

THURSDAY, 11 JULY 1996

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. N. J. Turner, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair at 9.30 a.m.

ABSENCE OF DEPUTY PREMIER AND TREASURER

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer—Leader of Government Business) (9.31 a.m.): I wish to inform the House of the absence today of the Deputy Premier due to illness.

PETITIONS

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petitions—

Smoking Ban

From **Mr Connor** (225 signatories) requesting the House to stop smoking in all public halls and clubs.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is too much noise in the Chamber. Members will resume their seats.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call for order in the Chamber. Would those members not in their seats resume their seats or leave the Chamber? I will ask for order for the last time. I wish to hear what the Clerk is saying.

Gun Control Laws

From **Mr Elliott** (20 signatories) requesting the House to (a) pass legislation that will outlaw in our society the possession of automatic or semi-automatic firearms and ammunition for the same (b) pass legislation that will outlaw in our society the use of automatic or semi-automatic firearms (c) pass legislation that will ensure that other firearms can be possessed and used only by those who have a legitimate reason for such possession or use (d) pass legislation requiring those who possess any firearm to ensure that while not in use any firearm is not armed and is stored in a safe and secure place and (e) ensure, by one means or another, that like prohibitions and restrictions apply throughout the Commonwealth of Australia.

Annerley Police Station

From **Mr Foley** (451 signatories) requesting the House to prevent any downgrading of the Annerley Police Station.

Gun Control Laws

From **Mr Gilmore** (65 signatories) requesting the House to support the proposed new gun laws.

Koala Coast Protection Plan

From **Mr Littleproud** (209 signatories) requesting the House to adopt the State Planning Policy 1/95 (Conservation of Koalas in the Koala Coast).

Hervey Bay Hospital

From **Mr Nunn** (3,741 signatories) requesting the House to instruct the Minister for Health to immediately commit 100 per cent of funding sufficient to staff and operate the new Hervey Bay Hospital to base hospital standard and supply the services promised before the 1995 election.

Recreational Fishing

From **Mrs Wilson** (211 signatories) requesting the House to (a) consider removing the "In possession of" statement clause from the fishing regulation (1995) and (b) adding clarification for campers camping away where an accruable daily bag limit should apply for duration of time away.

Planning and Environmental Development Assessment Bill

From **Mrs Wilson** (319 signatories) requesting the House to defer debate on the Planning and Environmental Development Assessment Bill (PEDA) until July 1996 to ensure that full community consultation takes place.

Petitions received.

PRIVILEGE

Hansard Record of Proceedings

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich) (9.34 a.m.): I rise on a matter of privilege. Yesterday, the Treasurer, when introducing amendments to the motor accident insurance legislation, read extensively from a speech which was totally irrelevant to the Bill, at which point I took a point of order. Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to page 1462 of the *Daily Hansard* and its failure to accurately reflect these events.

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table—

Premier (Mr Borbidge)—

Report on visit, accompanied by Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier (Mr Slack), to Japan and Korea from 27 May to 5 June 1996.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Salmonella Mbandaka

Hon. M. J. HORAN (Toowoomba South—Minister for Health) (9.35 a.m.), by leave: On 23 June 1996, peanut butter products produced by General Foods Pty Ltd in Melbourne were nationally recalled following 33 reported cases of gastroenteritis caused by salmonella mbandaka in Victoria and a further 18 in South Australia. On 26 June 1996, additional peanut butter products produced by Kraft Foods were recalled.

Human infection by salmonella organisms is unfortunately a common event in Australia and throughout the world. In Australia, about 6,000 cases of infection are reported each year with over 1,000 of these occurring in Queensland. Salmonella infection is often due to eating food which has derived from an infected animal or has been contaminated by faeces. Most cases of salmonella infection are associated with poor food handling practices or poor personal hygiene. Outbreaks associated with commercially packaged and processed foods are quite uncommon.

As at 10 July 1996, 27 cases of infection by salmonella mbandaka have been confirmed in Queensland since the beginning of the year. One of these cases occurred in January before the peanut butter outbreak, and is probably unrelated. The link between notified cases and peanut butter products has been and is under urgent investigation by my department. To date, in only one of these cases has peanut butter eaten by the infected person been shown to be contaminated by salmonella mbandaka.

As at 10 July 1996, since the announcement of the recall Queensland Health had received reports of 103 people advising they had suffered illness which they thought might be associated with the consumption of affected peanut butter products. At this stage, it is possible to show that at least 14 of these reports are not linked to contaminated peanut butter.

The investigation of the cause of this problem has required assessment of the complete production process. This has led to investigation in Victoria of the process used to manufacture peanut butter by General Foods

Pty Ltd. As roasted peanuts from the Peanut Company of Australia in Kingaroy were used in the contaminated product, my department inspected procedures and processes at Kingaroy on 27 June 1996 and 5 July 1996. One sample collected on 27 June 1996 under the granulator in the secondary processing plant has been shown to be contaminated by salmonella mbandaka. This indicates that this organism was present in late June, but the result cannot be used to confirm that this organism was present in January this year. Other samples collected at the primary processing area, where raw unshelled peanuts are received, contained other salmonella species, but this is not unexpected as peanuts are a ground crop.

At this time, the investigation suggests that the cause of the contamination of the peanut butter was roasted peanuts produced by PCA on 10 January 1996. These roasted nuts, which came from three batches produced on 10 January 1996, were used in a number of batches of peanut paste produced over the following weeks. All the available information provides strong circumstantial evidence that an auger, which was used for the first time on 10 January 1996 to introduce roasted peanut fines to whole kernels, was the most likely source of the contamination. In view of this, my department has recommended to PCA that all new equipment for use in the secondary processing area should in future be subjected to a formal commissioning process.

My department has written to the company with specific recommendations designed to ensure the safety of product which it produces. These recommendations relate to methods of cleaning the factory, covering of product during storage, quality assurance commissioning of any new equipment or processes in the factory and education and orientation programs for staff. As a result, the secondary processing plant has been shut down and extensive cleaning and sanitising commenced yesterday under the supervision of environmental health officers. Further sampling will confirm the eradication of the contamination.

A clearance program for products produced by the company has been instituted and the company will not be releasing any ready-to-eat product until the full results of the clearance program have been considered by my department and formal advice of that assessment is conveyed to the company. My department will maintain an active role in ensuring the safety of product which is produced by the company.

It is anticipated that Queensland Health and the Victorian Health Department will be releasing a joint statement in regard to the return to production by the industry when both jurisdictions are confident that food production processes meet satisfactory standards.

The successful management of this issue by the Queensland and Victorian coalition Governments highlights the comprehensive framework that regulates food safety and quality in Australia. At the National Food Standards Council meeting, which I attended on 5 July 1996 in Hobart, the whole issue of the national safe food system was discussed. The council supported the development of the national safe food system in which a paddock-to-plate approach to safe food would be adopted.

To conclude, this contamination incident is still under very thorough investigation by my department and each day new information becomes available. I will make further statements, if and as appropriate, as the investigation continues.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Century Zinc Project

Hon. D. J. SLACK (Burnett—Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier) (9.40 a.m.), by leave: A lot of misinformation has been spoken about environmental issues with respect to the Century Zinc project. If one believes some claims, one could be forgiven for thinking that the proposed mine was going to destroy the top half of Queensland! Nothing could be further from the truth. The Queensland Government, in cooperation with Century Zinc, will ensure that the environment of the gulf is protected. There are over 100 environmental approvals, permits and licences being obtained for the mine's construction and operation. The impact assessment study into the project concluded that the export of mineral concentrate through Karumba and the gulf would not be a threat to the environment. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority reached the same conclusion in an independent review.

Ill-informed claims have been made that the water required by the mine will drain the Lawn Hill gorge. That is totally wrong. The mine will draw water from an aquifer feeding perennial streams that is completely separate from that feeding the gorge. Ground-water studies have been validated by experts from the Natural Resources Department. Ground-water extraction licences were issued after a

public application process. I am also advised that an independent expert review commissioned by the United Gulf Region Aboriginal Corporation confirmed that there would be no detrimental impact.

As for the slurry pipeline, it is a buried steel pipeline to be constructed with extra thick walls where it crosses rivers. Such pipelines are extremely safe and efficient. The Savage River iron ore mine in Tasmania has used a slurry pipeline for 30 years with no leaks. The pipeline will be aligned so that places of cultural significance to Aborigines are avoided. An environmental management plan will be required for the pipeline.

At Karumba the water will be removed from the slurry and treated to such a standard that it will be used in irrigation and watering of cattle. The treated water will be a valuable resource for the Karumba/Normanton area. If necessary, the water will be suitable for discharge into the Norman River where it would have an almost undetectable effect on the salinity of the river. CSIRO tests show that the treated water will have no detrimental effect on marine organisms. Extensive tests were carried out on marine life in the gulf and they showed that, in the unlikely event of a spill, these organisms would not be harmed. All facilities and equipment will be designed and built to prevent spillage during transport operations.

Facilities at Karumba will be managed under a Government approved environmental management overview strategy. Century Zinc has invited the participation of Aboriginal groups in the development of environmental management and monitoring plans.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Fire Service

Hon. M. D. VEIVERS (Southport—Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport) (9.43 a.m.), by leave: On Monday, 11 March, a wide-ranging, independent review into the Queensland Fire Service began. The aim of this review was to ascertain the causes of concerns held by firefighters across the State. Obviously something was wrong because just over a year ago, under the previous administration, we had firefighters marching on Parliament and industrial action all over the State.

The review was conducted by private consultant Lyn Staib, while QFS Assistant Commissioner Wayne Hartley was seconded to the project team to assist with operational matters. The review involved extensive

discussions with Fire Service staff from all levels—from the fire station floor to the commissioner—and with representatives of the United Firefighters Union and Senior Officers Association. The aim was to get as many firefighters' and officers' opinions as possible to try to find ways of raising staff morale, fostering industrial harmony and meeting the fire prevention and hazard requirements of the community while operating at maximum efficiency.

Just nine weeks after the review began, a 300-plus page report was presented to the Acting Director-General, Mr John Hocken, and was immediately delivered to 50 or so major stakeholders, including firefighters, union officials and community representatives. These stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to comment on the report's recommendations and make other suggestions which might not have been included in the report.

The report was highly detailed and informative and credit goes to the small team who worked on it under very tight time deadlines. Significant findings of the report are that the Fire Service has been suffering under 1950s paramilitary style leadership; it is \$30m underfunded; morale is chronically low; and the bureaucratic structures and management procedures put in place are causing widespread concern to operational staff. Dozens of recommendations have been made and already some of those are in the process of being implemented by an implementation team which has been formed. Other recommendations, though, will take more time, but I am determined that where those recommendations can be implemented this Government will work strongly to do so. Every country and State needs an efficient and effective fire service for the safety of the community and I am determined that that will happen in Queensland.

Since the report has been released, a couple of other major events have happened within the Fire Service. Firstly, the long-awaited decision into the Queensland Fire Service's workplace reform package was handed down. This came almost two years to the day after unions and Fire Service management began negotiations. The decision was highly detailed and caused major concern among firefighters and officers. However, it also gave everyone a firm base to work from for further negotiations, and already the QFS and unions have begun enterprise bargaining in an attempt to improve pay and conditions. Firefighters had not had a pay rise for six years, and while the workplace reform decision was coming, a \$15 a week

interim pay increase was offered to, and accepted by, firefighters.

Mr Gibbs: Cut that out! That was in the pipeline from us.

Mr VEIVERS: They see me as the workers' friend. Last month that pay increase was ratified by the Industrial Relations Commission and this month every one of the State's 2,000-plus firefighters and officers will receive the increase plus pay back—back pay, I should say. That was a Freudian slip under great pressure! That is just a small increase, but at least it is a step in the right direction. Already Cabinet has agreed in principle to the hiring of an additional 135 firefighters over the next three years, which was a coalition promise that will be implemented. We will be working hard to improve funding and wages, staffing levels and training.

I would like to place on record my appreciation to the members of the Queensland Fire Service for their cooperation and support for my endeavours on their behalf and to assure them of my continuing support for their good work in the Queensland community. The Government will leave no stone unturned in its efforts to deliver the effective and efficient fire service that the Queensland community so rightly deserves. I table a copy of the Staib Report into the Queensland Fire Service.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

International Air Charter Services

Hon. B. W. DAVIDSON (Noosa—Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry) (9.48 a.m.), by leave: Tomorrow, I will attend my first Tourism Ministers' Council meeting in Adelaide. While a number of key issues will be raised at this meeting, I am particularly keen to draw my colleagues' attention to the question of international charter air services.

The increasing competitiveness of world tourism demands more efficient, direct air services for tourism destinations located away from international gateway airports. For Queensland, with its vast range of tourism product spread the length and breadth of the State, this is particularly so. However, while the tourism industry and all levels of Government have voiced their support for increased charter services, problems with Australian Customs have made it extremely difficult for airlines to plan services.

That insufficient Customs staffing levels would be allowed to jeopardise what is potentially the best hope for Queensland's

regions to attract more international tourists is simply not good enough. I plan to ask my colleagues at tomorrow's meeting to put their support behind the Federal Minister's commitment to resolve this issue. Further, I intend to initiate a task force between the Federal Government and my department to investigate how this can be achieved.

I would now like to advise members of this House of some recent achievements of the Office of Tourism within my department in attracting new scheduled airline services into Queensland. Contact has been established with six airlines with a potential to bring tourists to Queensland cities. Discussions are continuing with Emirates Airlines regarding the possible introduction of services to Brisbane in 1997. Talks have been held with Gulf Air regarding the introduction of a Brisbane call during 1996-97. We are assisting Korean Air to obtain rights to carry its own passengers between Brisbane and Sydney during July 1996 on one additional flight, plus assistance is continuing with Royal Brunei Airlines for the substitution of its 757 aircraft with a 767 on the route to Brisbane.

My department has also offered assistance to Malaysian Airlines for the introduction of a second service to Cairns. This service would not only benefit the Cairns and far-north region but also the whole of Queensland as a tourist destination for the fast-developing market from Malaysia. This exciting new market has experienced a growth of more than 30 per cent since February last year for visitors spending the majority of their stay in Queensland.

Discussions are also ongoing with Sempati Air of Indonesia regarding a service between Jakarta and Brisbane. As honourable members know, the Premier has recently returned from trade and economic development discussions in Jakarta and those discussions can only improve the negotiations with this airline.

Assistance is also being provided to both Kiwi Air and Freedom Air of New Zealand, who both wish to operate charter flights to Coolangatta from New Zealand. Freedom operated its first of four flights on 29 June but, as mentioned earlier, the National Passenger Processing Committee in Canberra has rejected all other applications from Freedom Air and Kiwi to operate to Coolangatta.

It would also be of interest to members of this House that successful negotiations were completed with Globespan, a UK charter company, which will commence a weekly

charter service from the UK to Brisbane in October 1996.

Effective from 1 July 1996, international air service movements at Brisbane have increased by 18 per cent since the last schedule change in October 1995—from 17,940 movements to 21,268 movements. Domestic air services to and from Queensland have also increased in the 12 months to 1 April 1996.

My department will continue to play a major role in striving to increase international and interstate tourism numbers to Queensland, and all avenues will be sourced to achieve my aims as Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry. This Government is committed to the tourism industry in Queensland. We have recently appointed a new board to the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation—a board with new ideas, new initiatives and some of the best marketing, promotion and administrative skills Queenslanders can provide.

In closing, I wish to reiterate to the members of the House the enormous significance of the tourism industry to our State's economy, and assure them of my total commitment to the growing potential of this diverse and important industry.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

1996 Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement

Hon. R. T. CONNOR (Nerang—Minister for Public Works and Housing) (9.52 a.m.), by leave: I wish to make a statement regarding the 1996 Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement. Firstly, I am pleased to announce that the Government has signed the interim, one-year agreement between Queensland and the Commonwealth.

Capital funding will be continued, based on the same formula used last year. This will produce \$273m for public housing in Queensland in 1996-97. However, most importantly, we will retain the option of carrying forward the unspent balance of Commonwealth funds for capital works in future years. This will mean that, all things being equal, we should be able to continue our building program through all of next year.

This is an important concession. It must be remembered that the Commonwealth's stated intention, under both Labor and coalition administrations, is to move towards supplying only income support, or rent subsidies, and discontinuing capital grants for

housing. I have strong reservations about this scheme as far as Queensland is concerned, and I will come to those shortly. I emphasise that our State has agreed in principle only to accept this new method of funding housing for low-income earners.

The in-principle agreement was not given lightly. It was given because of the potential benefits of the scheme. The new scheme, implemented in the correct way, has the potential to benefit low-income earners through—

freedom of choice between public and private rental homes;

greater freedom to move to a new locality which may be closer to a new job or family;

hopefully, an end to waiting lists like those on the Gold Coast, Cairns, and certain parts of Brisbane, for example; and

a better living environment, because this new scheme will achieve a better mix of people.

It will also mean that the housing and construction industry in Queensland will receive a boost. Private developers can be expected to build accommodation specifically for people qualifying for subsidies.

However, the transition may not be easy. Adjustments will have to be made with respect to Housing Department stock. The department will have to continue on the course I have set of adding new, or near-new, housing to its stock. Older and less desirable housing may have to be offered for sale if it becomes vacant. People eligible for subsidies will have the option of choosing more desirable housing offered elsewhere.

It will not be possible for the final details of new directions for public housing to be set in concrete until after the Commonwealth provides a comprehensive outline of its scheme. A very important exemption from inclusion in the direct subsidy scheme is the provision of housing under our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scheme. This is only commonsense, because most of the housing built under this scheme is in remote or distant communities where there is virtually no construction effort by the private sector.

However, there are other areas that need attention. As I said before, I have strong reservations about this scheme. I raised these at the recent Ministerial Council meeting. My biggest concerns with the proposed scheme are focussed on potential inequities. The first of these is that the new subsidy scheme should recognise the differing rent levels

across Australia and from suburb to suburb. If not, supported rental tenants may have to migrate away from high-rent suburbs. The second is the need to ensure that community housing programs are maintained under the new arrangements.

Because Queensland is the most decentralised of all our States, community housing programs remain vital. With full involvement of local communities, along with local financial input, community housing represents the best housing value for taxpayers' money in many localities. A large slice of our community housing programs are in regional and rural areas. In most of these areas there is little in the way of private development of rental housing stock to satisfy the needs of people eligible for housing support.

Thirdly, I see a valid need for a continuation of Commonwealth capital funding of purpose-built, or modified, housing for people with disabilities. I believe Canberra should rethink each of these areas. It should continue Commonwealth capital funding arrangements in lieu of the subsidy system in these cases. I believe that will achieve the best outcome on behalf of taxpayers and low-income earners.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Rail Safety Audit; Queensland Rail

Hon. V. G. JOHNSON (Gregory—Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.57 a.m.), by leave: Today, I wish to detail a most important report to the House and the people of Queensland. I refer to the rail safety audit of Queensland Rail, an initiative of the Borbidge Government. Prior to the 15 July election last year, the now Premier, Mr Borbidge, gave a commitment that upon the coalition assuming Government it would carry out a full safety and maintenance audit of Queensland Rail. That is exactly what we have done.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: I can hear a hum from the other side of the Chamber. The Opposition does not wish to know about a lot of the issues raised in the report.

This is the first time in the history of this State that there has been an audit of this type of Queensland Rail. This Government is proud to be able to table this report in the Parliament. It is a most thorough document, and it makes a number of significant recommendations. Since 1990, there have been five passenger fatalities associated with

train operations. That is a rate of one fatality per 84.6 million passenger journeys. That is a very good record. It is twice the record that has been accomplished by British Rail in the United Kingdom.

Rail Safety Accreditation Manager, Mr Kevin Band, praised Citytrain's efforts and its high level of commitment to improving passenger and public security performance levels. Mr Band has also highlighted a whole series of anomalies within Queensland Rail. I commend and congratulate Kevin Band on putting together such a comprehensive report in such a short time.

Current performance indicators suggest that Citytrain is having an encouraging degree of success in combating vandalism, graffiti and thefts from railway car parks. Mr Band found that the cost of security infringements was \$14.5m per annum, but new systems, such as surveillance cameras on trains, car parks and platforms, help lines, and closing off carriages at night, were working. The fitting of surveillance cameras on the Citytrain network is very commendable and is an advancement when compared to the situation in other countries with similar crime levels. Queensland Rail will not rest at these significant improvements—and nor will this Government—as it will continue to examine different methods to further improve Citytrain security for the travelling public.

The freight side of QR has been of considerable concern. There have been many derailments in recent times. As the Opposition spokesman I was very vocal in highlighting to the people of Queensland the safety of Queensland Rail and the reason for those derailments. I can assure the House that things are going to change in the near future as a result of the policies that will be implemented by this Government in addressing the sad situation which currently prevails in the rail network. It was probably through luck that there have not been more accidents and no fatalities.

Mr Band found that, when compared with the coal and minerals group, with huge revenues and major investment programs, the freight group was behind. He found that the freight group's only option was to continue to maintain its track to existing conditions where the majority of derailments have taken place. This is totally unsatisfactory to this Government and totally unsatisfactory to the patrons of Queensland Rail. The report found that 7,000 kilometres of freight lines were built last century. They were lines designed for lightweight traffic. It would cost hundreds of

millions of dollars to introduce major improvements. I point out that the Opposition when in Government showed no intention at all of upgrading those lines. Instead, it let them deteriorate to their current disastrous position.

The condition of the 6.5 million timber sleepers is progressively deteriorating on marginally used or rural lines, and on some lines are at dangerous proportions. Mr Band found that track conditions were maintained at constant levels in the 1980s and early 1990s, when improvements were made, but they were never ongoing. This Government will not rest until safety standards have been taken to the maximum for our public transport systems.

I was delighted to announce yesterday that this Government will be spending an additional \$17m during the next three years to improve the safety of the Citytrain network. That is further proof of this Government's commitment to improve our Citytrain network—and all our railway networks, for that matter. This House looks forward to the Travelsafe Committee's further report into rail safety, which will continue the examination of new options and standards.

However, the audit did find five major deficiencies: the current practice is focused towards asset standards—for example, specifications for sleepers, ballasts, etc.—with little attention placed upon management standards. As a result, there is a great deal of functional activity with minimal activity at the corporate level—for example, document control or planned investigations. Measurement and monitoring processes could be significantly improved at the corporate level. Greater use could be made of risk management processes, particularly in prioritising workload and maximising safety benefits through the use of benefit-cost ratios and safety budgeting techniques. Roles and responsibilities are poorly documented within the management structures. As a result, mandatory training and competence requirements cannot be set or maintained. There are flaws in the operational procedures associated with ticket working.

On track maintenance, Mr Band found that while staff numbers had been reduced, the effects were more than offset by productivity gains in capital-intensive mechanisation. However, one real issue is the problems confronting the people in the work force of QR, who were treated with contempt and neglect by the former Government. Mr Band recommends that a long-term 10-year strategy be developed, underwritten by the

Government. I will be directing the Chief Executive of Queensland Rail to prepare an implementation plan of this strategy and our policies that will be implemented in the short term to once again make Queensland Rail the great operation that it was.

This audit was well overdue and will allow this Government to ensure that Queensland Rail will continue to improve its safety standards. At the same time, I say to the employees within Queensland Rail that this Government will certainly be looking after their needs. We will be looking after the needs of Queensland Rail and addressing the needs of the patrons of Queensland Rail. I table the report.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Lytton By-election

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (10.04 a.m.), by leave: I table for the information of the House an article that appeared in yesterday's *Wynnum Herald* headed "Poll date anger", which quotes a spokesman for the Premier ruling out a Lytton by-election in August because I would be overseas. As the shadow Minister for Economic and Trade Development, Industry and Small Business, I planned a short working visit overseas on trade matters during August. I expected the Lytton by-election would have been announced and held in late July or very early in August. I therefore wrote to the Premier, as required, and was granted approval for the visit.

The people of Lytton are entitled to representation in this Parliament now. I therefore wrote to the Premier yesterday cancelling the trade visit to enable him to hold a by-election at the earliest possible time in August. I table that letter to the Premier. There is now no excuse for any delay in setting the Lytton by-election date in August.

LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Report

Mrs GAMIN (Burleigh) (10.05 a.m.): I lay upon the table of the House the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee's issues paper on Truth in Political Advertising. The issues paper was authorised for release by the committee pursuant to the Parliamentary Papers Act on 16 May 1996. The purpose of the issues paper is to stimulate public debate and provide guidance

to those wishing to make a submission to the committee on the issue. I commend the issues paper to the House.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Merger of Metway, Suncorp and QIDC

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (10.06 a.m.): I give notice that I shall move—

"That the Parliament of Queensland calls on the minority Government to ensure the proposed merger of Metway, QIDC and Suncorp does not result in job losses and branch closures in Queensland, particularly in rural and provincial Queensland."

Mahogany Glider Habitat

Mr WELFORD (Everton) (10.06 a.m.): I give notice that I shall move—

"That the House notes—

- (1) the Minister for the Environment has previously allowed 10 hectares of mahogany glider habitat to be destroyed despite clear warnings from the landowner that bulldozers were about to go into the area;
- (2) the Minister has not acted to remove the offending landowner from the Mahogany Glider Consultative Committee despite the violation;
- (3) that a further 100 football fields of mahogany glider habitat were this week demolished while the Minister procrastinates over the implementation of the Mahogany Glider Conservation Plan, finalised by the previous Labor Government in January this year, and condemns the Minister and the State Government for continuing its breach of its responsibility under the Nature Conservation Act to protect the habitat of the mahogany glider, which is threatened with extinction."

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Government Computer System

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (10.07 a.m.): The House will recall the extraordinary and quite vicious performance by the Premier in a ministerial statement in this place on 18 April on the Government computer system. The Premier alleged that there had been an invasion of the

computer system in the office of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing. He said that the actions amounted to unilateral tampering in what was an extremely dangerous system. He said that the decision making was extraordinary and unacceptable. The Premier then went on to make an unacceptable decision by announcing what was in essence a kangaroo court. He said that, on his instructions, two public servants—the office systems management unit manager of CITEC and the director of the Ministerial Services Branch—had been sent on leave pending a full investigation.

I was not prepared to stand by to see any sort of kangaroo court deal with the actions of these two public servants, and I wrote to the CJC to request an urgent investigation into what amounted to allegations of official misconduct by the Premier. In my letter, I stated—

"I am clearly of the view that the appropriate body to carry out such an investigation is the CJC and not a trumped up political investigation organised for political purposes."

I have now received a letter from the CJC Chair, Mr Clair, which I table, who says that the officers who had been required to go on leave were reinstated. The commission has also been advised that no action will be taken against those officers and that their actions in deleting the computer files in question were considered reasonable under the circumstances in that they were in accordance with established procedures.

This CJC finding puts the seal on what was pretty obvious to every thinking member of this House on the day—that the Premier had overreacted and had used the situation for his own political ends, and now we have an independent investigation exonerating the two officers concerned. I call on the Premier to do the proper thing and apologise to the two public servants concerned, to CITEC and to the Ministerial Services Branch.

Time expired.

Homeless and Disadvantaged Youth, Cairns

Mrs WILSON (Mulgrave) (10.09 a.m.): I want to bring to the attention of this House the plight of homeless and disadvantaged youth in the Cairns area and the ensuing problems that arise. The adverse effects of being on the street, even for a short time—and, in this case, it involves many young people—cannot be

underestimated. Many young people, like ships without a parental rudder, roam the streets of Cairns and, indeed, most towns at night, leaving themselves open to abuse. Some are even tempted to try petty crime and substance abuse.

Without the assistance of voluntary groups such as the Street Level Youth Care and the Indinge Drop-in Centre in Cairns, many young people would remain open to abuse. I commend the many volunteers who give their time at nights. Most young people we meet, especially at weekends, are below 15 years of age, with boys and girls equally represented. Most of them appear to have parental permission to be there. The Cairns City Council is trying its best and expending a lot of manpower and time. The police are trying their best, but are often hamstrung by rules and regulations and hence seem powerless in many instances.

I support the concerns voiced yesterday by the member for Thuringowa. It is always sad to see young people out late. In some instances this involves youngsters of 14. It is also a pastime for 9-year-olds. Sadly, there is a drug and alcohol problem, which makes many youngsters unsuitable for most jobs. Often these young people are incapable of turning up for an interview or even getting themselves motivated. They are lost in more ways than one. The talk of suicide amongst some of those who are addicted, especially to heroin, has been overwhelming.

I refer to an article in *Street Level Youth Care*, which states—

"Where are the caring parents? 3 years old and out at midnight with 8 year old brother!

Once again, the heart rending picture of a child too young to be let out at night let alone taking care of his 3 year old brother.

When does this nonsense stop and parents are made accountable for their action or inaction.

Children of such a tender age have the right to be protected and cared for.

The pendulum of freedom for children, at all cost, has swung too far"—

Time expired.

Theft of Marijuana Plants from Finch Hatton Police Station

Mr BARTON (Waterford) (10.11 a.m.): I want to draw the attention of this Parliament to

a most serious event that occurred on Tuesday night of last week at Finch Hatton near Mackay which, in my view, is a symptom of a much wider problem that appears to exist across many sections of the Police Service. In this event some 69 marijuana plants were stolen from a cell in the Finch Hatton Police Station where they had been stored. The Finch Hatton Police Station is an old timber building. It is isolated in a small sugar hamlet in the Pioneer Valley. The cells are not secured. This particular one was secured by a padlock. It is not attended at night. It was locked at 5 p.m. and the theft found at 8 the next morning.

I want to raise the point that this was a totally inappropriate place to store evidence of this nature—drugs that should have been stored in a much more secure location. What occurred was that thieves simply broke into that old, unattended building at night-time, picked the padlock and removed evidence—removed those plants. That is simply not good enough because the plants were evidence in a trial. Of course, it is much more difficult to gain a conviction where evidence is not available to be produced even though it had been photographed. The plants—the drugs in this case—were also a very desirable soft target for other criminal elements who would have been aware that the plants were being stored in such a soft location.

I believe that this is a symptom of a wider problem. In fact, that was the second loss of evidence in Mackay this year. This matter needs to be addressed by the CJC in its role of overseeing the Police Service and by this Minister who, I believe, should investigate this issue and tighten up the Police Service on the storage of evidence, particularly where drugs are concerned. Members hear a lot of anecdotal evidence that drugs in particular disappear from police stations where they are stored.

Time expired.

Timber Industry

Hon. R. J. GIBBS (Bundamba) (10.13 a.m.): It has recently come to my attention that the Minister for Primary Industries, Mr Perrett, is hawking our protected native forests around the timber industry. Behind the back of the Queensland Timber Board, and without the board's support, the Minister is attempting to sell off our native forests for woodchipping and to promote logging in areas currently protected due to their high conservation value.

The Forestry Working Group was established by Labor to negotiate a workable forest agreement. Much of the good work achieved by that group has been undermined by the Minister's cynical attempt to turn mill owners and workers against the Queensland Timber Board. Quite sensibly, the Queensland Timber Board has been working closely with the environment movement to ensure the long-term sustainability of the industry and the security of employment for thousands of Queensland workers. The Minister is trying to turn what is a sensible and positive working relationship between the two groups to his own political advantage, regardless of the effect it will have on our native forests or the future of the timber industry.

I ask the Minister: did he give approval for Mr Gary Bacon of his department to make clandestine visits to timber mills, offering up for logging areas currently protected by the interim management arrangements? Is the Minister, through Mr Bacon, attempting to generate grassroots unrest within the timber industry to gain support for the introduction of native forest woodchipping, despite reservations from the Timber Board? Did the Minister attempt to hand to the Queensland Timber Board on a silver platter several protected native forests for logging, only to have the offer rejected as environmental vandalism?

Forestry Working Group meetings have become farcical. Recent additions to the group, included at the insistence of the Minister, do not even bother to turn up, while the Wilderness Society is excluded. Government representatives push the Minister's pro-logging line against strong resistance from both the conservation movement and the Queensland Timber Board itself. Just who does the Minister claim to represent—the conservation movement, the Queensland timber industry or the multinationals intent on making a fast buck out of flogging off our native forests for woodchip?

Springsure Hospital

Mr MITCHELL (Charters Towers) (10.15 a.m.): The town of Springsure was established in 1854. Since its establishment, local residents have continued to support the main industries of cattle, grain and cotton. The original hospital at Springsure was built in 1868, with the new hospital being built in 1938. The State Government assumed responsibility for the hospital on 2 November 1940.

The Springsure Hospital is registered as a 27-bed hospital and is currently resourced as a 15-bed facility. The hospital provides medical services, limited surgical, obstetrics—an average of about 30 per annum—paediatric, orthopaedic and aged-care services at the hostel level, with the occasional nursing home-type patient and outpatient emergencies and casualty on a 24-hours-per-day basis. Of all presentations to the hospital, including admissions, approximately 3 per cent are transferred to major centres.

Springsure now has responsibility for some community services, such as school health, which is provided throughout the whole Bauhinia Shire; child health, which is provided in Springsure with an outreach service to Rolleston; and immunisation monthly in Springsure and Rolleston. Dental services are provided at Emerald on a once-a-week basis. Limited radiology is provided by nursing staff. Liaison with the St Vincent de Paul Home Nursing Service is constant, and there is community education as required with a program of structured health talks to the high school students to Year 10. Money raised by the local hospital auxiliary and spent on this hospital is considerable, amounting to a yearly average of about \$11,000 over the last three years. The local Lions Club also frequently donates items of need, the last project being a two-way radio valued at over \$2,000 with a beeper call system attached to allow on-call staff some flexibility of movement.

In a brief to the Health Minister, who visited the hospital in May, the only contentious issue raised by the people out there was continued fears locally that the hospital will close.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the next speaker, I acknowledge the fact that Mr Rick Setter, the Deputy Speaker of the Northern Territory Parliament, and Mrs Setter are in the public gallery.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Health Funding

Mrs EDMOND (Mount Coot-tha) (10.17 a.m.): I was amused by the Minister for Health's recent statements in the press that he would be seeking assurances from the Commonwealth Government on certain funding implications associated with the transfer of Federal health responsibilities to the

States. Mr Horan has said that he would be seeking \$160m extra to take on responsibilities for aged-care services and would also seek assurances from the Howard Government that Queensland will get full funding for HIV/AIDS care before taking it over from the Commonwealth. The Minister seems totally oblivious to the fact that the Howard Government is cutting expenditure on health and community services. He continues to make these calls for extra money from the Commonwealth when he knows that there will not be anything extra. It is a total farce. It would seem that the Minister does not read the newspapers, watch the news or get briefings from his department.

The irony of Mr Horan's call for more assistance from the Commonwealth for HIV/AIDS care is that he has already scrapped a package announced by the former Labor Government to assist people in our community caring for the aged and people with HIV/AIDS. Yes, that is right, he scrapped a package to give respite care support to people caring for the aged and people with an AIDS-related illness. That is a big mistake, really. If the devolution of health responsibilities to the States goes ahead, there will not be any more national approaches to help him out. Then he has the nerve to ask the Commonwealth for more money, when the whole idea of devolution is to cut Commonwealth expenditure and cost-shift to the States. Mr Horan has already established a real credibility problem at the national level putting Queensland's health system under pressure it simply cannot sustain, and at the same time he is cutting \$25m out of the State Health budget, handing it over to B1 and B2 for the "Banana Bank".

Health Services have been sacrificed willy nilly for a State Bank and four new hospitals in coalition electorates. To make sure that there is no dissent, he has to go and defund one of the few consumer voices in health. Mr Horan has no regard for the rights of consumers. On top of defunding Consumers Health Advocacy, he has recently given ordinary health consumers another kick in the face with his arrogant assertion that the coalition will not be introducing a code of health rights and responsibilities.

Time expired.

Thursday Island Health Facilities

Mr CARROLL (Mansfield) (10.20 a.m.): This Government recently agreed to the provision of 38 acute beds in the redevelopment of Thursday Island Hospital

following extensive consultation with hospital staff and members of the Torres Strait community. The previous Labor Government delayed badly the redevelopment of that hospital through its failure to finalise bed numbers.

Mr Bredhauer interjected.

Mr CARROLL: The member for Cook, who is interjecting, did little enough when he sat on the Government side of the House. The coalition Government has moved quickly to ensure that a decision was made after consultation with that community, and now we can get on with the job of building a new hospital on Thursday Island. The new hospital will provide 24 general medical beds including day surgery, six paediatric beds, two high-dependency beds, six maternity beds, accident and emergency services, limited outpatient service—

Mr T. B. Sullivan interjected.

Mr CARROLL: Yes, I have been up there recently. It will provide support services and all usual visiting specialist services. The hospital redevelopment was part of a \$31m upgrade of health facilities on Thursday Island under the hospital rebuilding program, which also included building a new community health system and upgrading and building new staff accommodation. The community health centre will work in conjunction with the hospital to provide a broad range of health services for the people of Thursday Island and Torres Strait. Services usually available in southern Queensland cities will at last be provided at the community centre.

Providing quality accommodation will be critical for recruiting and retaining health staff to work at this far-north hospital and community health centre, so better staff accommodation is to be included in the project with upgrades including better housing, duplexes and the construction of eight three-bedroom houses. This will also be a much needed lift to the Thursday Island economy. The upgrade of those health facilities is important in our recognition of the needs.

Time expired.

Government Air Wing

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton) (10.22 a.m.): I draw the attention of the House to the coalition's stated policy to the people of north Queensland prior to the last election. It states—

"The coalition will undertake to restore the Government Airwing to its

previous strength to establish its previously recognised Centres of Excellence in North Queensland: for search and rescue, hyperbaric treatment, neo natal and intensive care and para rescue."

Nothing could be further from the truth of what is occurring in north Queensland at the moment. I have received innumerable phone calls both from my colleague the member for Mount Isa, my colleague the member for Thuringowa and from various people tied up with the Emergency Services Support Committee who are absolutely disgusted that this Government has not been in Townsville. They are absolutely disgusted that the Government has not even come near to revisiting the problem that it has created for itself in north Queensland in terms of emergency services.

A Government member interjected.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Don't you come into it, farmer, because you are on the beak up there! I am giving you the rub.

The fact is that members opposite promised to do something about rationalising the problem, yet they do not even answer their correspondence. Poor old "stone axe" up there—sorry, Mr Stoneman, the honourable member for Burdekin—received correspondence from that group, which he has not bothered to acknowledge. He has not answered it; he will not talk to the people involved. No answer has been given by members opposite to the support agency, which put up a reasonable program for a community-based helicopter service. No attention has been paid to this issue whatsoever. In fact, many people who are closely linked with the National Party in that area are going to get square with the members opposite over this issue. They had certain expectations that the Government would deliver on its promise; it has not delivered one bit of it.

The hyperbaric unit in that area is under threat of being removed. Mr Horan's mob have not done a thing with it. It sits there idly. The word is all around the north that it is going to go.

Time expired.

Maxlands Station; RAP

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa) (10.24 a.m.): Last Saturday, I visited Maxlands Station, Boulia, which is part of my electorate, to see the results of the Labor Government's policy in relation to remote area power. While

in Government, the National Party always talked about what it could do to bring power to the people of the bush. Nothing was achieved. As a result of the efforts of the Labor Government, four properties in the Bouliia area were given remote area power experimental systems. Last Saturday, I had the opportunity to see at first-hand the fruits of the Labor Government's policy.

Where the property owners used to have cool beer, today they are drinking cold beer. Where they used to drink Sunshine milk, today they are drinking cows' milk. Where they used to have a cool refrigerator, today they have freezers. Mr Speaker, the people on those properties today now have what people in the cities take for granted, that is, refrigeration, all the modern conveniences, microwaves, stoves—you name it, they now have it. That is all because of the policies introduced by the Goss Labor Government.

I place on record in this Parliament today my praise for the member for Everton, Rod Welford, for the work he did, and for Mr Frank Barron. I am really concerned about the rumours that are circulating throughout the Department of Mines and Energy that the Office of Energy Management, which was instrumental in getting those projects off the ground, is to be axed. Already this Government has sacked, or got rid of, the director of that department, a lady who had tremendous ability. The rumour that is circulating now is that members opposite are going to demolish the part of the department which, I believe, represents the future. Today, I appeal to the Minister—

Time expired.

Kinka Beach

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Keppel) (10.26 a.m.): I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Environment for advising me that the beach protection study for Kinka Beach will be completed by the end of July. That follows a visit to the area by the Premier, for which I thank him very much. It also follows my continuous representations by way of writing letters and talking not only to the Minister but also to the Premier, to departmental officers, to all and sundry at least almost once a week. This follows the fact two more unfortunate moon tides have caused further erosion at Kinka Beach.

I want to set the record straight. A report in the *Mirror* newspaper yesterday stated that when a reporter rang the Department of Environment, the department said it was not

aware of any problem in the area or any representations by me. That was printed in the newspaper. Of course, I was able to make it clear very quickly what representations had been made. At this point, a search of the department has been unable to discover who provided that information, nor has the *Mirror* been able to work out to whom it spoke. One has to query whether or not the report is right. I simply do not know. However, I have made the position abundantly clear.

In relation to firearms, I have had stacks and stacks of people onto me about John Howard's latest suggestions about no crimping of firearms. I simply have to ask John Howard to show some compassion for those people who live in the country and who listen to members of the Labor Party who are in no position whatsoever—

Time expired.

Department of Environment; Actions of Treasurer

Mr WELFORD (Everton) (10.28 a.m.): Treasurer, Joan "the slasher" Sheldon, has moved quickly to inflict the death of a thousand cuts on the Department of Environment. In a little over four months, the Environment portfolio has been gutted with a zeal only displayed by those who consider filthy lucre the be-all and end-all of Government policy.

On the one hand, the Treasurer can write off \$200m to pork-barrel her own electorate, while on the other hand sack up to 600 short-term staff. She can spend \$80m playing Gordon Geko on the stock market while ripping the heart out of the State's capacity to protect and maintain our national parks and conservation reserves. What kind of screwed up thinking then sells off our national parks to environmental vandals and National Party cronies such as Sir Frank Moore? Of course, Sir Frank has an impressive record promoting environmentally friendly and unobtrusive developments! Honourable members can look to Toowong Village and the Roma Street Transit Centre for examples.

Time expired.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE Carruthers Inquiry

Mr BEATTIE (10.30 a.m.): I refer the Attorney-General to his press release of 10 July 1995, which I table, in which he promised an additional \$2m a year for the Legal Aid service and in which he stated that thousands

of Queenslanders are being denied justice due, amongst other things, to underfunding of the legal system, and I ask: will Mr Borbidge and Mr Cooper be subject to the same means test as other applicants for legal aid in respect of their representation at the Carruthers inquiry? If not, does this not demonstrate his Government's favoured treatment of senior Government Ministers and its unfair treatment of ordinary Queenslanders unable to get legal aid for matters such as family law cases and civil cases?

Mr BEANLAND: It is interesting to receive such a question from the Leader of the Opposition, who always makes out that the Labor Party invented the words "fairness" and "justice". However, he makes those words sound very hollow. In the lead-up to the question, the Leader of the Opposition talked about legal aid. He represents the same party that did so little for legal aid during its time in Government. It is quite clear that he now wants to cover that up.

The Carruthers inquiry was set up by the Criminal Justice Commission, not this Government and not anybody else within this Chamber. The documents may have been sent to the CJC, but the CJC alone decided to conduct a public inquiry. Clearly, when such a public inquiry is held, the CJC is assisted by counsel and in this case a retired judge sits in judgment on the matter. This inquiry commenced in March and will also inquire into the involvement of the Sporting Shooters Association in the run-up to the last State election. We should bear in mind that the Carruthers inquiry was expected to run for 20 days. Although I have not been keeping count, I understand that it has been going for 30 days or more, and it looks to me as though it will probably go until Christmas.

The Parliament established the CJC and gave it tremendous powers. At this stage, the CJC is not trying to say that someone is guilty; it is merely conducting a public inquiry in terms of the powers that were given to it by the Parliament.

Today, the Opposition is saying that people should not have fairness and justice. In his question, the Leader of the Opposition referred to a couple of people. Other people, who have little to do with the matter, have been called before the inquiry. They have also had to seek legal representation. Should they not have legal representation before this inquiry? That is what the Opposition is saying. Although I have not been keeping track of the

inquiry, I understand that half a dozen or more people, who have little to do with this matter, have been called to appear. Quite clearly, in the interests of fairness and justice—and I believe the public would understand this—people who are called before the inquiry should have their reasonable legal expenses paid.

I have indicated before—and if I have not indicated so in this House, I have certainly indicated publicly—that, at the end of the day, the Government will certainly be only too pleased to make public the full details of the legal expenses.

Carruthers Inquiry

Mr BEATTIE: I refer the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing to the fact that it was he who drew up the secret deal with the Police Union, he who signed the secret deal with the Police Union and he who called on the Criminal Justice Commission to inquire into the secret deal with the Police Union, and ask: why is he now asking the public to pay for him to be represented by a barrister at this inquiry? How much does he expect the bill to be?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I rule that that particular question is out of order because the issue is before the inquiry.

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, with respect, I am not dealing with any matter before the inquiry, about which you have previously made rulings; I am simply dealing with the decision by the Attorney-General, announced this morning—or yesterday—that the public of Queensland will be paying the bills for those appearing. The question has nothing to do with the subject of the inquiry. I am simply asking the Police Minister how much he expects to be paid for his legal expenses before the inquiry and asking why he believes that he should be represented at public expense at the inquiry in a disgraceful performance of ripping off the Queensland public.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the honourable Minister for Police.

Mr COOPER: The first part of the question about signing a secret deal I reject outright. I say categorically that it was no secret deal. I find that part of the question to be absolutely offensive and repugnant.

Secondly, as to the matter of the inquiry—it is not a matter for my portfolio; it is a matter for the Attorney-General.

Fuel Tax

Mr SPRINGBORG: I refer the Premier to the Commission of Audit recommendations that the Government should consider a fuel tax, and I ask: is he aware of any support for such a proposal?

Mr BORBIDGE: In reply to the honourable member, I am aware that there has been a deal of public debate in respect of the pros and cons of a fuel tax as proposed by the Commission of Audit. I am aware that the RACQ has, in fact, expressed reservations. Obviously, as we consider the recommendations of the Commission of Audit and as we prepare to deal with the Budget, we will be giving careful consideration to all of these matters. However, my attention has been drawn to a very significant speech that has been made on this issue, which I believe is quite relevant to the debate. I quote—

"For example whether we want to accept this or not, we do have a low-tax base not only in Queensland but generally in Australia. If something like a petrol tax is looked at, for example, not only is it fair and equitable but it means that those people who come to Queensland on holidays would pay a small percentage of a petrol tax towards State coffers that would release some of the money now used for road funding. That money could then be used in areas such as schools, hospitals, public transport, employment generation and generally for the infrastructure and social welfare of this State."

This proponent of a fuel tax went on to say,

"I know that it is an unpopular concept for anyone to be talking about a new tax and I accept that."

He goes on to say—

"However, if we are looking at quality of life for Queenslanders, and we are looking at where we are when it comes to education, particularly, and health . . . we do need to look at a broadening of the tax base, and we need to look at it very seriously. I believe that when the issue of unemployment is considered—which is the other major issue of concern—Queenslanders would be supportive of a one or two cents per litre petrol tax if it contributed to job creation schemes which the Government could pursue."

Those pearls of wisdom were dropped by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Brisbane Central, in this place on 13 July 1993. So we have the leading critic of a fuel

tax in Opposition being the leading proponent of a fuel tax when he was in Government. The Leader of the Opposition, when he was in Government, was calling on his colleagues to introduce a fuel tax in this State. Is that the same man who, not so long ago, was standing beside a petrol pump at Wynnum in the electorate of Lytton saying, "This is dreadful! The coalition Government might be considering a fuel tax." We have a born-again tax reformist. We have someone who, in this place in a major speech in 1993, was saying that there was an obligation on Government to introduce a fuel tax.

