the allegations. And not once did any person go back to Mr Tudehope or any of the neighbouring properties to ascertain the situation or to check up on the details. They did an internal investigation which was a total cover-up of the details given to Mr Stewart Wood on the occasion that he met with Mr Tudehope in the Clare club.

I believe this is one of the most significant and damning examples of mismanagement in the internal workings of a departmental structure that is supposed to be in place for the good of the State, the community and, more particularly in this instance, the neighbours surrounding it. We have heard lies and innuendo. Mr Tudehope told Mr Wood about fires being set deliberately—that is known by neighbours—within Swans Lagoon. I

come back to the question asked of the Minister as recently as March: what was the follow-up?

It is now reasonable to ask the Minister, as I have done, following the answer that he gave on 22 March surrounding the allegations: firstly, how could the matter have been "thoroughly investigated" without any further contact with the neighbour who gave the initial information to Mr Stewart Wood, Regional Director, North Region, or, it would appear, with any other person outside the department? Secondly, why did the Minister's reply state clearly that there was no evidence of wrongdoing when in fact the matter of a missing horse, which was part of the information given to Mr Wood, became the subject of a court action and conviction involving the former employee of the department in the Bowen court this year? Thirdly, would the Minister not agree that this action is clear evidence that there must have been wrongdoing and that as a result either one of two inferences must be drawn, as I said at the outset? These are either that the Minister has misled the Parliament or that officers of the department have advised the Minister of the truth and are involved in an attempted cover-up. In my view, the Minister has to immediately reopen the matter and have an independent investigation carried out forthwith.

Whilst I am on the matter of questions, I would like to mention another matter that reflects the contempt with which Ministers are treating this House in response to questions. In the Alligator Creek area of my electorate, just south of Townsville, in 1988-89 land was purchased by the Department of Administrative Services for the future siting of a primary and preschool. After investigations, which included the local shire councillor, the then regional director, Mr Steve Miller, and a number of other departmental people, it was decided to construct and locate a preschool on a site, the land for which was purchased. Ultimately, it was intended to develop the preschool into the component of a primary school.

Just prior to the 1989 election, the site was the subject of the delivery of books, pencils, first-aid kits and so on for the operation of the preschool. The prefabricated building was at the Stuart siding in Townsville, according to my information from another headmaster around the town. However, once this Government came to power, it removed everything. At the end of March, I asked the Minister for Education the following question—

"With reference to the purchase of land by the Ahern Government in 1988-89 at Alligator Creek just south of Townsville for the location of school facilities and to Mount Elliott Pre-school—

(1) Is the proposal to construct a pre-school facility on the site still supported by the Regional Education Office, departmental planners and the community?"

The answer from the Minister states—

"The need for a primary and pre-school facility at Mount Elliott was investigated in detail in 1989."

It was; I agree. It states further—

"Construction of a primary school was not considered to be justified at that time."

That is not the case. Again, we see an example of a Minister misleading the House. The fact of the matter was that the school was designed, the equipment was delivered to the neighbouring house near the block of land that was bought for the purpose, and the prefabricated building was sent to the nearest railway siding. Yet the Minister said that the construction of a primary school was not considered to be justified at that time. An election was held on 2 December 1989. The Minister's answer said that the matter "was investigated in detail". The only thing that was investigated in detail was how the Government could hide the equipment and get rid of it, denying the people of that area the facility of a preschool.

The rest of my question dealt with the preschool facility. Not once in the written answer given by the Minister—on advice from the department—was the word "preschool" mentioned. The answer kept talking about a primary school. A primary school was never in the equation. The members opposite are a mob of crooks. If honourable members want to talk about helping the battlers, why do they not tell the truth? Why do the people within the department not tell the truth? The regional director in Townsville must not be telling the truth if that person told the Minister that the matter was investigated thoroughly. It was investigated thoroughly and it was decided to build a preschool. But when the Goss Labor Government came to power, it took it away from those people. The same occurred with the Swan's Lagoon fiasco, on which there is an enormous amount of information. I do not believe that the Minister is culpable in the sense that he knew anything about this, but the fact of the matter is that the department

certainly knew about it, and it has not advised the Minister. I call on that Minister to investigate this matter fully. I call on the Minister for Education to go back—

Time expired.

Mr NUTTALL (Sandgate) (11.12 p.m.): I want to analyse this Budget from the perspective of a member who represents a seat that has been in the hands of the Labor Party for 40-odd years. I want to compare the funding that has been provided to my electorate in the past with the funding that is being provided at present. A number of Government members represent safe Labor seats. They remain safe Labor seats simply because of the hard work of those members of Parliament who have occupied them in the past and who currently occupy them.