The hypocrisy is absolutely breathtaking. The Leader of the Opposition did not make these sorts of comments when he was in Lytton, pumping petrol while standing in front of a banner. He wanted a fuel tax to be imposed on the people of Queensland before his political party presided over a \$662m turnaround in the finances of this State, before we were subjected to a \$190m cutback in funding from the Premiers Conference, before his own colleagues racked up a \$300m black hole in terms of workers' compensation, before he overspent his budget in the Department of Health by \$70m in terms of recurrent spending, and before he promised \$1.2 billion to the Health Capital Works Program, money that was not there. If he wanted a 2c per litre fuel tax before all this, I wonder what he really wants now. I wonder what the Leader of the Opposition would be advocating, if—heaven forbid—he was sitting on this side of the House. The Leader of the Opposition has been caught out by his own words—he forgot his stated position on fuel tax, stated on 13 July 1993 in this place.

I cannot think of a better summing up of the predicament of the Leader of the Opposition than what was reported from his own mouth this morning in the *Courier-Mail*. He was obviously asked why the former Premier, the member for Logan, was not taking much of an interest in politics these days. Opposition Leader Peter Beattie said that people needed to be understanding of Mr Goss' position. He was quoted as saying—

"He would feel awkward because there is a new leadership team and a new premier."

We know why the member for Logan would feel awkward; we know all about it. We know all about the double standards, the duplicity and the hypocrisy of the Leader of the Opposition—a man who stands in front of the TV cameras at Lytton and says, "Isn't this dreadful. This Government might be

considering a fuel tax." Yet this man, who would lead the alternative Government in this State, is on the public record in this place advocating and supporting the fuel tax that he is accusing us of seeking to implement.

Commission of Audit

Mr HAMILL: I refer the Premier to the statement of Mr Jon Stanford, a respected economist from the University of Queensland—which I table—that the accounts shown in the FitzGerald report do not make it possible to determine the change in net worth for the Queensland public sector, because they need to include the full net operating income of business enterprises. I ask: if the operating result is supposed to represent the changes to create the \$51 billion net worth in the 1994-95 balance sheet, why does it not, as Jon Stanford suggests, include the \$350m in retained earnings which contributed to that change? In simple accounting terms, why are these figures in the balance sheet but not in the profit and loss statement? Why do the Premier and the Treasurer continue to paint a bleak picture of Queensland's economic position for potential investors when it is clear to everyone else that Queensland is in a position of surplus and that it has the best Budget position of any State in Australia?

Mr BORBIDGE: I think it is very interesting that we have seen a very deliberate effort by the Labor Party, and those friends it has left, to discredit the FitzGerald Commission of Audit over the last 48 hours after the independent Commission of Audit has highlighted the economic vandalism of the previous Labor Government.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: What we saw yesterday—

Mr Fouras: Take that interjection. It is wrong, Borbidge, and you know it.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Ashgrove, who is a former Speaker, will not refer to the Premier as "Borbidge" across the Chamber. The honourable member will use the correct title.

Mr BORBIDGE: I would like to say how much the reputation and the standing of the Parliament has improved since the member for Ashgrove vacated the position.

Yesterday, we saw a deliberate effort by the Leader of the Opposition to discredit Dr FitzGerald. We had a situation—

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. The Premier is misleading the House. I never

sought to discredit Dr FitzGerald, simply his audit report and its inaccuracies.

Mr BORBIDGE: Apparently someone from the Leader of the Opposition's office spoke to Dr FitzGerald yesterday and so misrepresented his position that Dr FitzGerald and Mr McDonough subsequently had to issue a statement in respect of this particular matter.

What is Dr FitzGerald's true position on public enterprise retained earnings? He says in that statement—

"These are not funds that can sustainably be appropriated by a Government for General Revenue purposes. To do so would starve the enterprises of capital needed for their development and growth and/or investment in them. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, to do that would falsely disguise what is in truth a worsening operating position."

Those are not my words; they are the words of Dr FitzGerald. I go further—for six years the crew opposite bled money out of public enterprises and funds such as the workers' compensation scheme in this State. Many of these funds were left starving as a result of the legacy of honourable members opposite.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition said, "Dr FitzGerald has this morning confirmed to my office that these figures are necessary to make a final estimate on the change in public sector net worth." How would he know? The member for Brisbane Central was not privy to the call. The Leader of the Opposition does not know what was said to his staff member. He clearly does not know or does not understand what Dr FitzGerald said.

I have already tabled Dr FitzGerald's credentials, but for the benefit of honourable members I will emphasise a few salient points. Summing up the financial exploits of the Opposition, Dr FitzGerald wrote—

"The Commission believes its presentation of the State's financial condition gives a true and fair picture on sound accounting and public finance principles and therefore the estimate of a deficit of \$337m for the general Government operating position for 1995-96 stands."

Those are not my words; they are the words of Dr FitzGerald. The statement has been issued.

Of course, we have the choice of whether or not to believe the economic gurus opposite, the people who gave us the workers' compensation debt and the people who gave

us massive overruns in almost every Government department. The Leader of the Opposition, as Minister for Health, had overruns in his department of over 11 per cent when the Government budgeted for revenue increases of 5.8 per cent. The Minister for Environment had overruns of 17 per cent. The guilty parties opposite kept spending more than they knew they were getting on the Budget estimates.

Let us look at the credentials of the man they are denigrating. Let us look at the record of Vince FitzGerald—consultant to the OECD; Assistant Secretary, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; Deputy Secretary, Department of Finance, Australian Government; Secretary, Department of Trade, Australian Government; and Secretary, Department of Employment, Education, and Training. He served as secretary in a number of positions, including the Federal Department of Health, as I said earlier.

Dr FitzGerald's statement yesterday in response to a deliberate attempt by the honourable members opposite to misrepresent his position and his credibility totally clarifies the position. We can always find someone who will have a contrary view. However, I make the point that overwhelmingly the Commission of Audit report has been accepted by the community as an extremely worthwhile document. There is no doubt about that.

I will quote from today's *Australian*. I do not think that any member in this place could accuse the *Australian* newspaper of being a bastion of support for the National/Liberal Government in this State. It states—

"The Fitzgerald Commission of Audit into Queensland's finances is a predictable report card in line with the view of the State's finances long-held in financial markets. It finds that the State is well run and delivers a range of key services—at least to the standard but below the cost of other States.

...

The audit report is the most thorough public examination made of Queensland's finances. It points to a blow-out in spending in the past year when the Goss government put aside strong financial management and replaced it with a bigger spending policy."

Mr Hamill: No deficit.

Mr BORBIDGE: The deficit is there. Members opposite cannot run away from that. The estimated Budget deficit of \$337m was all

the work of members opposite. Who would the people of Queensland prefer to believe? They have a Leader of the Opposition who promised \$1.2 billion in capital funding in Health when he did not have the money. Members opposite have a Leader of the Opposition helped by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who presided over a \$70m overrun in recurrent expenditure. Members opposite had departments that overran their budget allocations by as much as 17 per cent when the forecasts for increase in revenue were 5.8 per cent. The record speaks for itself. The Labor Party knows that it has to set out to discredit FitzGerald and the Commission of Audit. I would expect now that members opposite will set out to ridicule and attack Jim Kennedy and his report in respect of workers' compensation. Day by day in this place, the shabby financial record of the previous Labor Government is being revealed.

Workers' Compensation

Mr CARROLL: I ask the Honourable the Minister for Training and Industrial Relations: is there any truth in claims by the ACTU and the Opposition that the full burden of the Kennedy workers' compensation reform package is being placed on employees and that employers are not doing their bit?

Mr SANTORO: I thank the honourable member for his question because, in common with me, he has obviously heard statements made by the Opposition and the ACTU that the burden of the Kennedy reform package is going to fall exclusively on employees. In particular, I refer to the comments of the ACTU secretary in Queensland, Mr John Thompson, who in many cases is a reasonable person. He states that the burden will be shared equally, but equally only by employees and not by employers.

It is terribly important for honourable members to appreciate what happened to the premiums paid by employers from the time that the Labor Party came to Government in 1989 until it left Government a few months ago. Honourable members would be aware that the average premium rate from July 1990 was \$1.40. Honourable members should keep that figure in mind. That figure was increased by 13.5 per cent from 1 July 1993 to \$1.61. Again, it was increased from 1 July 1994 by 3 per cent to \$1.70. In late 1995, as honourable members would recall, the then Government, now Opposition, literally botched its attempts to fix up the workers' compensation system. In reality—and this needs to be stressed—it

addressed only one side of the equation, the employer side.

As I mentioned yesterday during my ministerial statement and in answers to other questions, in the dying days of refining its so-called reform package, the former Government basically caved in to the whims of the unions and inflicted all of the pain on employers. It again increased premiums by 14.7 per cent and also dropped a 10 per cent levy. The result was an average premium rate from 1 January 1996 equal to \$2.14. I again stress the original figure that I quoted: in July 1990 it was \$1.40. Now it is \$2.14.

It is terribly important to appreciate that Mr Kennedy has not recommended the scrapping of that increase in premiums that applies to employers this year. The employers certainly sought relief from Mr Kennedy in terms of the premium increase, but Mr Kennedy, in order to implement the principle within his report and recommendations, which the Opposition did not want to implement—and that is the principle that the pain must be shared—did not succumb to the pressure of knocking out what were Labor's inequitable increases in premiums. That needs to be made absolutely clear.

For the benefit of the numerically challenged members on the other side of the House, I point out that the increases that I have spoken about represent a 53 per cent average premium rate increase since 1990. If members opposite wish to look at some more substantial and specific figures, I point out that it is estimated that the total cost to employers of the rate increase and the levy imposed by the now Opposition late last year, and effective as from 1 January this year, is \$166m—\$136m net of merit bonuses for a full year.

We reject the suggestions made by members opposite and by the ACTU in Queensland that the pain is not being shared and that the burden is being placed on employees alone. I refer honourable members to Table 8 of the report which estimates the financial effect of changes to the benefits structure at \$78m for a full year. That clearly puts paid to any claim that employers are not contributing their fair share.

I will refer to some of the comments made by employers about what impact this will have on business confidence and particularly on the ability and willingness of employers to employ more people—the sort of people that the Opposition obviously does not care about. Let us look at the response of the MTIA. It states—

"MTIA welcomes the findings of the Kennedy Report released in State Parliament today.

...

By its commitment to the implementation of the Kennedy recommendations, the Government is sending a positive message to Queensland business that jobs growth, competitiveness and business confidence must be promoted."

That is the response from one of the peak employer organisations representing many of the businesses that have the capacity to employ more people. Let us look at the comments of the Queensland Mining Council, another of the great employers of people in the State of Queensland. It states—

"It appears the present Government is prepared to bite the bullet on a number of difficult political decisions in a serious bid to stop the financial haemorrhaging of the fund.

Industry would stand strongly behind the Government if there was opposition to the changes because, clearly, prompt action is essential."

It goes on to say—

"It is important to accept or reject the report as a whole and not selectively support sections of it."

The QCCI represents many small businesses. It is within the small business sector that there is a greater capacity to employ people. That organisation states—

"Queensland business supports and welcomes the Government's commitment to implement the package of reforms put forward by the Kennedy Commission of Inquiry into Workers' Compensation."

That is the sort of response that we have received from business. Business is prepared to employ more people and embrace more confidence, which is something it was not doing under the Government of members opposite.

Queensland Budget

Mr ELDER: I refer the Premier to the information that his Treasurer provided to the 1996 Premiers Conference which was published in the 1996 National Fiscal Outlook Report, and I ask: how can he justify his claims that Queensland has an underlying deficit when the information his Treasurer provided to the Commonwealth Government showed that

for 1995-96 Queensland had an estimated underlying surplus and a projected underlying surplus through to 1998-99, and the comment on page 26 of the report that any revision during the Budget process would be reflecting policy settings of the new Queensland Government? Will the Premier now admit that, if Queensland's Budget is going to have a deficit position, it will be as a direct result of the Borbidge/Sheldon Government's policies and promises?

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: I have got all day.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: It is really nice to have you back there, Jim—right back there! Obviously, honourable members opposite are not aware of the initiatives under way in respect of accrual accounting within this Government. They are not aware of and are not prepared to own up to the facts. I am advised in respect of the National Fiscal Outlook and the Commission of Audit that the NFO is prepared on a cash basis in GFS terms. Hence, it includes superannuation and a wider range of authorities than the COA data. The NFO surplus assumes a very conservative approach to outlays and revenues. In particular, the NFO assumes that most outlays are maintained at, or near to, real per capita terms. Similarly, revenue growth parameters are at the lower end of possible growth ranges. Hence, the estimated NFO surplus is lower than the likely actual result.

I am advised that superannuation estimates in the NFO average about \$950m over the years 1996-97 to 1998-99. Over the same period, the NFO surplus—

Mr Elder: There's still a surplus.

Mr BORBIDGE: The member wanted the answer. Over the same period, the NFO surplus averages around \$450m. Hence, excluding superannuation, the underlying NFO surplus is actually a deficit in GFS terms averaging \$500m over the three out years. To convert this to a COA basis other adjustments are required, including separately identifying the capital and recurrent components of the NFO surplus, which is not done for the NFO exercise, and including depreciation expense and other accrual adjustments. I thank the honourable member for his question.

Elective Surgery Waiting List

Mr LESTER: I direct a question to the Minister for Health. Last week the Minister released the Government's elective surgery

waiting list strategy, Surgery on Time. I ask: will the Minister kindly tell the House how the coalition strategy differs from that of the previous Labor Government—a Government which, incidentally, presided over Australia's worst elective surgery waiting list?

Mr HORAN: I thank the member for Keppel for his question. If anything illustrates the difference between the previous Labor Government and the coalition Government in the way in which we attack the problems of health it is the fairy floss program announced last year by the former Minister for Health—I think it was called "Managing Elective Surgery"—and the plan introduced by the coalition, which is called Surgery on Time. The coalition plan is all about action; it is about doing things; it is about some extra money; it is about some equipment; and it is about staff. It mentions things such as hospitals. It actually mentions them by name. It mentions things such as nurses and doctors.

First of all, let us go back to the document of the previous Labor Government, produced by Mr Beattie when he was Health Minister. It was one of myriad documents that he produced after his 100 days of looking around Queensland and promoting himself. Of course, it had to be the standard 32 pages. They are always 32-page documents! This one was green; some of the others were red, blue and everything else. The document has some really heavy stuff in it. There are some deep and meaningful things in here. We have 14 pages of definitions.

Mr Borbidge: Did it define "ego"?

Mr HORAN: The document did not define "ego", but I will tell the Premier what it did define. There are 14 pages of definitions. There are some good things here that are really helpful if a person is about to go on a waiting list. The document defines "waiting list" as—

"A register which contains essential details about patients who have been assessed as needing elective hospital care."

That is pretty handy. If a person has a sore knee or a sore hip or they are losing their sight, at least they know what a waiting list is. The document also defines an "admitted patient". This is another helpful definition. If a person was waiting two years—or till the year 2000 in north Queensland—for a urology operation, at least they would know that an admitted patient—

Mr T. B. Sullivan: You didn't even know who you had.

Mr HORAN: The member should listen to this. He will learn something. This is from the member's leader. He will be able to talk about this. The document states that—

"An admitted patient is a patient who undergoes . . . admission . . ."

The electorate of the former Health Minister encompasses the Royal Brisbane Hospital. As he drove to work every day past the Royal Brisbane Hospital he probably wondered what that great big complex at Herston was. There is a definition here of "hospital", so it probably helped him. In case he did not read it, I remind him that a hospital is—

". . . a health care facility established . . . as a hospital or a day unit . . . authorised to provide treatment and/or care to patients."

No doubt as Mr Beattie drove past the Royal Brisbane that was very helpful to him.

A Government member interjected.

Mr HORAN: I take that interjection: it took the former Minister 100 days to work out what a hospital was, what a waiting list was and what an admitted person was!

Mrs Edmond interjected.

Mr HORAN: The member for Mount Coot-tha wants a bit more education.

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. I did not include one definition, and that is "stupidity". That is Mr Horan.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr HORAN: I will not take any notice of that comment, Mr Speaker. While the Opposition Leader is talking about stupidity, I will inform the Opposition Health spokesperson of another couple of definitions that would be pretty handy for her in her position as shadow Minister. One is "ready for care", which apparently means—

"Those patients who are prepared to accept an offer of a hospital admission."

Then there is another one, "not ready for care", which means—

"Those patients who are not in a position to accept an offer of a hospital admission."

I could go on and on.

Mrs EDMOND: I rise to a point of order. If those questions were so simple, why did it take the Minister five months to decide what was in the—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. I have a definition for 123A that might apply very soon. I call the Minister.

Mr HORAN: The matter of elective surgery and waiting lists is not a funny business; it is very serious. I would like to come to the serious side now—what we are doing and the action plan. But I could go on and on with those definitions. The former Government even defined the role of a surgeon. I am sure that the surgeons around the State are happy to know, at long last, what their role is. The document even has a little diagram of 10 different things that happen. What it really means is that a person goes into hospital and eventually comes out.

Let us get back to business. This document provides 32 pages of fairy floss and waffle and absolutely nothing else. The most serious feature of this document is that it never once mentions the word "nurse". It mentions the word "client". I hope that I am never a "client"; I would sooner be a patient or someone who is cared for. As I said, the document does not mention the word "nurse" once; nor does it mention a hospital. We have mentioned 10 hospitals in which our Surgery on Time plan will be implemented. We have mentioned a total of 34 hospitals into which the plan will be expanded. We are about doing real and practical things. We have increased the cash available under the Surgery on Time program from \$21.3m to \$25.6m. In addition, we are providing \$1m of surgical equipment—

Mrs Edmond: That's less.

Mr HORAN: No, it is not. The former Government provided \$21.3m; we are providing \$25.6m. In addition, we are providing \$1m in cash—and we announced this yesterday—to these 10 hospitals to provide them with the essential tools of trade such as surgical equipment and all the instruments that they require. I know how grateful they are for that.

On top of that, we have actually set targets. This mob opposite was not game to set a target. All they talked about was how they were going to "manage" things. We have set a target for the end of 1996 so that people can see that we are fair dinkum. At the end of 1996, the elective surgery waiting list for Category 1 patients—who should have their operation within 30 days—will see no more than 5 per cent of patients waiting more than the defined time. We have set another target for the end of 1997 that no more than 5 per cent of Category 2 patients will be outside the defined waiting time. What was the position in November under the crowd opposite when Queensland had the worst waiting lists in Australia? We saw 43 per cent of the patients

classed as Category 1 waiting more than the required time, and 24 per cent of the patients classed as Category 2 waiting more than the required time. That was absolutely disgraceful. It is no wonder that their fairy floss would not work!

Mr Hollis interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Redcliffe!

Mr HORAN: So here we are with cash, information systems, an elective admission system, an operating room management system and two information systems to provide monthly reports on how the scheme is going. In relation to work force issues—we are putting in place 10 nurse educators to train 40 to 50 peri-operative nurses, or theatre nurses; a junior doctor program; a residency program; and an ongoing register of scholarships. There was none of that in the former Health Minister's plan. It was fairy floss—14 pages of definitions!

Mrs EDMOND: I rise to a point of order. I really must protest. The Minister is misleading the House repeatedly. There were set targets. The targets were to have those numbers down by August. All of these figures are in Mr Beattie's report from November last year. The Minister is seriously misleading the House and he must withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr HORAN: There is nothing to withdraw. The member knows full well that there were no targets. She was not game. She had no confidence. She knew she was incompetent. She had made a mess of things. She had the worst waiting lists in Australia. That was her track record.

Nothing demonstrates more sharply the difference between the failed Labor Government and the new coalition Government. The previous, failed Government, which could not produce the goods, has been replaced by a Government that is practical, pragmatic, knows the problems, sets targets and puts in place the action plan to achieve results and bring back confidence to the people of Queensland in their public hospital system.

TAB Board

Mr GIBBS: I refer the Minister for Racing to his public statements that the Queensland TAB board needed to be replaced to bring harmony to the racing industry. I ask: is the Minister aware that TAB board member Mr Bill

Sexton, in his capacity as a representative of the Queensland Turf Club, leaked confidential TAB papers and minutes to a member of the Australian Jockey Club on issues relating to pay television and Sky Channel? Further, was this matter or related matters pertaining to disharmony within the board of the TAB raised with the Minister at any meeting with the chairman of the Queensland TAB, Mr Bob Templeton?

Mr COOPER: I am not aware of any member of the board leaking any papers.

Education Capital Works Funding

Mr HEGARTY: I refer the Minister for Education to claims by members opposite that there is a freeze on capital works projects in Queensland State schools. Could the Minister advise the House if in fact this is the case?

Mr QUINN: I thank the honourable member for his question, because it is important that we realise what is the true state of the Capital Works Program in State schools. With regard to new schools—at the beginning of the 1997 school year we will have eight new schools open and ready for business. That represents an investment of \$40m—the highest expenditure on new schools over the past five years. Those new schools will be at Edens Landing, Emerald South, Mapoon, Morayfield West, the Northern Beaches High School in Townsville, Sippy Downs and, for members opposite—particularly the member for Thuringowa and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—the Willows State School and the Victoria Point State High School. All of those will be ready at the beginning of the next school year. As I said, that represents a significant investment of over \$40m, the highest expenditure on new schools for the past five years.

Also of interest to Opposition members—because of a string of questions that they have asked over the past couple of parliamentary sitting weeks—is the Building Better Schools Program. The Opposition initially put forward that we were cutting \$23m from that program. Nothing could be further from the truth, as those members who received a reply would realise. That \$50m project was included in the 1995-96 Budget. But when one cuts out the community kindergartens and the university funds from that, it comes to about \$44m in State schools. Members should bear in mind that the former Government had eight months from when the Budget came down until it was tipped out of office to spend a vast proportion of that money. While it was in office, in eight months

it spent only \$5m of that \$44m. That is why the \$23m was deferred—because of the former Government's incompetent management. It could not get the program up and running. So over eight months it spent only \$5m. Since the change of Government, we have ramped up the scheme. We are now spending in excess of \$3m every month on the scheme to try to improve conditions in our State school system. This is after a period of eight months when virtually nothing happened in our State school system.

There is no freeze on capital works in our schools in relation to either the construction of new schools or improvements under the Building Better Schools Program. Record funding has been allocated for the construction of new schools. The Building Better Schools Program is at last back on track. If there was a freeze, it occurred under the former Government because of its sloppy management. But I would reckon that, as a result of the coalition coming to Government, they would want the temperature to go even lower, because there has been record expenditure since the change of Government.

Carruthers Inquiry

Mr FOLEY: I ask the Attorney-General: has he made an estimate of the costs of providing legal aid for persons appearing before the Carruthers inquiry, or has he simply signed a blank cheque for his political mates on this matter? Are these costs likely to blow away the extra \$2m the Minister promised to add to the legal aid budget to the detriment of those many Queenslanders seeking access to legal aid, particularly for family law problems and civil cases?

Mr BEANLAND: I notice that Opposition members are trying to make out that there is some relationship between legal aid and the Carruthers inquiry. Legal aid is provided for those people who are facing charges. No-one has been charged with anything; it is simply an inquiry. It was not sought by members on this side of the House, and I do not think it was sought by members on the other side of the House. I understand that the Police Minister sent the relevant documents to the Criminal Justice Commission for its officers to have a look at them. However, there was no statement from him that there should be a public inquiry.

Of course, members would be aware that, in relation to the Davies inquiry, which involved the Labor Party, the CJC did not hold a public inquiry. I am sure that members would be aware of that. Only in relation to this matter

was it decided to hold a public inquiry. In the interests of fairness and justice, and provided that the people appearing before the inquiry are cleared—and that has always been a clear indication—their legal expenses will be paid.

The member asked about the total costs of the inquiry. I am not a genie. I was told initially that the inquiry would go for probably 20 days. I understand that it has already taken 32 or 33 days. I understand that it is now moving off to inquire about the shooters after this, so there will be quite a—

Mr BEATTIE: I rise to a point of order. It seems to me that the Attorney has attacked the impartiality and independence of the CJC. I believe that this Parliament is entitled to a clarification.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr BEANLAND: I am setting out the position. I am not attacking anybody. I am not even attacking the Leader of the Opposition, but I have every justification to attack him on a whole range of things, including incompetence.

As I have indicated, there is no way of knowing how long the Criminal Justice Commission Carruthers inquiry will last. I am not a genie. The facts are that it could last from now until Christmas, or it may be much shorter. The initial indication was that it would take 20 days. A range of people are appearing before the inquiry. It is now moving across to the shooters inquiry. I understand that members of the Labor Party will be called before the inquiry, as will members on this side of the House and members of the public. A range of people are being called. It is an inquiry; I emphasise that. No-one is being charged; it is purely going down the road of an inquiry. The Criminal Justice Commission has a number of ways in which it can go. It does not have to have a public investigation. It did not have a public investigation or public inquiry into the Davies matter; it is holding a public inquiry in relation to this issue. I believe that, in the interests of justice, fairness is prevailing.