We just heard a tirade from the previous speaker, who alleged that this Government is a bunch of crooks. We should analyse that statement and really see who the crooks are. Let us consider the spending in Labor seats prior to 1989. Every member's electorate has benefited from one of the six Goss Labor Government Budgets that have been brought down in this Chamber. Our Budgets have displayed no favouritism whatsoever. Our Budgets practise fairness and equity. The Opposition does not understand the meaning of those two words. The people in my electorate were persecuted for the 32 years that the National Party was in Government, because they continued to return a Labor member to this Chamber. Budget after Budget, coalition Governments continued to refuse to provide funding and services to those people in my electorate. I will cite a number of examples of that.

Reference has been made to police stations. I cannot take credit for the construction of a new police station in my electorate; that was achieved through the hard work of the previous member for Sandgate, Nev Warburton. Prior to the construction of that station, 25-odd police officers serviced the Sandgate electorate. They resided in a small, wooden house and were supposed to fight crime from that structure. That house was full of cockroaches, and it was also rat infested. It had broken windows and broken doors. Those police officers were supposed to fight crime from that sort of work environment. It gets worse. What sort of typewriter do members reckon those police officers had?

Mr Beattie: An old manual typewriter.

Mr NUTTALL: The member for Brisbane Central is right. They had only about three of

those; only one worked, and the rest did not get fixed.

Opposition members have the hide to talk about crook watch-houses. They complain about the Brisbane City Watch-house. The Brisbane City Watch-house was a palace compared with what the Sandgate watch-house used to look like. Members opposite should not mouth platitudes about how this Government is crooked; they would not know what the word "straight" meant. This Government has built a modern police station that can house 40 to 50 police officers. We have given them adequate resources, we have given them new technology in terms of computer equipment, we have given them new radio equipment, and we have given them the right sorts of facilities to enable them to fight crime.

On the subject of crime—I want to refer to the beat-up in which the Opposition indulges regarding crime. I will cite some statistics. In my electorate there are some 15,000 homes and business houses. About 1.2 break-ins per night occur in that area of 15,000 dwellings. I ask members: is that a crime wave?

Mr Beattie: No!

Mr NUTTALL: Of course it is not a crime wave! That low break-in rate is the result not only of general policing but also community policing. I have spoken about that issue in this Chamber previously. Members opposite cannot claim that crime is all the Government's fault. The community must work with the police to combat crime. I am proud that my electorate has picked up that ball and run with it. For that reason, crime in my electorate has been reduced significantly. I am not saying that it has been eliminated; it never will be. But the fact is that my community is working closely with the police in an attempt to reduce the amount of crime in the electorate. That strategy works effectively because people are committed to it. Opposition members ought to take that on board. If they are good members, they will do something about community policing instead of standing up in this Chamber and continuing to whinge.

Mr Szczerbanik interjected.

Mr NUTTALL: They probably would not.

I turn now to the issue of public transport. We have heard a lot about that topic. Public transport in my electorate was ignored for years and years and years. We were provided with an electric train service, and I acknowledge that. But the trains used to pull in to dark railway stations that had no staff and no facilities at all.

Since we have been in Government, and through the Budgets that have been brought down in this Chamber, tremendous improvements have been made to the railway stations in my electorate. At the Deagon and Sandgate stations in particular we have installed bike lockers so that people can ride their bikes to the stations and have them secured. We have provided secure car parking so that people can drive their cars to the stations, park their cars and not have them stolen. Those are the sorts of measures that need to be implemented in order to encourage people to use the public transport system. We have installed phones at the railway stations so that people can use them if they have any security problems. We have also put in place better staffing arrangements and better lighting. All those matters facilitate people using the public transport system. That was never done prior to 1989, when the National Party was in Government. The Goss Labor Government has seen fit to rectify the wrongs of the past and will continue to spend money in my electorate—not on the basis of it being a Labor seat but on the basis of need. Funding was allocated to my electorate because it was neglected so badly prior to 1989.

Mr Pearce: Did they paint your schools?

Mr NUTTALL: I will come to that. I am glad that the member for Fitzroy raised that matter. Prior to 1989, schools in my electorate were a disgrace. It was a disgrace to ask children to go to those schools, and it was a disgrace to ask teachers to try to teach in them.

Mrs Edmond: Tell them about the paint dripping off the ceilings onto the kids—30-year-old paint.

Mr NUTTALL: Things were so crook that we did not even have paint. Paint is a new innovation in my electorate!

Mr De Lacy: These days the teachers have to keep moving or they get painted.

Mr NUTTALL: The Treasurer is right. They are doing so much painting out my way that if people do not move they get covered with it!

Mr Ardill: Did you know that the Liberals were treated the same way, particularly the ones——

Mr NUTTALL: The member for Archerfield is right. Even if one was a member of the Liberal Party and in coalition, tough bikkies—one just went to the back of the queue.

Mr Robertson: They don't need painting; they need tarring and feathering.

Mr NUTTALL: Perhaps they do need tarring and feathering!

A lot of work has been done at schools in my electorate under the School Refurbishment Program. In addition, a lot of money has been poured into the purchase of computers for students, funding has been provided for P & Cs—the list goes on and on. I accept that that is not the end of it. We do not paint a school and leave it at that. The money allocated to Education has filtered down through the system and is benefiting kids in my electorate. Ensuring that those kids benefit from our Budgets is the most important thing that we can deliver.

I want to refer to a few areas in schools that are particularly important. Last Christmas, this Government spent \$150,000 refurbishing the pool at the State school at Taigum. It was repainted, new tiles were put around the pool and a new filtering system was put in place. That pool is used not only by the school but also by the local swimming club and the community in general.

Mr Pearce: Who put the water in the pool?

Mr NUTTALL: The member for Fitzroy asks who put the water in the pool. Prior to 1989, there was no water in the pool. That is how crook the Opposition was. It turned the taps off. It did not even put water in the pool. My kids could run up and down the length of that pool faster than they could swim it. Because there was no water, they thought they were at an athletics meeting instead of a swimming club.

I want to mention a couple of other schools in my electorate on which this Government has spent a lot of money. I have already mentioned the school at Taigum, but Bracken Ridge Primary School is another establishment that I wish to mention. The pool at that school is about to be refurbished. A new toilet block has been installed for the kids who attend there. In years gone by—and I am sincere when I say this—kids attending that school have done it tough, and this Government is trying to address that.

Sandgate High School is about to get a brand new pool. A large proportion of that money was raised by local P & Cs. This Government contributed something like \$120,00 or \$130,000 towards that pool. I understand that not only will it be a 50-metre swimming pool; it will also be wide enough to cater for water polo. The construction of that

pool is just about finished. Getting that work done is a credit to the school community. It has taken locals 20 years to get that pool, but they still would not have it if this Government had not subsidised it. Under the National Party Government, because that school was in a Labor electorate, the school would not have got the dough, and all that those kids would be staring at would be a big hole in the ground.

Recently, there was a photograph in my local paper of the Liberal Party candidate in my electorate, the Leader of the Liberal Party and the member for Clayfield. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party were visiting my electorate, walking up and down the streets. Can honourable members believe the hide of Liberal Party people walking up and down the streets of Sandgate?

Mr Beattie: No-one would know who they were.

Mr NUTTALL: They did not have a clue. They came up to me and said, "Gordon, who are those characters? What are they doing in town?" In his column in the local newspaper, that Liberal candidate said that the Labor Government had neglected the seat of Sandgate. In the next column was my press release, stating that the Government had spent \$450,000 on a home economics block at a school in my electorate. That is now TAFE accredited; it is state-of-the-art. That is something of which this Government is proud and it is the type of thing that money is allocated to. It does not go on pork-barrelling. It is not wasted, as members of the Opposition suggest; it gets spent on the things that are needed in people's electorates.

I want to move on to the issue of public housing, because it has been a hot issue in my electorate for some time. In the last four to five years, the standard of public housing has been very high—it is second to none. The challenge now is for private enterprise to come up to the standard of Government-built public housing. It is a credit to the department, it is a credit to the people who build it and it is a credit to the people who reside in those public houses, because they take a lot of pride in the homes and units in which they reside. Those homes are absolutely outstanding. I invite any honourable member in this Chamber to come to my electorate and look at the quality of public housing there. As I said, it is second to none.

Crisis housing is an important issue to all of us, and there is increased funding for that in this Budget. An additional 500 homes will be made available for crisis housing for those

people, particularly women and children, who are affected by domestic violence. That is a welcome allocation of funds.

I want to say something about sports grants. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing for the interest that he has shown in the community and sporting groups in my electorate, a number of which have benefited from grants for coaching young people. Coming up to the 2000 Olympics, that sort of money is a great plus. I have been to swimming clubs and football clubs to present some of those cheques for coaching grants and, without doubt, each and every one of those clubs says that it could not continue to work with young people unless those grants were forthcoming. That allocation is a great plus for the youth of my electorate.