District Health System

Mr MITCHELL: I refer the Minister for Health to the fact that, in March this year, the coalition announced the introduction of the community-based community health system to replace Labor's failed and costly regionalisation system. Would the Minister please inform the House of the current progress of the introduction of the district health system?

Mr HORAN: Since the coalition has come to Government, it has moved with major speed to bring about a decent way of providing administration and management of Queensland Health in a practical way that can provide the real quality of health service and care and getting back to basics that Queenslanders demanded when they threw the Labor Government out of office. We assumed Government at the end of February and by 26 April the regional offices were closed and the transfer process to a district health system had commenced. Last week, we announced the appointment of the district managers who will manage the 39 health districts throughout the State. I congratulate those people who have been appointed. In particular, I thank the two interviewing committees that took part in the very extensive process. I understand that over 170 people applied, some of whom applied for two or three positions, so there was enormous interest and desire to be involved in this new community-based, decentralised system that we brought to Queensland Health.

We are now going to see a gradual move towards a proper, decentralised system that will have genuine community input. Now that the district health managers are in place, we move to the next phase, namely, legislation through this House to bring about the changes through the Health Services Amendment Bill. Then we will move to put in place the district health councils. Each district will have its own district health council comprising between eight and 10 people. That will give genuine community input and strategic direction to the way hospitals and community health services are delivered on a district basis. At long last, Queenslanders will have some genuine input into their health system.

At that time, we will be advertising for expressions of interest. We will also be promoting through the media that we are seeking expressions of interest for district health councils. We will be writing to every organisation in the State that is interested in and involved in health that we know of, so that as many people as possible can put forward their names to be considered for selection by independent committees for the district health councils. By the end of the year—at the latest, early next year—we will have in place the district health councils, and once again Queensland will return to a system of genuine community input.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: You have brought things back to the director-general's office.

Mr HORAN: Naturally, the district health managers report to the director-general, so we have an accountable system of line management; we do not want to have the budget overruns and the mess that we inherited from the former Government.

The district health councils will report to the Minister, so that genuine community input can come forward to an elected position. In that way, the community can feel confident that their representations and their views are being expressed through a different channel. The district health councils will have an important role. They will not be just advisory; they will have a real role. The members will have a real reason to get into their cars and drive to the meeting once a month. They will be overseeing compliance with service agreements. They will be overseeing the budget. They will be making decisions on the priorities of minor capital works. They will have representation on selection panels for senior executive appointments in their district. They will be involved with the staff in the development of strategic plans and business plans.

This will be a real advancement for Queensland Health. When we took office, a major part of our policy was to get the services right, to get the hospitals right and to get the management right. We have just about completed the entire process of getting the management right and giving back to Queenslanders some good, basic health care.

Sunlover Holidays

Mrs BIRD: I refer the Minister for Tourism to his claims earlier this week and on 29 May in the *Whitsunday Times* that Sunlover Tours will not be privatised. How does he reconcile his statement with the position of the Treasurer that the privatisation of Sunlover remains on the table?

Mr DAVIDSON: I have been sitting here for some time waiting for a question. The last time the member for Whitsunday spoke to me, she threatened to take out a writ against me. I am still waiting for the writ. It is costing me \$50 a day to keep my barrister on stand-by, so if she is going to issue a writ, I ask that she please hurry up.

In the four or five months that we have been in office, this Government has developed a very proud record on tourism. Everyone would appreciate that we have responded quickly to the needs and requirements of the industry and the neglect of the industry by the previous Labor

Government for five years. As the Minister, I acted swiftly and appointed a new board to the QTTC—a board that met with support from the industry right across the State of Queensland. I have received nothing but praise about the appointment of the new board of the QTTC.

I am so proud that the Chairman of the QTTC announced the appointment of Stephen Gregg as the new CEO of the QTTC. I inform all members of this House that the tourism industry right across this State is pleased for the first time in many years, following bungled appointments by the former Government of CEOs who had no credibility within the tourism industry in Queensland and no support from the tourism industry in Queensland. Industry members have taken great comfort from the fact that this Government has responded to their needs, and the appointment of Stephen Gregg is one that has met with enormous support right across the State. The Government has many other initiatives in mind for the next few months—

Mrs BIRD: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is not answering my question. I asked him a question on Sunlover. I ask him for an answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr DAVIDSON: I am leading to an answer. The honourable member needs to realise that Sunlover is an integral part of the QTTC, and I need to give her some background on the QTTC before I can answer the question. For the first time in five or six years, the tourism industry is delighted with this Government's approach to and concern about all the appointments at the QTTC. The industry knows that the Government is committed to ensuring that Queensland is promoted and marketed to the best of the ability of the QTTC board and within the budgets available. As to Sunlover—the member for Whitsunday and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Elder: What a strong Minister you were—"We won't privatise Sunlover."

Mr DAVIDSON: I have not started on the Deputy Leader yet. Was he not the Minister for DBIRD for three or four years? I will leave that to another day.

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr DAVIDSON: The Premier informs me that the Labor Party proposed the sale of Sunlover. I will have to research that, and I will bring that back another day. However, the

shadow Minister for Tourism has been running around the State, talking to as many people as she possibly can—to those people who will listen to her—attending functions, meetings and conferences and spreading this rumour about Sunlover. She is trying to stir up the industry about Sunlover. She knows as well as I do that she does not have community support. The people who contact my office on a regular basis inform me of the rumours and the uncertainty that she is trying to cause within the industry throughout the State. She needs to have a look at herself.

Mrs Edmond: You are causing it with the audit report.

Mr DAVIDSON: I am totally aware that it is a recommendation. I will have further discussions with the Premier, Treasurer and Cabinet in the coming months. As the Treasurer said yesterday, these matters will be discussed in Cabinet in the coming months, and I will advise honourable members when Cabinet has reached a decision.

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

JUVENILE JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. D. E. BEANLAND
(Indooroopilly—Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.29 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Juvenile Justice Act 1992, the Corrective Services (Administration) Act 1988 and for other purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. D. E. BEANLAND
(Indooroopilly—Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.30 a.m.): I move—

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

It is a pleasure to introduce this Bill amending the Juvenile Justice Act 1992. As promised in the 1995 election campaign, the National/Liberal coalition Government has heard and is acting on the concerns of many,

many Queensland people. Since late 1993, they have felt little but dismay about juvenile crime and the system's response to it. The deficiencies of the Act have not had limited consequences. It has had a real, adverse impact on the community. Business, schools and ordinary citizens have been detrimentally affected. This Bill will begin the process of correction. It is the first step in dealing with juvenile crime.

The reasons for the changes are clear. The National/Liberal coalition Government believes every opportunity must be afforded to juvenile offenders to mend their ways to stop their descent into adult crime. However, juveniles must be confronted with the responsibility of their actions. It is only then that rehabilitation is possible, and the community safeguarded. The Government does not arrogantly assert that it has all the solutions and that they can be made immediately. Juvenile justice will stay under continual scrutiny.

In consulting widely about today's changes, I have received submissions for new directions in juvenile justice. These ideas have arrived from all over Queensland, from places such as Thursday Island, Atherton, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Townsville, Monto, Toowoomba and other places.

There are four areas of emphasis in the immediate legislative changes. Firstly, the Act will contain provisions emphasising the role of parents. Secondly, the principles of juvenile justice will be amended to include a reference to people other than the offender. The community, the victim and the family will be expressly recognised. Thirdly, the Bill will ensure that processes exist to divert a child offender from the criminal justice system. Fourthly, the Act will ensure that courts and police have adequate and appropriate powers.

Until now, juvenile justice has been treated in isolation from the criminal justice system and in isolation from the community. That does not assist in the administration of the criminal law. That does not ensure the protection of the public. There are several changes to the Juvenile Justice Act transferring responsibility for juvenile detention centres to the Queensland Corrective Services Commission and correcting some operational difficulties. I will discuss the changes in the Bill as they appear.

As I have mentioned, the Bill will ensure that the principles of juvenile justice, which underpin the legislation, refer to the community, the victim, the parent and the strengthening of the family. Where a child is

charged by attendance notice or complaint and summons with offences against certain legislation, a police officer will be able to apply to a Childrens Court magistrate for fingerprints and palm prints. Certain conditions must be met. There must be identifying evidence, which has to be verified. At the application, it must be demonstrated that the child is reasonably suspected of being the offender.

In addition, two other safeguards are imposed. An independent person must be present when the prints are taken. There will be an obligation on police to destroy the prints after certain events, for example, if the proceeding ends without a sentence order being made. This specific power, subject to the safeguards outlined, is intended to be used to encourage the use of procedures other than arrest. Sometimes arrest is used just to obtain fingerprints. This often causes juveniles to be in custody either in a watch-house or police station. This new power is designed to avoid children being held in watch-houses unnecessarily. A similar power will exist after a child has been convicted.

A very important policy is enshrined in the Bill. It is a process of community youth conferencing. This is a new process to divert children from the criminal justice system. This will add another layer above cautions and can be used instead of criminal process. Similar systems have been used in New Zealand, in Western Australia and in some other States. This system has, however, been crafted with local conditions in mind. Police and courts will be able to refer matters to a conference. Conscious that some victims may not wish to participate in a conference, their consent will be required. A legislative framework is necessary to support the use of conferencing and is contained in this Bill. The objects of the process, appointments of convenors, conduct of a conference and confidentiality provisions are set up in the Bill. Provision is made in the Bill for the disclosure to a court of certain cautions. The aim of these amendments is to provide the court with an accurate picture of the antecedents of a child or adult.

The line has been drawn at offences punishable by seven years or more. Where a child is involved, they must reoffend after committing and being cautioned for one such offence. An adult must be dealt with for two of those offences and then offend again as an adult. In the case of the adult, the lapsing provisions of the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act will apply. The Bill will ensure that a victim of an offence can be informed by a police officer about the outcome of a caution. Where the court dismisses a

proceeding because the court thinks a caution should have been given, it will be made clear that the court can give the caution itself or direct that it be given by a police officer.

The Bill will provide a police officer with the power to arrest a child for a serious offence, as defined in the Act, without having to consider the use of other measures. The majority of the community would consider that it is not unreasonable that the police be allowed to make an arrest for these offences. In relation to the arrest provisions, the Bill ensures that a court will have a discretion in relation to arrests made where a police officer believes on reasonable grounds that the child is an adult and therefore arrests that child without applying the other provisions of the legislation designed to protect a child. Without this discretion, there is the prospect of cases being thrown out from arrest onwards, even though the police officer has acted on a reasonable but mistaken belief. Instead, the court will have a discretion.

A power to compel parents to attend court will be imposed by the Bill. An offence of failing to attend without reasonable excuse will be created. This is the only penal provision in relation to parents.

The ability to apply for a sentence review will be given to the prosecution and the time to apply will be extended to 28 days. The court will be given a new discretion to treat adults as adults, rather than children, for offences committed as children. The court will also have a new discretion to convert a child punishment upon breach to an adult punishment where the person subject to the order is now an adult.

There are amendments to the sentencing powers. In particular, there are increases to community service hours and to detention orders, for example, for particularly heinous offences. Life sentences will now be available to the courts for crimes such as murder. Previously the maximum penalty was 14 years.

In addition, further combinations of orders will be allowed. Detention and probation can be combined for a single offence, as can probation and community service. The Bill adds to the options which can be used by the courts. Provision for the conversion of a fine into community service hours will be allowed. This is a default enforcement mechanism.

The court will have a discretion about time spent in custody interstate after escape from a Queensland detention centre. There are amendments to the provisions which allow a compensation order to be made against a

parent for an offence committed by their child. At present, those orders can be for an unlimited amount. A cap of 67 penalty units, which is \$5,025, will be put on the maximum amount which can be ordered. A different test of responsibility will be used. The application will be decided on the civil standard of proof. There will be only civil enforcement of the compensation order. That means no parent will go to gaol or be fined or penally punished under the Bill for a compensation order.

The Act has always contained a provision allowing a court to permit the transfer of a person to a prison. The Act is not clear as to the credit to be given to the time spent by the person in detention prior to transferring to prison. It will be made clear that the person is to be released at the time they would be released under the detention order even though they are in prison.

The powers in relation to visitors to detention centres will be clarified. It will be made clear that a visitor can be subject to a pat-down search. A visitor can be directed to leave if they will not be searched or do not comply with a direction based on security considerations.

Today, in introducing a Bill to amend the Juvenile Justice Act, the community can again be confident that the Government is appropriately responding to the crime that is affecting their lives, their businesses and their state of mind, whilst still retaining proper legal rights of juveniles. I also make it clear to the House that this Government will monitor the changes to the Juvenile Justice Act over the next 12 months. I have every intention of re-examining the Act over that period. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Foley, adjourned.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL APPROPRIATION BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Debate resumed from 10 July (see p. 1514).

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore) (11.40 a.m.): It was interesting to hear the Opposition spokeswoman, Mrs Edmond, having another whinge about the consumer health advocacy's fate, especially as this organisation was particularly critical of the ALP's administration of Health. However, let us look at what Mr Elder's consultants said about consumer health advocacy. These consultants were put in by Mr Elder, who is now the

Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The consultants' report stated—

"... continued funding of CHA"—
that is, consumer health advocacy—

"we feel, can only be supported if the organisation can demonstrate in the next year that it is able to re-focus its activities as highlighted in this report and has achieved concrete outcomes that have demonstrably improved the health system."

The report also states—

"Staff do not appear to possess a high level of skill in evaluating or analysing research methodology. The methodology used in the two surveys conducted was poor and it is doubtful whether any piloting of the questionnaire was done or advice sought on sampling methods.

...

Statistics kept at present do not appear to be useful on documenting the organisation's work and are presented in such a way as to make them almost meaningless."

Further in the report it states, "Reimbursement for travel expenses has been problematic at times."

This is the organisation which Mrs Edmond was defending. Another interesting quote from the report states that salaries being paid to the consumer health advocacy were "in all cases higher than those specified in the service agreement with Queensland Health." Now we see the sort of organisation which would receive the Health dollar under Mrs Edmond—paper pushers and lobbyists, not doctors, nurses, dentists or even wardsmen.

I turn to the Sunshine Motorway. I find it astounding that the Opposition could continue to bag the Sunshine Coast. Opposition members seem to have some sort of a death wish in terms of their perceptions of the public. An audit has just shown that, contrary to what the Opposition has been saying, it has not cost \$200m to remove the tolls on the Sunshine Motorway. If Opposition members have not read the reports I can tell them that that debt existed under the previous Government. The cost of removing the tolls in the blow-out which the Labor Party has left us is actually \$4m. As we know, for a number of years a top-up has been going into the Sunshine Motorway from the Transport coffers. The former Government continued to peddle the lie that somehow those tolls were paying their way when they were not.

I do not know what Opposition members have against the Sunshine Coast, but the people of the area are tired of their lies. The suggestion that it will cost \$200m to take the tolls off the motorway is a total furphy. I ask members opposite: who promised to take the tolls off? It was Wayne Goss and Tom Burns. Opposition members continue to champion Tom Burns as a great bloke who looked after the working-class, but Tom Burns came up to the Sunshine Coast and said, "Sorry folks. We are not taking your tolls off, but we will put a toll plaza in that National Party electorate", and he did. What a great, fair, equitable and just bloke he was! That move was backed by the Labor Party. Tom Burns did not act alone; Opposition members were in there backing him. The Sunshine Coast has never forgotten that, and the lies that the Opposition is telling now will not wash with the people of the region. We remember that the Labor Party has left the financial books of Queensland in a disgraceful state. Suddenly, we have something like an 11 per cent overrun in Health and a 17 per cent overrun in the Department of Environment.

The Government has made a justified decision to keep our promise to remove the tolls, and many benefits are flowing to this area which needed an arterial network. The Government stands by its promises and I am pleased that we are not going to let the Sunshine Coast down the way the Labor Party did.

Another lie that the Opposition keeps peddling is that the motorway is in the Treasurer's electorate; it is not. It runs through my electorate, the electorate of the member for Mooloolah, Bruce Laming, and the electorate of the member for Noosa, Bruce Davidson. However, the toll plazas were in my electorate and that of Bruce Laming. They were not in the Treasurer's electorate. When members opposite are on the Sunshine Coast they should start talking to the people.

Hon. K. E. De LACY (Cairns) (11.44 a.m.): This is an interesting position from which to address the Chamber and it is an interesting experience. As honourable members know, I have generally sat back in this Chamber and watched the children play. However, the report by Dr FitzGerald has encouraged me to do wonderful things, such as to stand up in Parliament and discuss it. People should not come to the conclusion that I am not interested in what is happening in Queensland, because I am passionately interested in the future of Queensland. It saddens me to see the way in which the current Government is performing. It is on

schedule to be the worst Government, and certainly the most ill-prepared Government, in the history of Queensland. The May statement could not be delivered and the Government will bring down a Budget at least four months after the date when we would have delivered it had we been still in Government.

A whole range of multibillion dollar projects were launched while we were in Government. I would think \$10 billion to \$15 billion worth of projects were launched by the former Government, including Osborne, Cannington, Ernest Henry, Gordonstone, North Goonyella, Korea Zinc, and the Boyne Island smelter. Of all the projects we initiated, only two were not properly nailed down before we went out of Government, and they are Century Zinc and the Comalco refinery, and hasn't the Government botched those up! It just could not put the final nail in and ensure that those projects proceeded in the interests of the people of Queensland.

Mr Borbidge went up to Century to big-note himself as the big show pony. All he did was to provide a platform for and make a media star out of Mr Yanner. Of course, that has come back to bite him since.

An Opposition member: He's fixing it up.

Mr De LACY: Yes, he is fixing it up now.

An Opposition member: Hit the ground running.

Mr De LACY: Somebody said that this Government hit the ground running; it hit the ground running backwards. The coalition has three theories of government. The first is to change everything the Goss Government did and go back to the past. The second is to review everything. When in Opposition, those opposite had the answers to everything. As soon as they get into Government, they have the answers to nothing, so they call for reviews and get somebody else to make the decisions. The third traditional conservative theory is called the "theory of crisis"—a crisis has to be created all the time. Jeff Kennett got away with that, but he had the advantage that there was something of a crisis in his State. What this Government is trying to prove is the unprovable: that it has inherited a crisis or a financial position which is disastrous. It did not.

That brings me to Dr FitzGerald. This morning, I heard Dr FitzGerald on ABC radio. Mr Borbidge has made reference to this. Dr FitzGerald said that what he has produced is a fair assessment of the financial position of Queensland. I have news for Dr FitzGerald—it is not a fair assessment. It is not remotely a

fair assessment. I believe that the graph on the front of this report, which is being distributed right around Queensland—

Mr Welford: Grossly misleading.

Mr De LACY: It is grossly misleading and it is a scandalous misrepresentation of the financial future of Queensland. Dr FitzGerald has been thrown something by Treasury and he swallowed it hook, line and sinker. I would like to be present the next time Treasury speaks to Standard & Poor's or Moody's, the international credit rating agencies, and tries to explain that sort of nonsense away. Once it is out there, it is very difficult to bring it back. The report runs the risk of doing serious damage to Queensland's financial and economic future. It is absolutely disgraceful for FitzGerald to print this report and for this Government to promulgate it when it has no basis in fact.

Talk about a fair assessment of the financial position of Queensland! This report is trying to create the impression that there is something wrong with our finances when everybody knows that there is not. If one looks at all of the independent assessments, one sees that this Government inherited the strongest set of accounts, not only in Australia but also anywhere in the Western World. Anything that Dr FitzGerald might produce that enables Mr Borbidge to say that there has been disgraceful mismanagement of Queensland finances would not be a fair assessment of what has gone on in this State.

Dr FitzGerald is an honourable person. He was born and educated in Cairns. I wonder what he has brought from Treasury that would lead him to the conclusions that he came to. The two things I was interested in were the so-called underlying deficit for this year of \$337m and the turnaround between 1994-95 and 1995-96 of \$662m. I started to look at the accounts. Let us look at the main account, the operating statement. I agree with Dr FitzGerald that we should not just be looking at the Consolidated Fund; we should look at what he calls the operating result. I accept that.

Importantly, if someone has a client who wants to break a whole range of election promises and introduce Thatcherism into Queensland, that person has to come up with a big deficit. How was a deficit found? I turned to page 103 of the report and looked at all of the cash items. When revenue is added up and the expenses are taken away, we end up with a surplus of \$801m. As a starting point, how could a Government justify saying, "We've got to introduce Thatcherism into Queensland. We've got to sell off all of the public assets to overcome this \$801m

surplus"? Government members must have asked, "What can we do about it? This is not achieving our objectives." Somebody probably suggested, "Let's introduce accrual accounting. It's on the agenda." It is a bit ingenuous of Dr FitzGerald to recommend that accrual accounting come in in 1998-99. That has already been accepted. We were already going to introduce Australian Accounting Standard 29. Every State is going to introduce it. There was no reference to that fact in the report.

The findings of the report are based on accrual accounting. That means that there is a non-cash item called depreciation. Depreciation is not something that State or Federal Governments have included in their accounts before. I think there is a case to move in the direction of including depreciation. The report contains a figure of \$1,138m, or \$1.1 billion. That is a non-cash item that has been brought into the Budget. The Government has changed the whole basis of budgeting in this State so that it could finish up with a \$335m deficit, which serves the purpose of the Government. It can say, "We inherited a disaster. We can't implement our election promises. We have to do A, B, C and D, and we have to sell off all the public assets."

How valid is the use of accrual accounting and what does it mean? I think everybody knows that accrual accounting in the public sector is an imperfect science. It is the subject of a great deal of debate within the accounting fraternity.

Mr McElligott: Think of a number.

Mr De LACY: It does come down to thinking of a number. Firstly, we have to value our assets, for example, roads and sea lanes. How do we put a value on sea lanes, schools and hospitals? There are a number of ways in which that can be done, but they are lost in argument, and I do not think that we will ever get there. Frankly, I now have my doubts about that process, even though we were moving towards preparing accounts on an accrual basis, given that the whole exercise of valuing assets will use up so many resources and lead to so much conflict. What will be the benefit? The objective of managing our assets properly can be achieved in other ways. I have second thoughts about that process.

In this case, accrual accounting has been used deliberately to produce a deficit when on a cash basis there is a very healthy surplus of \$801m on these accounts, based on the way in which Dr FitzGerald has prepared them. Which other State Government in Australia at

the end of the last financial year would have arrived at an \$801m cash surplus?

I will make one other important point about depreciation. Depreciation depends very much on, obviously, the rate of depreciation and largely the value of the asset. The Queensland public asset has been valued at \$66 billion. We have to ask: how long is a piece of string? If that valuation of the Queensland public sector asset changed by 10 per cent, and if we were working on a 5 per cent depreciation rate, these figures would change by \$300m. The report admits that that is a figure that is virtually plucked out of the air.

Mr Welford: Speculation.

Mr De LACY: It is speculation. If instead of \$66 billion they had quoted \$59 billion, there would have still been a surplus, even on accrual terms. Mr Borbidge and other Government members say that they inherited a disgrace. I do not know how the Government would get on if it had inherited a disgrace. It is not making much of a fist of running the State now, given that it inherited the strongest financial position in the Western World. In fact, I might say the whole world, because I doubt that the Eastern World would be any better off.

As to the so-called turnaround, or what Dr FitzGerald referred to as a deterioration in the Budget position, of \$662m—it seems to me that, again, he has bought the Treasury argument. Every year, our forecast surplus is very much below the actual surplus. In last year's Budget papers, there is a good example of that. For the general Government sector—and I will stick to the general Government sector, not the total State Government position, although it does get better based on the total State Government position—we forecast for 1995-96 an underlying surplus of \$455m. Last year, we had an underlying surplus of \$1,182m, or \$1.1 billion. That is a big turnaround, but I make the point that we forecast for 1994-95 an underlying surplus of \$237m. It came in at \$1,182m. What a massive turnaround in the other direction between the forecast and the outcome! It will happen again this year. Mrs Sheldon speaks about a \$185m underlying surplus.

I can tell honourable members now that our forecast of \$455m will be exceeded. I am prepared to bet now that there will be an underlying surplus in the general Government sector for 1995-96 of at least \$1 billion. That means that the whole basis of FitzGerald's assessment of Queensland's financial position is wrong—dead wrong. Even on an accrual

basis, we will finish up the year with a surplus. No other Government anywhere can finish up the year, even on an accrual basis, with a surplus, yet Mr Borbidge is trying to talk down the economy. Members opposite do not even know that they are in Government. They have been in power for five months and they are carrying on as though they are still in Opposition, saying how bad things are in the State of Queensland and, as I said, trying to prove the unprovable.

The reason why our forecasts of underlying surplus always undershoot is that, under the Australian Bureau of Statistics requirements, all of the trust funds are fully expended and there are no carryovers. However, that is never the case; there are always carryovers. Trust funds are not fully expended. There is a whole range of things which I believe ought to be changed. The Government should mark my words: Mrs Sheldon's Budget papers, when she brings them down this year, and the Annual Financial Report—and I am waiting with bated breath for it to come down, if the Treasurer ever brings down a Budget; we do not even have a date yet as far as I know—will show an underlying surplus of \$1 billion. Who will have egg on their faces then? Mr Borbidge and Mrs Sheldon are claiming a \$158m underlying deficit, but there is an underlying surplus of \$1 billion. They are rolling in money. Their own papers will show that. The media has swallowed the \$158m underlying deficit line. If members of the media claim later that they have been hoodwinked for the past five months, I will draw their attention to my speech. Will the media say, "We have been grossly misled by Mrs Sheldon and Mr Borbidge"? I bet they do not do that. I have issued the challenge. I wait with bated breath for that to occur.

What is the real Budget position and why do we prepare it on the basis that we do? It is done that way simply because it is under the auspices of the Australian Bureau of Statistics; it is uniform national presentation of Budgets. All States do it, and the reason we do it is so that we can compare year to year and we can compare State to State and jurisdiction to jurisdiction. That is the reason we do it. It is not something concocted by me or by Treasury; it is uniform national presentation. That is the basis that we use and that is the basis which shows that the Goss Government improved Queensland's underlying financial position by \$6 billion over six years. And here we have this thing on the front cover of the FitzGerald report saying that there is a disaster! We reduced net debt by \$6 billion. Net debt is the

measure of the underlying financial worth of a State. Over six years, we reduced the net debt by \$6 billion—and they talk about disaster! Why do members opposite not read their own Budget papers? Why do they not have a look at Queensland's position instead of getting out there trying to talk the State down all the time?

Mr McElligott: Can any of them read Budget papers?

Mr De LACY: I do not think any members opposite can read Budget papers. They obviously do not read Budget papers. I make the point that I am sure that what we were forecasting—\$445m—will be exceeded.

But they are not the only assessments that can be made of the Queensland position. There are genuinely independent people out there who assess Queensland's financial strength, and I refer to the international credit rating agencies. They are beholden to no-one. They do not have to deliver something to someone who is paying the bill. Standard and Poor's has done another review of Queensland as of 17 June this year. It states—

"A AAA rating once again confirmed for Queensland."

A AAA rating! To listen to Mr Borbidge this morning, one would think that we were double C!

Mr McElligott: Triple D.

Mr De LACY: Triple D. The assessment continues—

"The AAA rating reflects the underlying strength and potential of the State's economy, the State Government's continuing low debt and debt servicing burdens. Queensland's financial position is the strongest of all Australian States. Despite the economic downturn, some uncertainties about the new Government"—

and I suggest that those uncertainties are growing every day—

"and demands to upgrade economic and social infrastructure, the outlook for Queensland remains strong."

The last assessment by Moody's stated—

"Queensland's rating of AAA"—

and they go on to explain that—

"is based on the State's sound financial condition, prudent financial management, diversified economy and low indebtedness."

Mr Borbidge said this morning, "Would you believe Dr FitzGerald or would you believe the

Leader of the Opposition?" I ask now: would people believe Mr Borbidge or would they believe Moody's?

Mr Pearce: The Queensland taxpayers have been conned.

Mr De LACY: They have been conned now for five months. I think, frankly, they are starting to get sick of it. The Moody's assessment continues—

"Its relative debt and debt service ratios are the lowest of the six States and it has in fact been a holder of net financial assets since 1994."

In other words, we do not have net debt in Queensland anymore. The Moody's assessment refers to the position as at September last year. It was the last one undertaken, and another one would be being undertaken now. I would be interested to sit in there with Treasury and see whether they are putting it in the same vein as they did to Dr FitzGerald. The assessment states further—

"The present Labor Government has sought to increase investment on large scale infrastructure projects and current expenditure for social services. As these spending programs are being carried out within the rather severe constraints of the Government's fiscal strategy, Moody's believes that they will not materially compromise Queensland's financial integrity."

And they did not.

Sure, there are some stresses on the Budget for this year. I have news for the Government: there are stresses on the Budget every year. That is what good management is about. I assure the Government that we had stresses every day of the year for the six years that I was Treasurer, but what the Government must do is face up to the financial position and live within its means. If the Goss Government had remained in power, we would have brought down a Budget in May, we would have still had the underlying surplus, we would have forecast a new underlying surplus, we would have balanced the Budget, and all of this nonsense would have been a figment of somebody else's imagination, because it certainly would not have been the case if the Goss Government had remained in power.

What is it all for? I urge everybody to read the recommendations. I suggest that this represents the introduction of Thatcherism into Queensland. People should consider the assets that this report proposes should be sold. According to the report, virtually

everything that opens and shuts or earns a quid has to be sold off to the private sector.

Time expired.

Mr WELFORD (Everton) (12.04 p.m.): I welcome the opportunity to participate in this debate on the Appropriation Bills. The Government has now been in office some five months. In that time its performance has left those on this side of the House and those members of the public who are aware of what happens in this place with absolutely no doubt about where this Government is heading. It is heading nowhere. It does not know what it is doing. It has not known what it was going to do since it came into Government. The coalition did not expect to get into Government, and that is the problem that it has. Having had thrust upon it the mantle of responsibility that Government carries, members opposite are now wandering around like stunned mullets trying to cobble together some plans of action.

As the previous speaker said, why would any Government proclaiming itself ready to govern come into office and then conduct the extraordinary range of reviews that this Government has—reviews of just about everything in sight? As the previous speaker said also, this Government has concocted a series of phantom crises as a justification for setting about a typical conservative Government agenda of gutting the public sector, cutting back on social services and creating fear just about wherever it goes that there is some sort of crisis that needs to be addressed, when in fact there is no crisis at all.

Here we have the extraordinary situation in which we are debating an Appropriation Bill for funding of the Government for the next 12 months virtually in an information vacuum. It is about time this Government got its act together. It delayed the Budget for four months—a Budget that should have been on track. There was going to be a May statement. What happened to that? The Treasurer was trumpeting around: "Here I come. Two weeks' time—May statement. We have got the news for you." The news is lost. The news has gone off into the never-never, to reappear some time in September. Is it any wonder that the Government has absolutely no sense of direction? This Government is like a rudderless ship. It is wandering all over the ocean. The way they are going, if members opposite do not improve their performance, at the next election half of them will be falling overboard. They are going to be awash in a sea of confusion, because that is where they have left government in this State at the moment,

precisely because they simply were not ready for it.

In the process, what they seem to have done is set about an extraordinarily confusing and inconsistent approach to government. On the one hand, there is the occasional announcement of extra money for this or extra money for that. They are frantic in their announcements about extra money for health, because they place so much store in that issue among the many issues about which they made totally unrealistic promises before the election in July last year. Occasionally we have these announcements. We heard one earlier this week in the Parliament from the Minister for Families about an extra \$1m for extra staff in an area of his department. While there are these ad hoc announcements about extra money, the Treasurer is sending letters to the heads of departments telling them that she wants them to freeze all expenditure. That is what happened for a while, and it impacted on people in my electorate and other electorates—

Mr Carroll interjected.

Mr WELFORD: No doubt it impacted on those in the honourable member's electorate as well. The Treasurer told the department heads to freeze expenditure, and then told them that she wants them to achieve a 10 per cent cut in corporate services in every department in the forthcoming financial year. This Government is simply setting up a series of phoney excuses to cut the public sector and deprive the people of the very important social capital that we spent the last six years building on behalf of the Queensland community.

Then we have this Commission of Audit. What an extraordinary state of affairs this Commission of Audit is. I do not need to say any more about the credibility of the audit and, more importantly, the credibility of the conclusions which this Government is trying to draw from the flawed figures in the audit beyond what the previous speaker, the former Treasurer of the State, has said. Suffice to say that it is becoming increasingly clear day by day that the million-dollars-plus figure which the Queensland taxpayers have injected into conducting that extraordinary Commission of Audit is proving increasingly to be a total waste of taxpayers' money. There is nothing in that audit that the State accounts do not already clearly indicate, except the extraordinarily flawed conclusion that the Queensland State Government accounts, after reducing net debt by \$6 billion over six years, are somehow of lower net worth and have a budget trajectory that is now, based on one year's turnaround,

going to be extrapolated over the next 10 years. What an extraordinary amateur-hour exercise that is. What a pathetic effort that is. Not even high school economics students would make those fundamental errors in analysing the accounts of the State.

Leaving aside the distortion and the misleading assertions about the reduction in turnaround—about whether that has left a \$300m deficit or a \$400m surplus—an argument that the previous Treasurer has already dismissed, suffice to say that anyone who suggests that, when the total surplus of the State reduces over one financial year, we should extrapolate from that one year over the next 10 to try to get a clear indication of where the State is heading would be kidding themselves.

The problem with the audit, apart from the fact that it is not complete, is that—leaving aside the incomplete analysis and the fairly straightforward analysis of figures contained within—the Government reaches these extraordinary conclusions without analysis and just from straight-out, plucked-out-of-the-sky assertions that the appropriate response to the Budget position of the State is to sell off everything—privatise the TAB, Suncorp and a range of other public sector agencies.

Given that the State's debt is lower than that of every other State in Australia, it is beyond me how we can maintain the net worth of our State public sector if we sell off all our public assets and pour that money into paying what is a so-called shortfall in recurrent expenditure. It is beyond me how we can maintain the net capital worth of the State by selling off assets that are earning income for the State and pouring the capital receipts from those sales into offsetting an illusory Budget deficit over the next few years. Not even high school or primary school economics students would have anything to do with this Government.

Dr Watson: They didn't teach you anything in law, that's for sure. They didn't teach you in law school.

Mr WELFORD: The "Nutty Professor" comes out from hiding in the cloistered, cobwebbed corridors of Queensland University to try to pretend that he can tell us something about economics. But all he has had to do—much to his chagrin, I am sure—is sit over there and try to justify the unjustifiable. He is trying to support arguments which he knows are insupportable.

The propositions contained in the Commission of Audit report stating that the remedy is to sell off all our State's assets are

just extraordinary. The way the Commission has set about doing it is equally extraordinary. First of all, it would abolish a stream of income. This is the Government that says that the income stream of the State is in jeopardy. So what is the first thing it does? It abolishes a stream of income on a \$200m debt for a tollway in the Treasurer's own area. A pork-barrel if ever there was one! The Government is pouring public funds from the rest of Queensland into the area served by the Treasurer and her National Party cronies. Then it tries to tell us that we have a problem with the debt. Government members have said, "We have not created a \$200m debt because the debt was already there." What a joke! The income projection streams from the tollway were going to wipe out that debt. But now, with no income, the Government has created a \$200m debt that would otherwise have been serviced. So to say that it has not created a debt is just an out-and-out untruth.

Government members interjected.

Mr WELFORD: And why would they not squeal? I hear them moaning and grumbling. All of their electorates in the bush and regional Queensland are sacrificing services, road funding and a range of other facilities to fund a pork-barrel in the Treasurer's own area. Government backbenchers are deeply embarrassed about it, and so they should be.

The next step the Government undertook was extraordinary. As people who want the Government to get out of holding assets and out of the business of owning any enterprise or interfering in the private sector, what did they do then? They engaged in a massive intervention in the share market. These are the free marketeers who want to adopt policies that get Government off the back of the private sector. So they go into the private sector and make a cynical attempt to manipulate the share market in what will prove to be a failed attempt to speculate on the value of the prospective shares that they hope to sell off in the amalgamated entity. They have exposed the State to extraordinary risk. No Government in Australia worth its salt would do that sort of thing in the way that this Government has: go into the market, make a bid, be outbid, and then come back and make a further bid at an unrealistic price. They engaged in a Dutch auction in the share market over a bank that is already private—Metway—and ended up paying an extraordinary price for those shares. If ever the amalgamation of Metway, Suncorp and the QIDC comes off, it is very doubtful that the income stream of that combined entity will in any way justify a valuation of the share capital

of the amalgamated entity that would meet the price that this Government has paid by dabbling in the share market. It is nothing more and nothing less than unmitigated speculation in the share market by a Government that is putting at risk taxpayers' funds.

There is no point in trying to run away from the suggestion that the Government is not putting any services at risk because the money came from a hollow log somewhere. The Government should not try to run that one past us. The simple fact is that, in a share market speculative play, the Government is spending taxpayers' funds which would otherwise be available either to earn income to provide services in their own right or to be directly spent on services and capital infrastructure—the social infrastructure of the State. So in both those respects—in the abolition of the Treasurer's own private tollway or private freeway on the Sunshine Coast, and in the share market speculation in which the Government has engaged, trying to play a cynical game with Suncorp's value and shares—we see an indication of just how rudderless this Government's economic direction is. It is reckless.

I do hope sincerely that this State comes out of those two exercises relatively undamaged in terms of its Budget position. However, if we do so, it will be more out of good luck than good design, because that sort of reckless disregard for the budgetary arrangements of the State—which has been carried out in advance of any information coming out of the Commission of Audit—is quite an extraordinary way for a Government to behave.

I turn now specifically to the Department of Environment, a department for which I am the shadow Minister. Prior to the election last year, the environment was a very important issue debated in the election campaign. Our good friend Mr Slack was then the shadow Minister for Environment. He went around the State ingratiating himself to all sorts of members of the conservation community.

Ms Spence: Quite successfully.

Mr WELFORD: He did a very good job; he was very successful.

Ms Spence: He hoodwinked some people.

Mr WELFORD: He even hoodwinked Mr Hutton, the then coordinator or spokesperson for the Queensland Greens, which subsequently threw its weight behind the National Party Opposition, as it then was, in

the run-up to the election. I bet there were a few things that poor old Drew did not hear Doug say before the last election. A few little things have slipped through since that time that poor old Doug must have just forgotten to mention, because of all the departments facing budget attacks by this Government, the Department of Environment, although a small department, is one of the most critical for the long-term future of this State both in terms of the State's natural and built environmental values. That department is now about to be absolutely gutted. All members of the Government ought to know and realise—and the Minister himself does know—that only a couple of weeks ago senior officers of the Department of Environment called together the staff of the department on each floor of the head office in Ann Street and held meetings about what the Government was expecting the department to do. The news given to the stunned staff members of that department—the department charged with responsibility for protecting our urban environment, air, water and terrestrial resources, the department concerned with protecting our national parks, native plants and animals—was that they would have to suffer budget cuts of \$50m—more than 30 per cent of the budget of the department. That is a reduction from \$175m in the past financial year to an anticipated \$125m in the year ahead.

One simply cannot achieve cuts of that proportion without making massive inroads into the capacity of that department to carry out its basic and most important functions: the protection of our natural heritage in this State. If the Government proceeds with that intention—an intention quite openly advised to all departmental staff—it will show that it has completely ditched any commitments made by the member for Burnett in the run-up to the last election. If it goes ahead with that threat, it will have perpetrated what amounts to an outrageous fraud upon the conservation community of Queensland. As each day passes and each announcement from the Environment Department comes to the surface, we have a cumulative castle of evidence to confirm that those budget cuts are well and truly in the offing. There is no more evidence of that than the recent foray of the Minister for Environment into the extraordinary proposition that the national parks be put up for hock for private enterprise's involvement and control.

I do not think the Minister has a clear idea about how he is going to do that, or, indeed, what he wants to do. That is why he is

searching around desperately for ways in which he can try to engage the private sector in returning to the bad old days of how national parks were treated. The proper, primary role of national parks is to protect the natural resources and heritage of the State and its great environmental values. National parks are not theme parks for tourism developers. I know that the Tourism Minister might like to view national parks simply as an economic milch cow, but that is not what national parks are all about; national parks have a primary role of protecting our environment.

Time expired.

Mr ROWELL (Hinchinbrook) (12.24 p.m.): I was quite interested to hear the contribution of the former Treasurer. He referred to accrual accounting and then proceeded to pull it to pieces to some degree. Approximately two or three years ago, I recall attending a seminar at which he was singing the praises of accrual accounting. Apparently, when it is convenient he will support one aspect, and then not support it.

Ms Spence: I was at that seminar and the Treasurer was not there singing the praises of it.

Mr ROWELL: He was singing the praises of accrual accounting. He was sitting on the left-hand side certainly having his two bobs' worth about accrual accounting.

Ms Spence: He didn't even address it.

Mr ROWELL: He did not address it, but he was singing out supporting it. The honourable member must be blind and cannot hear very well.

I will proceed with the matters that are important as I see them in this State at present. I take great umbrage to what the member for Everton had to say about members in the northern and rural areas not getting a fair shake from this Government. In very many ways, those members have to find the traces of where the members opposite left off, and I can assure the honourable member that a lot of work is to be done. There is no doubt about that. However, many exciting developments are occurring throughout the State. To see that we have to look only to the north-west provinces where mining is proceeding at a great rate of knots. The likes of Century Zinc, Cannington, Ernest Henry, Tick Hill, Osborne and the Duchess phosphate deposits will be major contributors. They are multibillion-dollar projects and they will be creating enormous job potential for those people who live in those areas.

Of major concern is the disruptive element of people who try to stop those projects, as was seen with the Tenneco pipeline and Century Zinc. Of course, we have seen the Port Hinchinbrook development being disrupted by those elements of people who, I believe, do not have any great interest in the project; they are there to disrupt. That element was also at a development at Dungeness, which is just south of Port Hinchinbrook, waving flags and going on like crazy. The ironic part was that that they did not know where the development was and they had to follow the TV cameras to the development in order to protest. Their genuineness is questionable. It was interesting that those people were almost all members of the James Cook University students' group. That university has a good reputation and I am concerned that that element, which demonstrated also at Port Hinchinbrook, was demonstrating at Dungeness and waving the flag and banners and cracking up about that terrible thing called development in the Hinchinbrook electorate.

Mr Tanti: Protests.

Mr ROWELL: Protests—that is all they know: protests. I just wish they would get back to their studies, because it is important to go ahead with those projects and create jobs.

Honourable members have referred to the Commission of Audit, but I will continue with the subject of the Port Hinchinbrook development because Senator Hill has made an announcement. The consent process is well advanced. I think that that is really a win for commonsense. It is important that this development goes ahead. It has been supported very strongly by the Australian Institute for Marine Science. They are being positive about it. Of course, the radicals continue to object and now they are talking about court action. Where are we going when we have strong levels of support by the local people—they have indicated their support at meetings and they have demonstrated that support at the ballot box—yet we still see those disruptive elements coming along, talking about court action and disrupting something as important as job opportunities for the people of Cardwell, many of the people in the Hinchinbrook Shire and certainly throughout the electorate? Of course, GBRMPA still remains sceptical about it. People have raised concerns and they have been answered.

Mr Welford: Neither GBRMPA nor a number of people concerned about the project are opposed to the project. They are only

concerned about the impacts on world heritage values adjacent to it, and that is the issue.

Mr ROWELL: I will take that interjection. I am very mindful of what the member is saying. Once we get the project up and running, people will be going out to the reef and to the rainforest. I have expressed my thoughts on this issue, and I am pleased that the member has brought it up because it is very important. But to not have any development at all is sacrilege. I understand quite clearly that we have to be very careful about that asset—if one wants to term it an asset. It is something that we want to preserve for the next 100 years so that people can go and see it. There is no question about the way in which it has to be managed. But to do nothing is the other side of the argument. It concerns me very much that people are arguing that we should lock up the place and throw away the key. I assure the member that I will be supporting proper principles relating to boat trips and the other activities that will take place in that region.

Mrs Bird: What about the development stage?

Mr ROWELL: What about it, for goodness sake?

Mrs Bird: What about the environmental damage during that?

Mr ROWELL: What is the member on about? I do not think that the member really understands the issue. A number of very respectable groups such as the Australian Institute of Marine Science have looked at the development very closely; GBRMPA has looked at it. Those organisations have addressed issues of concern such as dredging. Benefits will accrue to the people such as the provision of boat ramps by which the coastguard will be able to access the sea at low tide or under the fairly hectic conditions typical of those in which the coastguard is often called out. Many benefits will accrue as a result of the development.

Mrs Bird: What about the environment?

Mr ROWELL: The environment? Is that what the member is on about? We have talked about the environment. I think that we have covered it adequately. For over three years the developer has been in the process of getting the development off the ground. As I have indicated, there is a very strong level of local support for the Cardwell development, and I think the member for Whitsunday is very well aware of that support.

I turn now to the schools in my electorate. That brings me back to the point that I was making to the member for Everton, who referred to a lack of services. Although the member was about to leave the Chamber, I note that he is coming back. The previous Government really neglected the maintenance of the Tully High School. It is absolutely disgraceful. Paint is peeling off the toilet block walls, the external wall paint has been taken back to its undercoat, chipboard tables are falling to pieces, handrails are rusting and panels are smashed. Over the last five years, very little maintenance has been carried out on that school. I have approached Q-Build about this matter and, of course, it has responded in a responsible way. Q-Build is now going to do something about the situation at that school.

Mr Welford: Your Treasurer has cut the money.

Mr ROWELL: The member is saying the Government is cutting the money. He is not consistent in what he says. This Government is getting things done—important repair work—such as painting and carrying out repairs to handrails.

Mr Welford interjected.

Mr ROWELL: I am trying to say to the member that this Government is getting the job done. The member is saying that nothing is happening and I am demonstrating what is happening.

I refer to the East Innisfail Primary School, which is a little beauty. In 1992, Block A was ready to be demolished. The then Minister for Education, Paul Braddy, had a look at it, as did the then Minister for Lands, Mr Eaton, who unfortunately has left this Parliament. I can assure members that Mr Eaton is a very nice chap. I have a great deal of respect for him. What happened to the allocation in the 1992-93 Budget for a new classroom area in Block A? Something happened in the 1992 election that terminated Mr Eaton's membership of this place. Guess what happened? That school slid off the program. Because Block A is in such a bad state, the current Government has to address the matter. We have a demountable building that is irreparable; it is not suitable to be inhabited by children. Now the old Block A at the East Innisfail Primary School is about to be demolished and this Government is going to build a replacement block. That is the sort of thing that this Government is doing in the north. I am sorry that the member for Everton has left the Chamber because I wanted to point out to him in particular that during the

term of the Labor Government there were crazy schemes such as the \$50 school uniform allowance.

A Government member interjected.

Mr ROWELL: As I recall it, that scheme had a little bit to do with the Mundingburra by-election. It was an absolutely impossible scheme to administer. It was a mess; it was a scam; it was shocking. I cannot remember a Government doing anything that caused so much confusion and ill will. I had cheques being returned and cheques being issued to people who did not exist. I think that every member of this House would recall that debacle. That is how the previous Government ran the State. I hear the Treasurer waffling on about his non-acceptance of accrual accounting—

A Government member interjected.

Mr ROWELL: I am sorry, the ex-Treasurer. I stand corrected. I have it in my mind that that chap at the back of the Chamber is still the Treasurer. I look at the window and I see a glow! That is about all that is coming from near that window—just a glow. The ex-Treasurer has gone, and all that is left is a glow. Under the former Government, we saw the debacle of the rapid turnaround in the State's finances. We certainly heard what the ex-Treasurer's thoughts were about the current finances of the State.

I turn now to the sugar industry, which is a very big and very important industry. At this stage, we are expecting a record crop throughout the sugar-growing areas. The Tully mill is going to produce something like 2.1 million tonnes. For the first time in the history of the Tully mill, it will produce more than 2 million tonnes. Mourilyan mill will produce about 960,000 tonnes. Ingham's mills will produce up to about 5.14 million tonnes.