In the few minutes that I have left, I want to talk about the Gaming Machine Community Benefit Fund. I know that, in the last two rounds of funding, there was a commitment by the Treasurer and this Government to support people in drought-affected areas. Community and sporting organisations in those areas were given a priority, and rightly so.

Mrs Edmond: And we support them.

Mr NUTTALL: The member for Mount Coot-tha is correct; we do support them, and we have no qualms about that. I have been fortunate that a couple of community groups in my electorate have been successful in their applications, one of which is the senior citizens' club. The president of the senior citizens in Sandgate, Mr John Bailey—and he is well-known to the member for Brisbane Central—is a gentleman who—

Mrs Edmond: Does he have a son?

Mr NUTTALL: He does have a son. A large number of senior citizens live in my electorate, and they have benefited from funding from the Gaming Machine Community Benefit Fund.

Do honourable members remember the way in which old State schools were built? They were usually a couple of buildings with black bitumen in between them. They were bare, stark, hot and terrible. One of the old schools in my electorate that was in that state received a grant from the gaming machine fund. All the bitumen was ripped up, and beautiful greenery, tables and seating replaced that awful sight, and now the kids can actually get out and enjoy their surroundings. It is a credit to the P & C of that school that it had the foresight to do

something like that for the kids. Prior to 1989, they would have got nothing.

Mr Pearce: They would have let them sit on a 44-gallon drum.

Mr NUTTALL: The member for Fitzroy is right; the National Party Government would have let them sit on a 44-gallon drum.

Some major roadworks are going on in my electorate. There is the duplication of the Gateway Arterial, work on the Deagon Deviation, and, finally, some noise barriers are being constructed. I would have to say that they are not the most attractive things in the world, but if a bit of greenery is planted—

Mrs Edmond: The people who are living behind don't complain.

Mr NUTTALL: The honourable member is right; the people who are living behind do not complain. I am hoping that that work will continue. I will continue to pursue that matter with the Transport Minister because I believe that, in all future roadworks, houses that back onto those types of roads should have noise barriers put in as a matter of course.

Air Sea Rescue is another organisation in my electorate which has benefited greatly from funding provided in Budgets brought down by this State Government. Again, that organisation is most grateful for the support that it has received from this Government.

This Budget carries on the good work that this Government has been doing since 1989. It is not about pork-barrelling, it is about being fair and equitable and looking after the people of Queensland.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (11.32 p.m.) I was quite interested to hear what the honourable member for Sandgate had to say. Unless I misinterpreted what he said, he was saying that in the bad old days the National Party Government used to give us nothing, it used to really do us over—the buildings were falling down and nothing happened. I will mention a few things in relation to what is happening under this Government, and honourable members opposite can defend them.

The Government has of its own admission confessed that about \$138m or thereabouts will be spent on a whole lot of endangered species—the ALP and some koalas. It seems that the emphasis is on looking after the ALP endangered species rather than the furry ones. There used to be a few furry ones, but I believe the really furry ones are giving it away.

By comparison, it is interesting to look at what is happening on the Darling Downs. This

is the sixth Budget in a row where the capital works budget for the Darling Downs area is less than that for the previous year. The last time any money was spent in the Darling Downs region was in 1989. We have now seen a progressive reduction of capital works in the Darling Downs area. As I said, this will be the sixth Budget in which it will be less than the previous year. I hope honourable members opposite are proud of that. Prior to the drought that we are experiencing, the Darling Downs was probably the most productive area in the whole of this State. The Government has treated it abysmally. I hope honourable members opposite are proud of that. They should look at their record, at what they have produced up there.

For the first time in my memory as a member of Parliament, Toowoomba is actually going backwards. I hope that the honourable members opposite are proud of that. Toowoomba is one of the major inland cities of Australia. Its population is approaching 90,000 people. It is a very big and important place. Honourable members opposite have neglected it shamefully.

I cannot believe what I just heard from the member for Sandgate. It is unreal for him to come in here and talk like that when we see this shameful pork-barrelling exercise right through that coastal belt towards the Gold Coast. Honourable members opposite should all hang their heads in shame. "Whiteboard" Molly, who is not in the House at the moment, is involved in it up to her ears. I agree totally with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that she should be stood aside until a proper investigation is conducted as to how those funds were allocated and how they are to be spent.

Our area is not the only one in drought at the moment. Honourable members opposite should look at the Darling Downs and other areas in central Queensland that are suffering the ravages of drought, with the follow-on problems that that has brought about. What have members opposite done to alleviate the problems up there? Not one single dollar has the Minister for Primary Industries, who has responsibility for Water Resources, managed to find to spend on doing anything to do with water resources on the whole of the Darling Downs. Major water storages are going dry. The underground aquifers not only on the Darling Downs but also in the Lockyer Valley are suffering a similar fate. This is also the situation in the electorates of the honourable members for Lockyer, Warwick and Crows Nest and the electorates to the west of mine. All of those areas are suffering in a similar

way. Yet honourable members opposite do not see fit to spend one single dollar on water storages. They are not even prepared to spend some money on looking at the feasibility and the long-term viability of inter-valley transfers—really futuristic schemes such as the Clarence River and right across the top of the northern rivers scheme.

We have the Border Rivers Act. We are all aware of that Act and understand it. Those of us who are interested in rural affairs understand the reasoning behind that Act, which cuts across all political parties. Both sides of politics have understood the need for the sharing of water in this land of ours. We live in the driest continent on earth, for goodness sake. Can those opposite not get it into their minds that they must spend money on water resources. I am not talking about pulling some phantom projects out of the air at the last minute coming up to an election. They have not drilled a hole; they have not even had discussions with the Australian Agricultural company which planned to build one of the nation's largest feedlots. That company had an agreement with Water Resources. It understood that Water Resources no longer had an interest in the particular dam site in central Queensland. Yet off the top of their heads members opposite announce something that will be listened to in the south-eastern corner and that will sound as though they are doing something useful regarding water resources.

If honourable members opposite do not take in hand the water resources of all of southern Queensland along the border and look to the future, they will have problems not only in my area—the irrigation areas and the flow-on effect that that has to all of the towns in the Darling Downs and the surrounding areas that will come to a grinding halt—they will rue the day because the people of Brisbane will run out of water. Honourable members opposite should look at Wivenhoe Dam and see what is going on there. They should also look at the other dams. If they think this problem is isolated, they are wrong. If they think that they do not have to worry because they are National Party seats up on the Darling Downs and they do not matter because the people there do not vote for the Labor Government anyway, they should just wait and see what will happen if they neglect the long-term water storages for urban areas in this State. In the same way as those opposite have neglected the power stations, the same way as they have no vision when looking to the future power needs of industry and for urban use, they will reap the same

reward over water resources, because they will run right out of water. That is what will happen to them. It is amazing to me that honourable members opposite have the temerity to talk about the previous Government when they behave in this shameful way. That is what it is; that is the only way one can possibly describe it.

In relation to the Darling Downs—let me consider the DPI and what has happened since 1989. Do honourable members realise that, across Queensland, 850 people have been lost from the DPI since the Government came to power in 1989? In the previous Budget, the Government made a prediction about how many staff would be lost from the DPI. Would honourable members like to suggest what that prediction was? The prediction was that the DPI would lose six staff. Honourable members should read the *Portfolio Program Statements* for the DPI, which was amongst that large packet of Budget documents that they received. The DPI has lost 200 staff. On that basis, if that ratio continues, the Government's prediction will be 54. And if we project that figure at that very same ratio, the DPI will lose 1,800 staff in the next Budget. One hopes that the Government will not continue on that basis, because I do not know what would be left of the DPI if it did. That department has been absolutely decimated by the Government by the loss of morale.

At functions that I attend, people are hiding behind pillars looking to see if anyone is watching, because they are not game to talk to members of the Opposition in case the hit men get at them and say, "You were talking to a member of the National Party. You are obviously a National Party supporter or sympathiser." That is what is happening in the DPI, and it is happening in the Education and Health Departments. People are terrified to even talk to members of the Opposition, because they think that the hit men in the PSMC or someone else will get at them and say, "This person is a sympathiser of the National Party. I heard him complaining to the member for Cunningham." That is an example of how low the Government has stooped. I thought that a former Premier was pretty good at looking after people who did not do the right thing, but he was a rank amateur alongside members opposite. They have worked that into the greatest art form that anyone has ever seen.

What has happened in relation to law and order? How many new police will be available next year? One hundred and fifty! If the Toowoomba district were to have as many

police as the State average per head of population, how many more police officers would the Toowoomba district need? It needs 146 police to bring it up to the State average. Who is going to have the other four?