An honourable member: What did c.c.s. do?

Mr ROWELL: C.c.s. is going quite well—mine is even better than mill average. I just thought that I would inform members that the sugar industry is going quite well. I see the trucks rolling into the terminals, which will help our disastrous balance of payments created by the Labor Government. The sugar industry is very important to Queensland. As I said yesterday during a debate, it is a major contributor to our economy. It generates something like \$2 billion in revenue.

The sugar industry is under review. The importance of single-desk selling has certainly been brought to the fore. Acquisition is another important component of the industry,

as is the assignment system. Because of the tight competitive nature of the industry, we believe that it will not experience problems as a result of the National Competition Policy. As I said yesterday, it will be the first cab off the rank in relation to that policy.

A considerable amount of land is available south of Tully for expansion of the sugar industry. The South Johnstone mill and the Mourilyan mill are expanding their operations into that area. They are transporting sugarcane to their mills via the road system, which is causing concern for the Cardwell Shire Council. It is a relatively small local authority but it administers a lot of land on which rates are not able to be charged, such as areas contained within national parks and forests. Of course, that local authority does not have the ability to absorb the necessary road construction work that B doubles will need in the future so that they can take the cane to the mills. It is a 120 kilometre trip. Those two mills are land locked and they are desperate to increase their capacity to stay competitive not only on world markets but also in the industry generally. Of course, they are doing everything that they possibly can to ensure that they have a sufficient area of land to enable them to boost their capacity.

North Queensland is a wet area and, of course, the cane industry needs high flotation equipment. Harvesters have full tracks and the haul-out equipment has high flotation tyres. Last September, an Ingham manufacturing organisation run by Tony and Lyn Carta and their son Paul received a certificate of commendation from BHP—a very prestigious award—for the revolutionary design of their equipment. Their product is selling quite well throughout northern areas where that type of equipment is required.

The papaya fruit fly came into the Cairns region because of a lack of surveillance, but, of course, certain measures were taken as soon as we were aware of the infestation. Quarantine zones were set 80 kilometres distant from the most recent sighting. The horticultural industry, which is worth approximately \$270m, was severely knocked around, yet, because it implemented the demands and protocols required by southern States, it continued to supply markets. Currently, host status testing is being carried out on watermelons and rambutans; agreement has yet to be reached with southern States in relation to those fruits. Mangoes and pawpaws undergo a heat treatment process to clear them of the pest, and that is going quite well. Presently, a VHT unit is working in Cairns on trials. Certification

assurances are now coming into place as a result of amendments to the Plant Protection Act introduced in May. Growers have to certify fruit as being free from the pest and, of course, that process will continue.

Eradication prospects are particularly good. Last week, only 12 flies were found in some 900 traps. That process uses canite and methyl eugenol in a blocking process, and the chemical Malathion kills the fly. Other options are available, such as male sterilisation, which is an extremely good option and, no doubt, will be considered once fly numbers have built up and it is appropriate to release the sterile male flies. Road inspection stations are being considered for when areas are cleared as a result of the blocking programs.

The Caribbean pine plantation in my electorate has approximately 11,000 hectares of trees, and its optimum area is 13,000 hectares. The area was first planted in 1967, and different stages of development have been going on since that time. Currently, tenders are being called for the first stage of expansion. An Ingham group is involved there, and Boral is certainly on the short list of tenderers. The cost of the initial operation will be approximately \$9m to \$10m. The computerised plant will be equipped with dryers and a moulding plant. Because the wood of the Caribbean pine twists, it has to be dried when sawn or the timber will distort. The future increases in production for that operation are quite interesting. By the year 2000 it will be producing 50,000 cubic metres, and by the year 2010 it will be producing approximately 160,000 cubic metres. It is estimated that there is a requirement for some 350,000 cubic metres in the Cairns/Townsville area alone. Approximately 100 jobs will be created as a result of this milling project. It will be a major benefit to our balance of payments, with exports of timber products of the order of \$2 billion.

There has been strong competition for land usage. The sugar industry is always looking for additional areas to plant and the pine forests are down on their optimum levels, which creates competition for land. If Governments really want to get away from planting these types of forests themselves, they will have to consider tax breaks of some nature to attract private enterprise, which will be faced with long-term funding issues involved in forestry plantations.

Time expired.

Ms SPENCE (Mount Gravatt) (12.46 p.m.): It is ironic that here we stand today debating an Appropriation Bill to give

this Government more money—this Government that has betrayed most Queenslanders. From the moment it took over the Government of this State, by courtesy of the member for Gladstone, this Government has been characterised by ineptitude, broken promises, cronyism and populist, shallow policies. However, today I would like to focus on the disappointment and the sense of betrayal being experienced particularly by service and community groups in this State because of this Government's absolute failure to guarantee funding to community groups, serving women and families in particular, and its failure to offer direction and security to women's organisations in this State.

The other night we heard from one of the Government's cronies, Terry Lewis, in an unbelievable, self-pitying analysis of his present predicament. Mr Lewis summed up the assessment of his present predicament by saying he was a scapegoat. Mr Lewis was no scapegoat; he undoubtedly deserves the punishment meted out to him by our legal system. Instead, let me focus on the present day scapegoats of this inept Government—the people who will be made to suffer because of the Treasurer's hasty and ill-considered decision to remove the toll from the Sunshine Motorway and because of this Treasurer's decision to use \$70m of taxpayers' money to play the stock market.

The first group I want to mention today is Children by Choice, an agency which has already been advised that it will receive \$165,000 in funding for the 1996-97 financial year. This represents \$100,000 less than the funding it received last year. After serious consideration, the Minister for Health decided this organisation could do the same job on nearly half the money. It could serve 4,000 Queensland women and their families through its counselling service and an additional 4,000 who use its educational services. The services of Children by Choice are driven by a commitment to ensuring that women faced with an unintended pregnancy and their families have the best possible information concerning all options available to them. The role of Children by Choice is to provide information, counselling and support so women can make the best decision for themselves and their families.

Children by Choice has earned a positive reputation and high acceptance within the medical and public health community. The service is recognised as professional and its qualified staff are committed to providing a high standard of service. Approximately 50 per cent of Children by Choice's clients are

referred by their general practitioners or other health professionals. Clearly, it cannot continue to provide the same level of professional service on half the funding. This Government, despite its rhetoric about how important families are to our community, shows a very schizophrenic attitude to the wellbeing of our families, particularly when it comes to their economic wellbeing.

The current Minister for Families, Mr Lingard, often places great emphasis on the role of families in our society, but let us look at the real picture of the actions of this Government over the past few months. The Government has imposed on families a \$66 hike in their third-party car insurance. It has taken away the \$50 school uniform allowance, which probably amounts to about \$100 for each Queensland family. It has halved paid maternity leave. By now Queenslanders are getting the message—when this Government finds itself in financial trouble, families will get slugged first and hardest. Families in Queensland will pay for Treasurer Sheldon's unfunded decision to add \$200m to the State debt. Families will pay for this Government's gambling on the share market, and families will pay for this Government's lack of commitment to funding community organisations which care for families.

Mr Woolmer: They won't let you on the share market. That would be fun.

Ms SPENCE: I am glad the member for Springwood finds this amusing, but I can assure him that the community organisations I have been talking about, and will be talking about—some of which are located in his electorate—are very unimpressed by the Government.

I am also advised that the funding for the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Child Witness Program has been slashed by \$100,000. This program was designed to address the needs of children who are witnesses to domestic violence and to give them therapy and counselling, hopefully limiting some of the long-term harm that has been done to them. It was allocated \$245,000 in last year's State Budget, but apparently the money has not been spent because it has taken a year to plan and put the program out to tender. Even before the money has been spent, the Government has advised that that program also will be short changed \$100,000. Instead, the program will receive funding of around \$150,000, rather than the \$245,000 initially planned for it.

This is another example of the untruths and broken promises of the present

Government. I will quote an article from the *Courier-Mail* of 27 May this year in which the current Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care, Mr Lingard, promised to increase—to boost—the fight for domestic violence by \$1m. The article stated—

"Launching Domestic Violence Prevention Week, Families, Youth and Community Care Minister Kev Lingard said domestic violence legislation needed to be expanded to protect all women, the elderly, disabled persons and children, as well as providing assistance for perpetrators."

He said he would lift the State's domestic violence prevention budget by \$1m to \$11.5m. The Government is taking \$100,000 away from a very new and important initiative that helps children who are affected by domestic violence, and domestic violence groups in the community are left wondering where the extra funding is going—if it is going anywhere at all. Like me, they are waiting for the State Budget to find out who will get the extra funding that the present Minister is promising. Is this going to be another broken promise from this Government, or is this money going to fund other organisations?

There is a great fear amongst the domestic violence community workers in our State that this Minister is going to put domestic violence money into counselling men who are perpetrators of domestic violence and take it away from groups which at present help women and children who are the victims of that violence. Certainly, the Minister's statements publicly and privately to groups around this State have them very concerned and worried about where that money will go in the future. I can promise the Minister that there will be a very large backlash if money is taken away from groups serving women and children and the victims of domestic violence in order to fund Mr Lingard's preference for helping men who are the perpetrators.

Mr Tanti: So the men can't be represented?

Ms SPENCE: I am not saying that we do not need to give those men some help. No-one is going to say that. That is stupid. I am saying, "Do not take the money away from the victims." That is all they are concerned about.

Mr Tanti: Are you rumour mongering, or do you know for sure?

Ms SPENCE: If the member for Mundingburra had listened he would know that I have explained that the first program to

look after the children of domestic violence has already been told that its funding will be cut by \$100,000. This is a pilot program. If that is an indication of the direction in which this Minister is going to take domestic violence funding when the State Budget comes down, I foresee an enormous backlash from those groups in our State.

There have been no funding assurances for many women's groups who are concerned about how they will fare in this year's State Budget. There is a feeling amongst those groups that they will be forced to go back to this Government year after year with the begging bowl to ask for their funding. They have already been getting the message from this Government that they need to be quiet and well behaved or they will get nothing. I quote from the Deputy Premier's landmark Women's Statement on 23 May, in which she said, "We must be cautious of those who would pressure and bluff Government unreasonably to conform with their point of view, or give them more than their fair share of attention." It is interesting that this spokesperson for women is sending out the message to women's groups that they are not to pressure Government; that they, amongst all groups, have to conform with the Government's point of view; and that they should not ask for more than their fair share of attention, or they may suffer under this Government.

Mr Woolmer: You don't believe that. You're talking about Labor MLAs, actually.

Ms SPENCE: I have quoted from the statement. Interestingly, although we do not ask any other groups in this State to conform, to be quiet and behave, the women's groups are being told that, if they act quietly and do not pressure Governments, they may be rewarded by getting the funding that they got previously. No wonder the Treasurer and Deputy Premier is concerned about the pressure that women's groups can put on this Government. On 9 May at City Hall over 200 women gathered fairly spontaneously—the meeting was organised with only a week's notice—to talk about where they are going in Queensland under this Government. Over 27 motions were passed at that meeting. I will table the motions so that honourable members can read them at their leisure. I wish to quote some of the motions passed on that evening because they express the concerns of many of the women's groups in this State. Motion No. 6 states—

"That the Minister for Health urgently clarify that sexual assault services funding

under the Prevention of Violence Against Women Program will not be defunded after June 1996."

Motion No. 7 states—

"That any changes in wages policy under industrial relations legislation introduced by the Queensland Government include measures to redress the present inequalities of women in the work force, be open, transparent and publicly accountable."

Motion No. 8 states—

"We demand that community-based, women-focused, rape and incest, crisis and long-term services across Queensland continue to be funded from the centralised Prevention of Violence Against Women Program, and that enhancement of existing services occur immediately."

The motions go on and on expressing the concerns of women's groups—women's health rights groups, women's sexual assault workers, women's groups in law, and women in trade unions—regarding their concerns for funding under this Government. The longer this Government delays in bringing down its Budget, the more these groups will have cause for concern.

It is not just funds for the women's services sector that will be cut under this Government. This Government's recent axing of the funding to the Consumer Health Advocacy Association is another example of its unwillingness to fund groups that give Queenslanders a say in service provision. Consumer health advocacy was an embarrassment to this Government, and I am not surprised that it is one of the first groups to get the axe. The AMA did not like it; it did not like the whole concept of clients in the health system having a say about the quality of the service they received.

For information of members of the House, I will tell members about a survey that the Consumer Health Advocacy Service undertook. It revealed that more than half the callers noted that the health system was appalling to below average. Callers perceived that there was an abuse of power in the mental health area and that elderly people were treated as stupid. Callers perceived a lack of hygiene in hospitals and in doctors' surgeries. Is it any wonder that the AMA did not like this type of consumer health association, an association that provided the public with a forum to voice its complaints about doctors in the health system? From my

experience as a member of Parliament, I have found that people have more complaints about the health system, particularly the treatment that they receive in the medical system, than about any other Government service. Obviously, people using the health system are often at their weakest and most vulnerable and cannot voice their complaints or concerns regarding their treatment. Organisations such as the Consumer Health Advocacy Service are vital in providing people with independent outside advocacy to help them obtain justice and answers from the health system.

I wish to quote from a letter I received from the Queensland Bioethics Centre, which is also concerned about the axing of the advocacy centre. It states—

"We are concerned about the prospect of the closure of Queensland Health Advocacy Inc. The organisation has an important role in promoting the interests of those least able to voice their concerns. It seems that at a time of major restructuring of health services the interests of the most vulnerable members of society warrant even greater protection."

Although the AMA might be against organisations such as this one, it is not representative of the whole medical community.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Ms SPENCE: Before lunch I detailed this Government's shameful withdrawal of funding from the Consumer Health Advocacy Association. If that is how this Government plans to treat consumers, then I am fearful that consumer associations in this State have worse in store in terms of funding. One of the first actions of this minority Government was to withdraw funding from and to sack the Consumer Advocate, the independent person whose job was to liaise between the bureaucracy—that is, the Office of Consumer Affairs—and Queensland consumer associations.

Queenslanders are getting used to this Government's broken promises. Yesterday, we saw the Government go back on its pre-election promise with respect to workers' compensation. It now intends to deny workers access to common law for their workers' compensation claims. But I fear that more is to come. It has come to my attention—and Government backbenchers might want to listen to this one because I suspect that they do not know that this is in store for them—that on 21 July the Government will announce

changes to the Seniors Card. I understand that the Government is going to introduce a seniors business card for applicants over 65 years of age using the incomes and assets tests associated with the Seniors Card. This seniors business card will entitle successful applicants to the same concessions provided by business to other Seniors Card holders but they will not be entitled to any concessions on Government goods and services.

This will represent another failure by the Government to honour one of its election promises. I would like to quote the Premier, Mr Borbidge, on a promise he made to Queensland seniors in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* in April 1995. That promise was that—

"More than 20,000 Gold Coast elderly people would be eligible for Senior Card concessions under a coalition government.

At Proserpine yesterday, Shadow Cabinet approved a policy to expand the Senior Card to cover all elderly Queenslanders over the age of 65 if the coalition wins government at the next state election.

Opposition Leader Rob Borbidge said the policy would allow an extra 41,000 Queenslanders to have health, ambulance, TAFE and electricity concessions."

The new seniors business card, which will be available to those applicants over 65 years of age, clearly is a breach of another election promise. Those applicants will be eligible for the private-enterprise concessions that are currently being offered to Seniors Card holders but they will not be eligible for the Government concessions to which current Seniors Card holders are entitled.

Mr Robertson: How heartless.

Ms SPENCE: It is heartless. Government backbenchers ought to be fearful of this little broken promise because the seniors out there have been waiting for the Government's promise with respect to seniors cards. They assumed, quite rightly, that they would be entitled to the Government-provided benefits and not just the private industry-provided benefits. This proposal means that they will not be entitled to concessions on their car registration, their electricity, their ambulance fees or anything else. The Government has sold those people short in promising them something that it clearly does not intend to deliver. On 21 July, when the Minister makes this amazing statement, all those Queenslanders will know that they have

been let down and that this Government has failed to live up to yet another election promise.

Mr Hollis: And the pensioners had their third-party insurance increased under this Government.

Ms SPENCE: Yes. Combined with the increase in car registration it is just another blow to the seniors of this State. It is the constituency of Government members that is being hurt by this broken promise—all those self-funded retirees. It is the constituents of Government members who will be knocking on their doors and saying, "Why haven't you lived up to this election promise?"

I know that this is a major issue for many people in my electorate, and I am sure that it is a major issue for people in the electorates of Government members. Senior citizens have been asking for this for a number of years. The coalition promised it, but when the time comes it will not be delivering.

Time expired.

Mr NUTTALL (Sandgate) (2.35 p.m.): During my contribution to this debate I will touch on a couple of issues relating to my electorate and then I will cover some other general matters relating to the economy of the State of Queensland.

Firstly, I want to raise an issue which I have raised in the Chamber previously but about which I recently received further information. I refer to the proposal for a transport-oriented development in one of the suburbs of my electorate named Fitzgibbon. Along with that development there was to be constructed a new train station between the stations of Bald Hills and Carseldine. My electorate contains the third-largest TAFE college in the State. A new railway station would have enhanced the opportunity for young people to attend that TAFE college. Given the large number of housing developments within close proximity to the proposed railway station, the use of public transport also would have been encouraged.

When we were in Government broad agreement had been reached between the Transport Department and the Department of Housing for the construction of this facility. In April this year I asked a question on notice of the Minister for Public Works and Housing as to whether the development was to proceed. I have received a response to that question. Disappointingly, the Minister gave no clear statement on whether the development will proceed. If the Minister is not prepared to make a clear statement that the development

will proceed—if he is saying that it is under review, that the matter will be looked at, etc.—I am led to conclude that at this point in time that train station and that development will not proceed.

The people of Bracken Ridge and surrounding districts have a right to that railway station. The Labor Government gave those people that commitment. The new Government should proceed to build that railway station. In failing to build this facility, the Government fails in its responsibility to provide services for the people of Bracken Ridge. I intend to make sure that the people of Bracken Ridge and the surrounding suburbs of Fitzgibbon and Taigum are made aware of the fact that the National/Liberal Government will not proceed with this railway station. As a consequence, those people will be disadvantaged for some considerable time.

I am sure that we have not heard the last of this matter. Already, I have received a number of phone calls from constituents seeking my views as to when the railway station may be built. I have said to those people that when we return to Government that commitment holds and the railway station will be built and the development will proceed. The proposal was for a mixed development of both private and public housing. The demand for public housing is at a premium. The waiting lists in my electorate range from three years to five years, and I know that they are substantial in a number of other electorates. The fact that this Government has said that everything is on hold does not give any comfort to the people in my electorate who want to be able to utilise this railway station.

Mr Hamill: The Government is on hold, too.

Mr NUTTALL: That is true. I thank the shadow Treasurer for reminding me of that fact.

On the subject of good government and public housing, I want to refer to a matter which relates not just to my electorate but to all electorates. I am pleased that the Minister for Public Works and Housing is in the Chamber. I will quote from a press release on public housing and private rental issued by the Minister on 17 June. This morning, he also made a ministerial statement on this matter.

When one reads the Minister's press release from June this year, to say the least the comments attributed to the Minister are confusing in that he says, "There will be changes, but we are not sure how they are going to work or how it is going to affect you." Because of that, the Government has caused

stress and anxiety to residents and tenants in public housing. Those people have been ringing me and asking, "What is going on? What is going to happen to my rent? Is it or is it not going to go up?" Being a good tenant, one of my constituents decided to send around a circular to other tenants calling a meeting to have a discussion as to what they should do. The circular was not around two days before someone from the Minister's office came knocking on the door—did not ring up, just came knocking on the door, barging in like Big Brother, asking, "What do you think you are doing? What audacity you have to call a public meeting and to put around a circular to say that we are going to increase the rents."

Ms Spence interjected.

Mr NUTTALL: That is exactly right. I thank the honourable member for Mount Gravatt for that comment. That is exactly what has happened. This is Big Brother stuff. It is not someone from the department, it is someone from the Minister's office. Surely a phone call would have sufficed. But no; we are going to knock on people's doors and try to heavy them by saying, "You shouldn't be holding public meetings. You shouldn't be talking about this issue, because I am going to look after you." But the Government will not say how it is going to look after them. It is not good enough. But it gets worse. The new Federal member for Lilley, Elizabeth Grace, returned the phone call—

Mr Stoneman: Better than the old one.

Mr NUTTALL: She has a long way to go. I will give the honourable member the drum. She is a oncer; I promise the member that. The new Federal member for Lilley returned that constituent's phone call after three weeks and proceeded to abuse the lady over the phone by saying what audacity she had to say that John Howard would do something like that to them. So we have the Liberals in Queensland and the Federal Liberals attacking residents in public housing because they have the audacity to be concerned that their rents are going to go up.

Mr Pearce: The old right to rule.

Mr NUTTALL: The right to rule—"How dare you challenge us."

Mr Hollis: It is just like the bad old days when they used to have spies watching the single mothers.

Mr NUTTALL: One wonders if they are not sitting in their cars keeping an eye on everybody.

Mr Robertson: They just don't understand.

Mr NUTTALL: They do not understand. That is the problem. It is a sad reflection on them.

In my electorate, as in every other electorate, there are people in public housing. But this Government does not have the right to create anxiety, fear and stress in those people. If it is a caring Government, which it says it is, it has a responsibility to tell them how this program is going to work. That press release was circulated on 17 June, nearly a month ago. Those people have not heard another word about what is going to happen with their rent.

Mr Hamill: They take a while. We are still waiting for a May Budget statement.

Mr NUTTALL: That is right. I am glad that I am not holding my breath waiting for it.

Ms Spence: They would get no comfort from the Minister's statement this morning, would they?

Mr NUTTALL: There was an opportunity for the Minister to set out clearly what was going to happen for residents in public housing in terms of this new program. But he failed to do that. By failing to do that, the Minister gives no comfort to those people. They continue to be worried and concerned. We are still waiting for the Minister to say how this is going to work. All he can say is that it is a boon for the private sector. I am telling the Minister: it ain't good enough. Government backbenchers in marginal seats ought to be talking to the Minister as well. He needs to be delivering for them, because if he does not then they will not be here next time around.

I want to move on to talk about some other funding cuts that have occurred, particularly in relation to sport. Most members have amateur swimming clubs, Little Athletics clubs and those types of organisations in their electorates which receive regular grants, upon application, from Governments to help them with their clubs—whether it be coaching or whatever. At a recent swimming club break-up day and trophy presentation, I was approached by the secretary of the swimming club. He said, "When you were in Government we received \$3,000 per annum from the Community Sports Development Program to assist us with coaching. We have just been advised that that is to be reduced to \$2,311 by the new Government." So every small swimming club is going to get \$700 less. If they were getting a grant of \$3,000, they will now get \$2,311. I acknowledge that \$700 is not a lot of money in the scheme of things; but \$700 is a lot of money for a little swimming club or a Little Athletics club to have to

fundraise. It is a lot of dough. When they see this Government deciding to merge financial institutions—and I will come to that later—and the types of money it is spending, and when it talks in telephone numbers of millions and billions of dollars, that is no comfort for those clubs. It actually makes it worse when they see all that sort of stuff and the Government says to them, "We are going to take \$700 off you."

The Sports Minister has indicated that the reason for the reduction in funding is that more clubs are applying. If more clubs are applying, the Government should find a little more money. The need is greater. Members heard the former Treasurer this morning. I am pleased to see him back. He is out of hibernation, and he is going to cut Government members apart.

Dr Watson interjected.

Mr NUTTALL: The honourable member for Moggill says, "Not on today's performance." He would run rings around the Attorney-General any day. Don't you worry about that!

When Government members were in Opposition they had all the answers. But the first thing they do when they are in Government is cut \$700 from little swimming clubs and Little Athletics clubs. They are a great mob. They really care about them! Why do they not find a bit more money to help those sporting clubs and give them a hand? It ain't good enough. And the mob up the back in their marginal seats can kiss them goodbye—especially the member for Greenslopes. He is a oncer. He will not be back. What has he done for the swimming clubs in his electorate? Has he made any representations to the Sports Minister. Not on your nelly! He would not even know that there have been funding cuts, because he does not get around his electorate.