Mr J. H. Sullivan interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: If the honourable member considers the attrition rate, he will find that to be true. At the end of the day, 150 new police will stay in the system, and Toowoomba needs 146 of them. That is what the Government thinks of law and order on the Darling Downs. It has done nothing. It has been absolutely disastrous.

In relation to what has happened in Education, the Government always employs absolute academic—I will not use the word "idiots", because that is not kind—theorists, who look at matters purely as they appear on paper. They do not have any practical commonsense, background or understanding of how to run a business, nor do they understand the logistics of where to place people. The PSMC has to take most of the credit for what has happened in the Education Department. The Government has shot down the morale of the people in the Education Department to the extent that specialist education teachers will not go out to the bush at all. Why would people move from the coast or Brisbane when their morale is shot to pieces and their security of tenure is gone, and volunteer to go to Boulia, Goondiwindi, Talwood or anywhere else? Why would they be prepared to travel into the bush when they can stay here? They have no security in their jobs any more, so why would they go into the bush to take a job when they can sit here in comfort near Bribie Passage or on the Gold Coast? Members opposite are responsible for destroying the morale of those people and for their loss of security of tenure.

At one time, the Education Department was full of people who were dedicated to their jobs; they knew that they would have a job tomorrow because they did their job. Providing they did not transgress the departmental regulations and code of ethics, they knew that they would not lose their jobs. That is not the case under this Government, which has undermined that whole system. I hope the Government is proud of that, because the result will be a disaster. The Government will be unable to staff many of the high schools in inland Queensland.

Mrs Bird interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: It is all very nice for the honourable member from the Whitsunday Passage, with all those lovely tourist areas to

which teachers want to flock. I understand that; they are all normal. When members were younger, we all had a great desire to be close to the coast where we could swim and take advantage of all those things.

Mrs Bird: Collinsville?

Mr ELLIOTT: What about Collinsville? What is the honourable member doing about that? I do not hear the honourable member protesting or taking any action on behalf of the people of Collinsville and her constituents. The honourable member should investigate how easy it is to obtain teachers for the Collinsville school. She will have just as much trouble as I am having at Goondiwindi in encouraging specialist teachers to travel there to take their place in those high schools. They will not go there.

I turn to roads. Once again, the Government is cutting back. This record Budget could have been the best Budget that the State has ever seen. But no, all the good old pork-barrelling and all the socialist diatribe and attitudes had to come out; the Government had to support all social areas to ensure that it could buy some votes in the marginal seats. Where are the water storage schemes? Where are the schemes that are going to really put some emphasis on the future of this State? Where are the power stations? What is the Government doing about the hard questions of the environment? The Government should tell us what it is going to do about ocean outfall of sewage. What is the Government planning to do about all the towns that have sewerage plants emptying into the Murray/Darling system?

Mr Livingstone: You're in Opposition. Tell us what you'd do.

Mr ELLIOTT: After six years, that is all members of the Government can say. Members opposite have been in power for six years, and they cannot do anything but blame the previous Government. That is the best they can do because they have done nothing but pork-barrel their own electorates and try to cover social areas.

Mr Slack interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: That is exactly right. If one considers the technology that is available, the Government has ignored and done its level best to undermine the D'Oliviera methane technology. It has not done a thing about it. Uniquet, through Professor Paul Greenfield, has carried out the study on that very process. He has signed the bottom line to say that it is a goer, that it is not a hocus pocus scheme and that it will work. Why is the Government not doing something about it? It is my belief that the Government undermined its potential. A pilot study was to be conducted at Griffith University. My understanding is that either Wayne Goss or——

A Government member interjected.

Mr ELLIOTT: I challenge that smart alec to go to Uniquet. I challenge the man with the smart mouth over there to go to the University of Queensland and talk to Dr Paul Greenfield, who is probably the foremost chemical engineer in this country, and tell him that it is a Stephen Horvath car. That is the member's mentality. He should go back to rolling drunks—or whatever he used to do before he became a member of this place.

I challenge this Government to get out and make those hard decisions. It is very easy for Government members to pork-barrel electorates and to make the easy decisions. However, Government members are not doing one thing about making any of those hard environmental decisions, and for that they should hang their heads in shame. They will go down in history as having done nothing about the environment. When Labor members were in Opposition, they used to scream to the rooftops about how uninterested the National Party was in the environment. Government members should talk to the Surf Riders Association of Queensland. They should also talk to the Greens and ask them how the Government is running. I tell Government members now that those people are going to leave them at this election and that the Government is going to lose the election.

Debate, on motion of Mrs Bird, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 11.52 p.m.