Mr Hamill: The only thing he has raised here is the Union Jack.

Mr NUTTALL: I was going to say something, but I will not. I will hold my tongue. I do not want to get thrown out. I want to move on to a number of issues.

I turn to an issue raised by Mr Beanland—again on 17 June—in his press release about graffiti. I have spoken on this issue on a number of occasions. When the Labor Party was in Government, it had a policy and a plan to attack graffiti. All the Honourable the Attorney-General has said is that the Criminal Code's advisory working group must proscribe graffiti and vandalism as crimes in the revamped Criminal Code. How on earth

does that solve the problem? The answer is tougher penalty options. We have to catch them first. We have to nip the bud in the source.

That press release in the *Courier-Mail* was linked with another article regarding the Mayor of Pine Rivers, Yvonne Chapman. That article states—

"Pine Rivers Mayor Yvonne Chapman said last night Brisbane Lord Mayor Jim Soorley deserved a 'good spanking'"—

I do not know whether she has a fetish, but the article continues—

"for saying unemployed youths could not be blamed for scrawling graffiti over buildings when society denied them jobs."

If she wants to put Jim over her knee and give him a good spanking, that is her business; however, it will not solve the problem of kids' spraying graffiti. I will cover the issues affecting young people in another debate at another time. Perhaps the debate on the Bill that was introduced by the Attorney-General will be an ideal opportunity to address that issue.

Being a former bank officer, I wish to speak briefly about the merged bank. We all know that that bank is a risk. Even the Government will have to acknowledge that, at the end of the day, what they are doing is risky.

Dr Watson interjected.

Mr NUTTALL: If the honourable member wants to start me on that, if he wants to debate that issue, I will take him on any day. At that time he can bring his cronies back in here—half of whom are in gaol. He knows what happened as well as I do, so he should not start me on that one. He ought to back right off that, because he cannot win on that issue.

The bank merger is the worst thing that has happened to this State. The Government has gone about it in the wrong way. We have been ridiculed again as a State. When one picks up the *Financial Review* and sees caricatures of the Premier and Treasurer dressed as B1 and B2—

Ms Spence: Bananas in Pyjamas.

Mr NUTTALL: Bananas in Pyjamas—that is an indictment on this State. In five months, the Government members sitting opposite have taken us back to where we were before 1989. It has not taken them long to make a joke of this State. They ought to be ashamed of themselves for making a joke of this State. If they were proud of Queensland,

that would not let that happen. If they think they have a big bank, they are kidding themselves. If they read all the economic advice and commentary on that issue, they will find that the experts are saying that that new institution could be swallowed up tomorrow. The big banks such as the National Australia Bank, the Commonwealth, ANZ and Westpac will sit back and wait. When the new bank gets into trouble and the shares fall through the floor, those big banks will come in over the top and take it. Where will the head office be then? The head office is the reason the Government wants that bank. This is all so the Premier and the Deputy Premier could have a glowing picture in the paper. That is the dearest photo they will ever see.

Mr Hamill: B1 and B2.

Mr NUTTALL: B1 and B2. The new bank is being called the "Banana Bank". How on earth can confidence be inspired in any investor in a bank that is called the "Banana Bank" from the word go.

When that lot opposite were in Opposition, they used to rise and get stuck into the Labor Party in Victoria and the Labor Party in South Australia for letting the State banks go broke. What do they do—exactly the same thing! All the advisers say, "Don't touch it." So what do that lot do? They say, "Oh no, we know best."

Mr Hamill: It's all with other people's money.

Mr NUTTALL: That is the point. They cannot give \$700 to a little swimming club, but they are spending megabucks, spending up big and buying shares. The realities of life are that, when Australia had seven or eight banks, the bigger banks just took them over. Now the big four banks in Australia will swallow up this institution as sure as night follows day. It will not have a headquarters in Queensland, and we will be back to square one, with the potential for losing a lot of money. There is no logic in what the Government is trying to do.

A couple of days ago, I heard the speech of the member for Indooroopilly—

Dr Watson: Moggill.

Mr NUTTALL: Moggill, I am sorry. I say to that member that one does not have to be blind Freddy to see that his heart was not in it. The honourable member knows probably better than anyone that that bank should not exist.

Time expired.

Mr GRICE (Broadwater) (2.55 p.m.): I rise to speak to this Bill with particular

reference to the dredging of the Biggera Creek at Labrador in my electorate of Broadwater.

A Government member interjected.

Mr GRICE: No, I do not have a swimming pool in my electorate, unlike the member for Sandgate who dips buds in the sauce all the time.

Since I was elected as the member for Broadwater, I have been inundated with complaints from local residents about the lack of funds to carry out much-needed dredging work at the Biggera Creek. To date, this has resulted in the establishment of a local residents action committee to address the problem with members intent on ensuring this project is carried out. In essence, the build-up of silt through natural processes has severely restricted the use of Biggera Creek for navigational purposes at low tides and for flood mitigation. The last time Biggera Creek was dredged was in 1985 and that was done solely at the cost of the Gold Coast Council. In the past six years, under the Goss Labor Government, only two contracts have been let for dredging the Broadwater. One was after the then Treasurer De Lacy signed up for the America's Cup trials. That was a good move on his behalf. However, he discovered that the Broadwater was not deep enough, and he had to dredge it to allow the America's Cup boats to come up to the Southport Yacht Club. The only other time that any dredging was carried out in the Broadwater was when the member for Woodridge, Bill D'Arcy, was out on his boat with Bill Ludwig and a couple of other Labor luminaries, and they went aground on a sandbar in the Coomera River. Very soon after that, a contract was let. It took a long time for them to get off that sandbar—about two and a half slabs of beer and several bottles of Verve Cliquot, I think, for the "member for Raby Bay".

Mr Hollis: Do you watch that show with Mrs Bucket?

Mr GRICE: The honourable member keeps talking about buckets. I brought a couple along. I could run through a few. We have Wallah; Huey; Lindberg; Gibbs, which I have not done yet; and Goss, which I have not done yet. I do not have any for the honourable member for Redcliffe, but Catherine Job sends her regards to him.

Some six weeks ago, I was invited to attend a public community meeting to discuss the issue and I observed the considerable frustration of local residents who are affected by the problem. In fact, the Biggera Creek problem affects several hundred residents who live along the creek. In April of this year, the

Gold Coast City Council was petitioned by local residents who had had enough and demanded that the dredging work be given urgent priority. In turn, the Gold Coast City Council offered to pay half the total cost being \$220,000 to dredge the creek. That was a very generous offer from the local council and one for which the residents are very thankful. It gives me great pleasure to inform the residents affected by Biggera Creek that I have received an assurance from the Minister for Transport, the Honourable Vaughan Johnson, that funding for the dredging work has been granted and will be brought forward. I have since spoken to the Gold Coast Council and its offer is still on the table. I thank them, through Councillor Joe Sciacca, for that. In this case, the Minister for Transport has shown himself to be a very practical man. I am sure that he will be happy to see his photograph on every fridge door in Vaggelas Crescent.

This problem has been around for the past six years. It has taken the coalition Government to recognise the need of the local residents in my electorate because Labor refused to provide the funding. It is becoming more and more obvious to members of the local community that if they want something done, they should talk to this coalition Government. Labor was thrown out of office because it became arrogant and aloof. That is accepted totally. We all understand that. It saw itself as the party born to rule in Queensland and that is why it now sits on the Opposition benches today—even though it seems as though there are a lot more swimming pools in Labor electorates than there are in Government electorates. Labor failed to deliver on necessary services to the community while managing to squander millions and millions of taxpayers' dollars. Labor's contempt of the people is evident because it remains defiant by refusing to apologise to the people of Queensland for its past.

The residents of my electorate are fully aware that it is a coalition Government that is delivering essential services; it is a coalition Government that is listening to the people; and it is a coalition Government that is achieving positive requirements. That is why the latest opinion polls in the *Australian* shows this Government 12 percentage points ahead of Labor, up from an eight-point lead in the January to March quarter. Twelve points ahead! No wonder the journalist Scott Emerson detailed what a blow that has been to the ALP.

It is apparent that the grassroots issues that affect the local residents also impact on

voters at general elections. That fact has been lost on the ALP, which claims to represent the common people. As a National Party member, my direct representations to the Minister for Transport have proved successful. I understand that work will commence on Biggera Creek shortly. I extend my thanks to the Minister and the Department of Transport for recognising that need.

Mr ROBERTSON (Sunnybank) (3.01 p.m.): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill. This Bill is being debated at a time when, as a result of actions taken by conservative Governments at both Federal and State levels, the very nature of the provision of services by Government to the community is under grave threat. Over the past two days during question time and in other sessions, members have concentrated on the Commission of Audit Report. One disturbing feature of those debates has been the contributions by both the Premier and the Deputy Premier who have tried to link the Opposition's criticism of the report with some implied attack on Mr FitzGerald. I find that both disturbing and insulting. Surely it is the role of this place to scrutinise such reports as that handed down by the Commission of Audit without being accused of some type of personal attack. Unless we do so we all become superfluous to the decision-making process in this State, and Government is conducted solely by commissions of inquiry. So the Premier and the Deputy Premier do themselves no favours and do this Parliament no favours by their attacks upon Opposition members, all of whom have grave concerns about the impact of this report.

The report of the Queensland Commission of Audit tabled in the House this week represents more than just a review of the State's finances. It is an ideologically based treatise that gives scant regard to our obligations to provide services to the whole community and to ensure that those who are economically powerless are not left behind but are provided with every assistance to be full and productive participants in the community. That is the defining difference between Labor and the conservative parties both Federally and in this State: Labor cares about the economically powerless, and it believes that Government is the tool by which the assets, finances and economic growth of the State are shared by all Queenslanders.

The performance this week of the Premier and Deputy Premier, in their blind defence of that report, demonstrates how wide is the gulf between Labor and the Liberal/National coalition Government. Clouded in the abuse

and bile spat forth by the Deputy Premier, she would have us believe that the sole point made by the Queensland Commission of Audit was that, on an accrual basis, there will be a deficit of \$337m in the Queensland Government's finances and that by 2005-2006 that deficit will have reached \$2.7 billion.

However, anyone who has read the report knows that that is only part of the story. It is only part of how the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided by a caring and responsible Government should be assessed. There has been no admission by the Treasurer that she was prepared to sell out this State by accepting the heartless cuts in Federal Government grants which the Commission of Audit noted as follows—

"The reductions in Commonwealth funding negotiated at the June 1996 Premiers Conference have been included. Of the projected revenue gap of \$2.2 billion in 2005-2006, 60 per cent is attributable to revenue from the Commonwealth growing at less than gross State revenue."

At no stage in this ongoing debate has the Treasurer ever admitted or even referred to the impact of the Federal Government's funding cuts which will have such a devastating impact on Queensland's long-term budgetary position.

Nevertheless, let us look closer at that alleged deficit. The table used to justify that alleged deficit is the Operating Statement—General Government for 1994-95 and 1995-96 Estimated, which is preliminary and unaudited. It is a statement that provides little information to explain how the figures were arrived at. For example, I cite the line item "Post-Budget adjustment (unable to be attributed)" of some \$239m. I note that although information is provided for each revenue item, no supporting information is provided on how the expenses were arrived at. Post-budget adjustments are a feature of proper financial management by any Government. However, on this occasion we are not told whether the adjustment includes the costings for the coalition's own election promises.

Even if that is not the case, let us consider whether this alleged deficit is as a result of the alleged irresponsible actions of the previous Government. The Commission of Audit blames the alleged deficit on significant expenditure approved for most policy areas, including Education, which grew by 8.9 per cent over the last financial year. Is that evidence of a profligate Government throwing

money around irresponsibly? The Commission of Audit provides an interesting insight into the level of demand for education services in this State. The largest increase in Education outlays was capital expenditure, which increased by \$47m or 32.3 per cent between 1994-95 and 1995-96. The Commission of Audit observed as follows—

"An audit of capital needs completed in 1994 identified a requirement of \$863 million for asset renewal. Consideration of this situation resulted in a special initiative called Building Better Schools."

Mr Hamill: A very good initiative.

Mr ROBERTSON: Indeed it was, as the Commission of Audit notes. It states further—

"This provided a total of \$262 million over five years to cover building new schools, the upgrade of the standard of classroom accommodation, the acceleration of maintenance activities and related tasks. The program commenced in 1995-96."

There is no suggestion in the report that the Better Schools Program was an irresponsible use of taxpayers' money or that it was not warranted. As a result of an answer given today by the Minister for Education, no doubt members will be confused by some of the findings of the Commission of Audit. According to the Minister, the previous Government spent only \$4m in capital works in Education in the first eight months of the 1995-96 financial year. So where is this blow-out in expenditure in Education? Not even the Minister of Education actually believes it.

The report highlights an increase of 11.2 per cent in approved expenditure in Health between 1994-95 and 1995-96. Unfortunately, the Commission of Audit does not adopt the same approach as with Education in analysing where the increase in funding would have been spent. However, the report notes that it was the Labor Government that committed \$1.7 billion over 10 years from 1993-94 to replace and upgrade Health and capital infrastructure, including an additional \$75m over 1995-96 and 1996-97 to upgrade specialist equipment and accelerate the rebuilding of metropolitan hospitals. At no time does the Commission of Audit suggest that this expenditure was anything but necessary to meet the Health infrastructure needs of Queenslanders.

What about Police? We had an increase in the budget of 7.5 per cent. Was that an outrageous and irresponsible increase? The Commission of Audit observes the following—

"Queensland faces growing demands in all areas of policing, notably (but not only) in areas of fast population growth. To meet this demand, the Queensland Police Service projects a need to increase staff levels by 26% over the next ten years and spend 25% per annum more on infrastructure."

Again the report does not include a breakdown of where the increase in funding will be spent. However, I suspect the increase was to meet the very demands that the Commission of Audit recognised as appropriate; that is, more police and more new police stations.

Those are just three areas in which the Commission of Audit highlighted that increases in expenditure resulted in the alleged deficit. However, the report highlights one example where that increase in expenditure is being wasted on infrastructure or services that are not needed, and I turn the attention of members to that section of the report which refers to the duplication of services between the Department of the Premier, the Treasury and the new Department of Economic Development and Trade, which in fact was an initiative of this Government.

It is interesting to note that the Commission of Audit is supportive of the approach taken by the previous Government in launching programs such as the Better Schools Program, the Rebuilding our Hospitals Program and the adoption of the Queensland Police Service's resource requirements for the twenty-first century report, not to mention the reforms commenced by the previous Government to the provision of public transport.

However, despite this endorsement by the commission and the admission that the future decline in the State's Budget position will result principally from the reduction in Commonwealth grants, this Government's reaction is to adopt the same Thatcherite slash-and-burn policies as its Federal counterparts, with not one ounce of consideration given to the impact on ordinary Queenslanders. What I do not understand is how Government backbenchers can sit there and cop it.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr ROBERTSON: Perhaps they just do not understand. I would have thought that, if they had any spine, they would be up in arms at the approach taken by their leaders, which will result in a vicious and savage reduction in services in their electorates. What about all

those glorious promises they made before the last election? They have gone, as has the level of support they received from their electorates based on their promises of a brand new day. Instead, all they have is a services blackout. Among the promises made by the coalition was that, in the coalition Government's first term in office, Sunnybank would have its own police station. However, less than four months into the Government's first term in office, we find the Police Minister back-peddalling on this promise. In an answer to a question on notice he said that a police station will not be built in the Sunnybank electorate before the 1998-99 financial year. That is yet another promise which has flown the coop.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mr ROBERTSON: Yes, that is true, and with the Minister who was just in the Chamber.

Mr Hamill: Public works.

Mr ROBERTSON: Public works. Perhaps the Minister is just not interested in Sunnybank at all.

An issue that will be of significant concern to the Queensland business community is the recommendation that departments should be freed up in terms of their purchasing policies. The report states—

"Allowing departments and agencies to choose how much and from whom they purchase will facilitate the realisation of the full benefits of outsourcing, and indeed is an essential aspect of implementing the leading edge public sector management framework outlined earlier."

If this Government accepts this recommendation, there will be a significant loss to the Queensland business community of millions of dollars and, as a result, jobs. If this Government tears up the State Purchasing Policy to achieve the "leading edge public sector management framework", then departments and agencies will be required to source the most cost-effective suppliers of goods and services which will lead to a substantial loss of business to suppliers in other Australian States and even overseas. What a boost for Queensland business that will be! No doubt some Queensland businesses will benefit; however, in regional areas of Queensland, where cost advantage is difficult to achieve, the impact of this approach will be devastating.

Earlier I raised the question of how members of the Government back bench must feel as they assess the impact of the

Commission of Audit report on their own electorates. I still cannot understand how National Party members in particular can support this report. It is no surprise to me that their Gold Coast Premier has sold them out by allowing his Liberal Treasurer to seize the economic agenda as we plummet towards a free market economy with a minimal role for the Government to play. However, to see the compliant National Party back bench, those so-called champions of the bush, just sit there and not raise one concern about the impact of this report on regional Queensland demonstrates just how much the National Party has really deserted the bush in this State.

Even the Commission of Audit recognises the potential of the recommendations to impact adversely on regional areas in Queensland. The report states—

"In some communities there exists great reliance on public sector employment. In these cases the possibility of employment losses due to contracting out has enormous implications, especially in small communities."

This is, of course, something that all members in this House already know. However, the concern expressed by the Commission of Audit is not supported by any other recommendations in the report, most of which will decimate job opportunities in regional Queensland.

Members opposite might interject and say that, as a city boy, I would not have a clue about the needs of regional Queensland. However, one thing I do know about is the distribution of fire services throughout the State. What does the Commission of Audit recommend for Queensland's fire services? The report states—

"Firefighting resources are currently distributed unevenly around the State, partly for historical reasons and partly because political decisions have apparently had limited regard to standardised planning processes which would locate resources according to fire risk-weighted need."

The report also states—

"Importantly, the staffing policies currently used by the Fire Service are a mixture of systems inherited from the previous Fire Boards system. The Service informs the Commission that, as a result, there are many cases in which staffing arrangements are inappropriate in terms

of staff allocation, and cost inefficient in terms of the mix of full and part-time workers."

How can the Government fix the problem? Perhaps the member for Burdekin, Mr Stoneman, might want to object to the inevitable reduction in the number of full-time staff at Ayr and Home Hill. Perhaps the member for Warwick, Mr Springborg, might want to object to reducing the number of full-time staff in Warwick and Stanthorpe. What about the potential for reductions in permanent staff in Gordonvale, Tully, Bowen, Charters Towers, Ingham, Innisfail, Proserpine, Gympie, Nambour and Charleville? It is these regional centres that the Commission of Audit was referring to. What will Government members tell their electorates when their own Government transfers these jobs to other parts of Queensland, particularly Brisbane or the Gold Coast? The Fire Service is just one of many services in regard to which the Commission of Audit recommends taking jobs away from regional areas.

What about education? The Commission of Audit found as follows—

"The provision of school education across the State will be enhanced by processes for rationalisation of where schools are provided . . ."

The report goes on—

"New approaches to school management which can rationalise the numbers of schools through options from closures to clustering of schools and joint use of some facilities will be needed for the future to meet growing demands and changes in the spatial pattern of demand."

For the benefit of members opposite, I will provide a simple translation of this recommendation. It means quite simply that schools will close in their electorates, particularly in rural electorates.

When will members of the National Party back bench stand up and defend their electorates? Are they just going to sit there and allow their Sunshine Coast toll-free Liberal Treasurer to destroy jobs in their towns? I believe that if the members opposite were not bound by party discipline and the adoption of the Commission of Audit report was put to a conscience vote, it would go down in a screaming heap. Unfortunately, Queensland is unlikely to see members from the Government side of the House stand up and be counted.

This is a cognitive debate. Along with the Appropriation Bill, we are also debating the

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 1996. If the direction of the Commission of Audit report is adopted by this Government, this could well be the last time this House will need to debate an Appropriation Bill for the Parliament. Why? Simply because this parliamentary precinct represents a significant Government asset and—dare I say—an underutilised, loss-making asset.

If the Government was consistent and brave enough to apply the principles of the Commission of Audit—the ones which the member for Moggill has spent years waiting for—to this Parliament, then a "For Sale" sign should be placed outside the gates today. According to the principles of the Commission of Audit, there is no justification for the Government to own such a significant, loss-making asset which is used between only 30 and 60 days a year. Surely this represents an inefficient use of such a valuable asset, which could be turned into a profitable enterprise by the private sector. Why will the Government not consider selling this precinct and leasing it back from private enterprise for the 60 days per year that this Parliament sits?

We are talking about a major loss-making public asset. Would there not be an opportunity for private enterprise to use the precinct for retail purposes on the other 300 days each year? Why could private enterprise not rent out the accommodation in the annexe and turn it into a boutique hotel with river views? After all, the bedrooms are used only sparingly. The Strangers Dining Room would make an excellent venue for a restaurant. What about selling off the gymnasium and instituting a user-pays system for those members who chose to use it? This Chamber itself could become a profit centre for conferences and executive meetings. After all, we use it for between only 30 and 60 days per year. What about the Speaker's Green? What a wonderful beer garden it could be converted into.

Clearly this is a ridiculous scenario, but is it any more ridiculous than adopting the strategy of asset sales and privatisation recommended in the Commission of Audit report—selling off schools, publicly owned land, the TAB, port authorities and state forests? Of course, the self-interest of the members of Parliament who comprise the Government would not allow the sale of Parliament House. However, they are prepared to sell off other public assets, despite the fact that the people of Queensland would care more about the future of their local school than this expensive, loss-making public asset.

I call upon you, Mr Deputy Speaker, to join the members on this side of the House in rejecting the Thatcherite nonsense contained in the report which will eventually bring the future of this great place into question. For the sake of the future of this great public asset, join us in our fight to return sanity and compassion to Government in Queensland.

Mr HOLLIS (Redcliffe) (3.20 p.m.): It is a pleasure to speak to the Appropriation Bills this afternoon. I will speak only briefly because over yesterday and today the Opposition has discredited the FitzGerald audit report. It has been proven by the Opposition that there is no foundation for the alleged deficit. It has also been proven by the media, to some extent, that the document is a fraud. The document, the Bible for economic growth espoused by the Liberal/National Parties, should be relegated to the circular filing cabinet that sits under our desks. The front page of the document displays the operating budget outlook on a lovely graph, which I think has been described as being similar to sharks' teeth. Even as far back as 6 July it was reported that this graph assumes that there will be no economic growth in Queensland. On that basis alone we see the rot contained in that document and how poor it is.

Yesterday the Treasurer asked us whether we challenged the independence of the audit team. I do not think anybody is challenging the independence of the audit team, but perhaps we should ask a few questions. When the Treasurer decided to have this audit of the State's assets, what did she do? She gave Dr FitzGerald his terms of reference. In other words, she gave him his riding instructions: "Look at what you can slash and burn, look at what assets you can sell off, and see what new taxes you can recommend." The hallmark of this Government is its preference for keeping decision making at arm's length. The Government prefers somebody else to make recommendations so that it can say, "We agree with the independent audit team. Its report is our bible for what we should be doing."

One of the difficulties that we have, not only in this State but in all States, is that Governments rely on outside bodies and consultants to make the decisions for them. That is really what it is all about. Before the change of Government we had an Under Treasurer, Gerard Bradley, who was renowned throughout Australia as being the best Treasurer—

Mr Hamill: Treasury head.

Mr HOLLIS: Yes, Treasury head. That fellow is considered legendary. He knew exactly what he was doing. He was credited with being able to write up the State Budget each year from the top of his head. Would we not have thought that a new Government might have asked Gerard Bradley, "What is the state of the finances?" Perhaps the Treasurer did ask Gerard Bradley that question, and he gave her a story not to her liking; he probably told her the truth, that the finances of this State were in good condition and that they have been that way for the past six and a half years. He probably even told her about the billions of dollars in debt left to the Goss Government that it wrote off over six and a half years. We restored this State to a net debt position. However, when people tell the truth to members opposite, off they go. That is one of the big worries.

Mr Hamill: South Australia snapped him up.

Mr HOLLIS: Yes, and there is a Liberal Government in South Australia. Does that not show how incompetent this Government is?

The Treasurer, the member for Caloundra, seemed confident that she was right about her decision to get rid of Gerard Bradley, the man who was renowned as being a very good Under Treasurer, and to put Doug McTaggart in his place. If she were so sure that Doug McTaggart, the man she is paying \$150,000-plus per year, could handle the finances of this State, why did she not ask him for his assessment of the State's finances? Why did she have to go outside the public service and bring in consultants? Dr FitzGerald and his commission are consultants.

Mr Dollin: It cost a million dollars.

Mr HOLLIS: It cost \$1m to buy what she claims is expertise to tell her what is happening in the State of Queensland. Why did she employ a new Under Treasurer at a cost of \$150,000 per year if she then had to find somebody else to tell her the story? She wanted a story that suited her. That is why she gave Dr FitzGerald his riding instructions: "Let's have a look at the assets we can sell. Let's have a look at the new taxes we can raise. Let's see what we can do to inflict on the poor people of this State enough damage so that our rich mates can now profit."

This Government's hallmarks are review boards and consultants. This morning we heard about the Kennedy report. How much did that cost? We have the Scurr report into subcontractors. How much is that costing us? We have the Knox report into retail trading. He is another old Liberal who has come back into

the fold. How much did that cost? We have the Fire Service report. How much did that cost? We have the rail safety report. How much did that cost? It goes on and on. All this Government does is call in other people to give it the answers that it wants to hear—all at a cost to the taxpayers of Queensland. That is what National/Liberal Governments have always done.

I return to the audit report. We hear all about new taxes. Because of the audit report, this Government is now going to break its promises. There is nothing new with the National and Liberal Parties. They break their promises all the time because that is their style of operation. We now have a proposal for a fuel tax which is going to be confined to south-east Queensland. Motorists in Brisbane, through the payment of gateway tolls, are paying for the removal of the toll on the north coast. Everybody who travels across the Gateway Bridge and on the Logan Motorway is now paying for the removal of the toll on the Sunshine Motorway.

Now the Government is saying, "We will have fuel taxes, but we will have them only in the south east." Is that not lovely! That is so that the National Party members can go back to their electorates and say, "Yes, there is a fuel tax, but we are making those city boys pay for it." That is what it is about. What about the sin taxes—tobacco and alcohol? Next, the Government will be reducing the payouts on poker machines to gain more revenue. Again, the very people that the Government will be hitting are the working class of this State who will suffer under this Government. It is quite true that there is a proposal for a fuel tax. This morning the Premier would not rule it out. He stood in the Chamber this morning and said, "I will not rule out a fuel tax." He said he would give it careful consideration.

I wish to address the matter of housing. My colleague the member for Sandgate spoke about housing this morning. I was pleased to hear him raise that matter because I was just as concerned about an article I read in a newspaper on 17 June as he was. Fortunately, the Minister is in the House now.

Mr Connor: Will you take any interjections this time?

Mr HOLLIS: I will take interjections. In that report he stated that he welcomes the proposal of increasing rents for public housing to those in the commercial market. In that article he states that he welcomes the proposals and that they will provide a welcome boost to the private rental market. In other words, the policy is one of looking after the

developers and the landlords. That is a typical conservative strategy. They take from the poor and give to the rich. They are the Robin Hoods of yesteryear.

On 3 April I spoke in the Address In Reply debate. I said that for many years it has been the policy of the Liberal Party to do away with public housing. This agreement is the first step in realising that policy, a policy designed to hurt the needy, the pensioners and the battlers. What is Mr Connor going to say to the war pensioners? He told them recently that he would exclude disability pensions from war veterans' rent assessment for public housing? Is he going to blame his Federal and Liberal State counterparts for this iniquitous imposition on those who can least afford it? Is he now going to say to those war veterans, "Sorry, mate. I wanted to help you, but my Liberal mates elsewhere said I must look after the developers and the investors"? When Mr Connor made this promise to war veterans in March this year he said it would take about two months to lock in. What we have today is a promise which should have been effected in June and which one month later, in the month of July, is now being reneged on. So much for the empty promises of this minority, policy-free Government!

What is Mr Connor going to say to those worried battlers and pensioners living in public housing who fear that their standard of living will be considerably reduced if rents rise from a quarter of their income to market rates? Will Mr Connor guarantee that there will be food on the table and petrol in the car? Will he guarantee that they will have enough disposable income to pay electricity and phone bills? Will he also guarantee that the proposed rent subsidies will not increase the net rent payable by public housing tenants? Of course he will not! He will do what New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States have done to housing tenants.

I noticed that in the Minister's statement this morning he said that he was concerned about public housing tenants being forced out of their accommodation and into the backblocks through increased rents. That is exactly what has happened in New Zealand. It is exactly what has happened in England. It is exactly what has happened in the United States. Those Governments have said, "Banish them to the backblocks and sell off public housing!" The only thing that gives these people a decent standard of living is the very fact that they live in public housing and therefore have more disposable income. For many years I have had the difficulty of convincing small businesses—and I made this

point also in my Address in Reply speech—that public housing not only gives those people a decent standard of living but also their disposable income is spent in the areas in which they live.

In his statement, the Minister referred to public housing in rural areas and how he is going to look after the people who want to live in rural communities. Conservative Governments were in power in this State for 32 years, but they did not build one public housing unit in country areas. It took the Goss Government to do that. It got out there and provided public housing in rural communities so that people could remain in those regions.

The proposed housing agreement is a sure way to reduce public housing. I spoke of the New Zealand situation in my Address in Reply speech. This proposal is identical to that which the New Zealand Government introduced in 1993. The market rents are too high for public housing tenants, even with the rental subsidies available. So people are suffering because they cannot afford the rents being charged for public housing. What is happening to public housing in New Zealand? The better-located public housing is being sold to the very investors and developers who support the Liberal Party. It is being sold because the tenants cannot pay the escalating rents. So they vacate their homes to seek cheaper, poorly serviced homes in outer areas.

This Liberal/National Party Government has a responsibility to ensure that all Queenslanders have access to secure, affordable housing whatever their circumstances. Do not let us fall into the New Zealand trap of banishing our battlers and pensioners to the outer suburbs, where their standard of living will deteriorate because of their inability to access services. That is the problem. If people are forced further out of the city, they will experience the very problem referred to often in this House: the inability of those in more isolated areas to access the services available to people in the inner city. This is another attack on the pensioners and low-income earners in our community.

Building programs under our Government were going a long way to reducing the waiting lists for public housing in Redcliffe alone. Proposed building plans for houses and pensioner units were well advanced. We must wonder now whether the proposed construction of 32 units of housing in 1996 will proceed under this Government, or will it now cease all building to enable the private sector rents to rise because of a shortage of rental

accommodation? I warn the Minister that I will be watching the progress of the Department of Housing in the Redcliffe electorate very closely. I assure the Minister that he will hear not only from me but also from every member of that community who lives in public housing, and he will hear also from the large number of people seeking to access public housing. The demand for public housing is high. I do not think the Government will decrease that demand by selling off public housing or by raising the rents to market level. That is a recipe for disaster.

The member for Sandgate hit the nail on the head when he said that those Government members who hold marginal seats and whose electorates contain public housing will feel the effects of this proposal. All public housing tenants will be concerned about this issue. I predict that coalition marginal seats will be at risk because of the fact that this Government has lost sight of what is required to assist those most in need. I hope that the Minister has heard my plea that we do not adopt this misguided proposal to increase public housing rents to market levels. We should continue to care for those people who need it most.

Mrs BIRD (Whitsunday) (3.35 p.m.): I am pleased to join the debate on the Appropriation Bill. The people of regional and rural Queensland have a special right to feel abandoned by this Government. As her first rampant action on entering the Treasury benches, Mrs Sheldon lifted the toll on the motorway in her electorate. In one impulsive action, the Treasurer deprived the rest of the State of \$200m worth of services.

Mr CARROLL: I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading the House. The Sunshine Motorway is not in the electorate of the Treasurer.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr J. N. Goss): There is no point of order.

Mrs BIRD: In one impulsive action, the Treasurer deprived the rest of the State of \$200m worth of services. More recently, the Treasurer gambled \$80m on the stock market like some inept parent playing the pokies in the hope that the returns would pay the household bills. This Government means bad news for ordinary Queenslanders, bad news for services and bad news for industry, especially the tourism industry.

Since coming to Government, the coalition has been a thorn in the side of the tourism industry. It has brought nothing but broken promises and industry destabilisation. In the lead-up to the election, this Government

promised boosts to tourism promotion by \$10m to at least \$40m. Queenslanders going to the polls thought that they could have confidence in the commitments of this Liberal/National coalition. They misguidedly believed the commitment for a stand-alone portfolio for the tourism industry, which has not been delivered. This Government told tourism operators that they are so valuable and so important to the economic productivity of this State that a stand-alone portfolio was essential. Did the Government deliver on that promise? No! It misled the industry and the public.

The Government also committed itself to a boost in tourism infrastructure, the abolition of land tax and the raising of the payroll tax threshold. All of those things never happened. Where is the code of conduct for tourism operators that was promised? It seems almost certain that the Government will renege on the reintroduction of the Research and Development Division of the QTTC. Seven hundred small operators rely on the Government's Sunlover program for promotion and exposure to both the domestic and overseas markets. For most, this is their only access to these markets. Sunlover must not be sold off.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mrs BIRD: That is right. Sunlover must not be used as a vehicle to pay Mrs Sheldon's bills.

Most members and certainly the industry recognise that Sunlover has been significantly effective. It was recognised as such by AFTA, Australia's superior travel organisation, which awarded Sunlover the best domestic wholesaler for the second year in a row. Sunlover costs this Government nothing. It is self-funding and is a revenue raiser. It provides the QTTC with over \$108m. This revenue is then recycled through the QTTC, providing much-needed promotional funds. The Government should tell us where it will find this promotional funding after the Sunlover sell-off. What will happen to the 700 small tourism operators throughout regional Queensland? Can the Government give an assurance that the same level of support currently provided to them will continue?

The Minister must move now to end speculation, despite the Treasurer's comments that the recommendations of the Commission of Audit are all on the table. The Minister must put to rest the growing fears of the industry that Sunlover will go. Under the recommendations of the Commission of Audit—described by the Premier as the

blueprint for the future of Queensland—we can only assume that it, too, will go. This morning during question time members heard the Minister refusing to confirm this. Contacts in the QTTC tell me that there is a definite move to withdraw Sunlover as an international service. The Minister must stand by the commitment he made in my local newspaper, the *Whitsunday Times*, on 29 May that the coalition is not planning to privatise. I appeal to this Minister that any moves in this direction—any interference in the role of Sunlover—will be resisted strongly by the industry.

The Minister has been listening only to those who shout loudest and whose interest is other than broad based. There are no concerns for the hundreds of operators and small businesses in regional and country Queensland. These people depend on Sunlover for their livelihoods. I suspect that one of the noises that the Minister is listening to and taking heed of is that from ITOA, which has admitted that, over the past couple of years, it has deliberately diverted tens of thousands of inbound tourists away from Queensland. ITOA has lost focus for the tourist industry. It is lacking professionalism and has betrayed the Queensland tourist industry. And this is who the Government is listening to—not the hundreds of operators, but an organisation that has turned people away from this very State. ITOA refused to put Queensland on its itineraries of tourism operators who flew to this State on familiarisation or promotional tours. The reason for not promoting Queensland: retaliation for the existence of the successful Sunlover promotions. The impact of this petty blackmailing boycott cannot be assessed, but one can only assume that it was very significant, given that 95 per cent of inbound tourism operators are based outside the State. This has been a marketplace disaster. It could involve tens of thousands of visitors, and I suspect that it does. The industry believes that this Minister will cave in to ITOA's demands.

If ever there was an atmosphere for future strained relations between operators and unions to the economic detriment of the industry then it has been created by what this Tourism Minister has done. The Minister's decision to remove and not replace workers' representation on the QTTC board left workers in the industry floundering. Where previously there was an opportunity for consultation, discussion and negotiations to take place for the betterment of the industry and workers, there now exists no representation. What this Minister has said to 130,000 workers in the

industry is, "You do not deserve representation. You do not belong to the tourist industry." The Minister does have a duty to protect workers as well as operators—to represent their interests as well as those of operators. It is of little use to market, promote and sell if tourists are greeted by staff who feel totally alienated. The result is that the service will suffer.

The presence of Bill Ludwig on the QTTC was advantageous to both the industry and workers. The effect of his representation was to take a job and a pay packet and to fill time with a career with security of tenure. Ground-breaking opportunities gave operators the chance to capture the market day to day on an everyday basis, not five days on and two days off on rotating rosters. That is far more equitable for everyone. Removing the presence of the main player—union representation from the board—showed poor judgment and was a mean, spiteful payback. Now we can expect industrial relation deterioration, especially considering the comments on the industrial relations policy of the Tourism Council of Australia as outlined by managing director Bruce Baird.

The TCA's policy indicates limiting employees' rights to take industrial action—a prohibition on industrial action during the life of an award or agreement. The policy also strictly limited the ability to initiate legal or protected industrial action to the agreement renegotiation period, in essence putting threats and restrictions on workers' rights to strike and take legal action. Will this Minister be supporting the policy of the TCA in Queensland? His lack of worker representation on the board of the QTTC indicates that his support for the introduction of minimum conditions for workers is inevitable. He will do this at his peril.

This portfolio has ground to a halt over the last few months. The greatest incentives and announcements have been announcements of sacking. Instability abounds. The regions have expressed their concern publicly and directly to the Minister, but the Minister continues to do nothing—by his own admission publicly, "I know nothing about tourism, but I'm having a good time." We are talking about our greatest industry—full of hardworking, dedicated, energetic, invigorating people. As one operator in Cairns said recently, "We are bubbling over with enthusiasm. We have reached out for assistance, and they send up Groucho Marx in a striped T-shirt."

The Minister's inability to deal with this portfolio is obvious to the regions. The more the Minister visits, the more nervous the industry becomes. It is clear from his lack of leadership that he does not understand the industry, nor does he understand the difficulties faced by the whole of the tourist industry. Most recently, the regions have expressed their concern about the future of the industry. Roger Power, manager of the Whitsunday Visitors and Convention Bureau and now manager of 14 regional tourism associations, has made representations to the Minister to ask not only for improved funding but also for improved conditions and some stabilisation. I can only hope that this Minister sees some sense and delivers.

Mrs WILSON (Mulgrave) (3.46 p.m.): In addressing the Appropriation Bill I want to focus on a few issues in the north of the State and in Mulgrave. Queenslanders are only too relieved that the Treasurer took the initiative to have a Commission of Audit of the State's affairs. What has eventuated from the probe into the State's affairs reveals a scandal that each Queensland should become aware of. Each Queensland should understand that the former Government set out on a spending spree which, had things continued, the citizens of this State would be paying for for years to come. We would have borne the yoke of a Government bent on spending without checking the till to see if there was cash in there. No-one purchases a business without first doing a proper audit of the books, and that is exactly what the Treasurer did. We all know of the enormous budget blow-out in Health by the former Goss Government—\$70m over two years. However, the Health Minister, Mike Horan, is committed to bringing back the status of health to Queenslanders, to cutting down waiting lists and opening up hospitals.

With regard to health in the Cairns area—\$70m has been promised for the redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital. This has now reached a figure of some \$90m, and I am pleased to see the very keen interest and response taken by the Minister, who has visited the area on numerous occasions to listen to and respond to those who will be working in the hospital, namely, the practitioners, and also to some of the patients. There has been a noticeable lack of specialist services at the Cairns Base Hospital, and concerns have been raised with me that essential specialist services are focused in Townsville rather than in Cairns. These comments come from both specialist practitioners and patients, many of whom

need to travel to Townsville for treatment. Cairns is growing fast, and expanded supported specialist services in Cairns must become a reality. I am not being parochial. I am being realistic. In the last 120 days, Queensland has seen the opening of wards, access to surgery, more doctors and nurses. As well, the waiting lists in my electorate have been reduced. The phone calls to my electorate office have certainly been reduced due to the pro-active approach taken by the Government.

The promised \$2.5m Community Health Centre for the south of Cairns will become a reality under the present Government. The Minister supports the concept. The facility will provide services for the aged, family and health services, drug and alcohol counselling, sexual health services, youth health, mental health and extended services in palliative care, rehabilitation and home medical aid. The facility will be built in an accessible position when it is constructed by the Borbidge/Sheldon Government. It will be placed in an area that is accessible to public transport.

Gordonvale, Babinda and Yarrabah Hospitals, catering to the people living outside of Cairns, need constant support. I have only recently had inquiries for a birthing centre—a method of birthing that is gaining great favour amongst young parents today. The Health Minister, Mike Horan, has said that community consultation would be the key to the ultimate success of the national health and aged care forums agreed to in Hobart this month by State and Federal Health and Community Service Ministers. A national working party has been established to develop a work plan to develop strategic directions for aged care and to look at the agreements on the consolidation of existing health special purpose payments to be brought within the current Medicare agreement. A local group from Babinda has met at the Babinda Hospital to research the possible inclusion of an aged-care facility at the hospital to support those residents in the area who do not wish to leave their town when they finally reach the stage of needing constant care.

A research paper based on results from a local questionnaire in conjunction with the Cairns City Council will be released shortly. In my book, shared health facilities are cost effective and I welcome the initiative that citizens of Babinda have taken in undertaking a needs analysis. The differences between the previous Health Minister's 100 days of listening and the current Minister's actions are listening and action, and listening and no action. What

is happening in the Mulgrave electorate is that activity is occurring in the health sector.

The suicide rate in far-north Queensland is high, with Yarrabah statistics rating perhaps the highest in the world. The coalition Government will be focusing on support for young people following findings in *Suicide in Queensland 1990-1992*. The Youth Bureau in the far-north region has worked in Aboriginal communities to establish youth development workers and one such worker has been established in the Yarrabah community. The Aboriginal coordinating council, which represents the north Queensland Aboriginal councils, has provided conscientious support for their people and has recognised the need to have culturally appropriate substance abuse programs. Recently a group of students from the Bama Healing Centre graduated from the first course of its kind, a course which prepares graduate students to go back into their communities to support community members who suffer from substance abuse.

Our youth needs special focus and, given the fast growth rate being experienced in the north, it is an area that needs constant financial support, both in the electorate of Mulgrave and in other areas. Plans are under way for placement of a youth worker in the Edmonton area. Education for the young in the fast-growing electorate of Mulgrave must take priority in planning. There is no denying that teachers in the field have been suffering from a lack of support from the previous Government in terms of both human and teaching resources. I know that it is the intention of the Minister, Mr Quinn, to support teachers and to lessen their load of unnecessary impositions of committees and extraneous calls on their time so that they can do what they are trained for; that is, to teach. I must give credit to and thank the members of the P & C groups who work tirelessly for their schools, raising funds to complement the funding allocations.

Residents just south of Woree are asking when the promised new primary school will commence construction. Housing development is constant with new families arriving daily. Young families move in and look for easy access to educational facilities for their children. Following public meetings of concerned people with respect to the dismal public transport system left by the Government in my electorate, a concerted effort has been made to enhance bus transportation for school children. All the problems are not yet ironed out; however, the passage is much smoother than it was. A community committee has been formed to keep an eye on the bus

transport system for students, with representation from parents, schools and transport representatives and departmental officers. Certainly, the increased numbers of buses have eased the situation in my area.

Children with special needs need the greatest support available if they are to be mainstreamed into school communities. Support is needed in terms of therapists: occupational therapists, speech therapists and specialist teachers. Without that support, the staff at the schools will be unable to function effectively and the people who suffer are the children. The best way to solve the problem is, firstly, to admit that there is a problem and then go about trying to solve it. That is just what this Government is doing in education. The uniform allowance, a \$28m expenditure debacle, was a disgraceful overall waste of money, and parents and schools admit to that.

The Building Better Schools Program has strong support from the Government. Queensland's multi-million dollar program to refurbish thousands of classrooms across the State is steaming ahead at more than \$3m a month, after barely reaching a crawl under the outbound Labor Government earlier this year. The education Minister confirmed that there had been a fivefold increase in expenditure under his department's Building Better Schools Program since the coalition stepped into the driver's seat just four months ago. Last year's budget for the Building Better Schools Program was more than \$44.1m, but, by the time the coalition took over in late February, Labor had spent just \$5.2m—less than 12 per cent of the annual allocation after almost 8 months. I do not know what happened with the rest of the money or what they proposed to do with it. However, since we gained Government, a concerted effort has been made to get this money out of the department and into the schools and classrooms where it belongs. The level of expenditure has jumped from an average of just \$650,000 a month to \$3.4m a month. The Government has just approved \$40m for schools, the highest expenditure in five years. The sum of \$20m has been approved for another 200 support staff to help us restore some discipline in our classrooms.

The electorate of Mulgrave stands to gain from that. For example, capital works in 1996 and 1997 include some \$2.5m to schools such as Flying Fish Point, Gordonvale, Hambledon, Miriwinni, Mundoo, Woree and Yarrabah State High Schools, which are all to receive capital works in the next round. Also, schools that have benefited from the Building

Better Schools Program include Alooomba, Babinda, Bartle Frere, Bellenden Ker, Flying Fish Point, Gordonvale, Hambledon, McDonnells Creek, Mena Creek, Miriwinni, Mundoo, Palmerston East, South Johnstone, White Rock, Woree and Yarrabah. That includes approximately all the schools in the Mulgrave electorate, so the concerns held by members on the opposite side of the Chamber that nothing is happening around the State are really quite unfounded.

In Mulgrave, a new fire station facility is to be established at Roberts Road, Edmonton, and a new ambulance station will also be built at Edmonton to serve the wider community. The increased traffic flow at East Trinity on the Yarrabah Road resulted in a promise of some \$3m to upgrade overutilised roads. The people of East Trinity have waited patiently for their promised road upgrading to be implemented.

I will touch on law and order in the north. Recognising the problems that increasing population brings with it, Minister Cooper is committed to increasing police numbers over the next few years, despite the comments we hear from the other side of the Chamber and read in the media. In the next two weeks, Gordonvale is to receive two extra police, bringing its numbers up to five plus a trainee. The police are working long and hard hours to maintain law and order in our area, despite the need still for more resources.

Two Neighbourhood Watch meetings have been held at Gordonvale during the last month when concerned citizens met to discuss the uprise in vandalism and youth problems in the area and to curb juvenile crime. At that meeting a curfew was called for, particularly when children as young as nine years are out in the streets. As I mentioned this morning, there was a report of a three-year old out in the care of an eight-year-old sibling. The township will probably undergo a safety audit with the assistance of the Cairns City Council. The townsfolk are angry that police seem to have their hands tied and can do nothing. Young perpetrators are not being made to pay for their crimes. Yesterday, the honourable member for Thuringowa spoke of his concerns, which dealt with almost the same issue. These issues are not isolated; they are everywhere. The community is now saying that the perpetrators must pay for their crimes. More human resources are needed as well as the upgrading and provision of new equipment. The lack of maintenance on equipment renders the equipment useless over time. Equipment needs to be upgraded.

I attended a function called Reclaim the Night. It was attended by many women who have objected to claims that, for their safety's sake, they should lock themselves up at night and not go out. Women are affronted at these suggestions and they feel that they should be safe on the streets should they choose to be out at night, or at any time. A recent attack by a pack of juveniles on a lone female left the town in shock. Queenslanders will welcome the Juvenile Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 1996 which will be dealing with juvenile crime—a promise that was made at the 1995 election campaign.

Public housing is an ongoing requirement in the electorate of Mulgrave where housing is fairly costly, given that most houses in the developing areas are new. Recently, the Minister for Housing was in the north and he spent some time listening to the concerns of citizens and he will continue to offer assistance where possible, despite the anxiety expressed continually by the members of the other side of the Chamber. Tenants in that area and departmental staff have developed a very sound relationship and houses will be provided accordingly. Tenants have also taken on the role of planning the type of housing that will be provided. The housing that has been provided by that arrangement has been very good.

With urban expansion comes opportunities for business expansion, and this Government has taken the initiative to include the Department of Business into the portfolio of Tourism. The facilities offered to new businesses will still be available, and intending and continuing business proprietors will still be able to access departmental officers. There will be cost saving by doing away with the duplication of infrastructure, costs and services and, as a result, more people will be able to gain assistance.

Our fruit industry has been put in jeopardy through the neglect of the previous Government—neglect by not maintaining the Department of Primary Industries to the maximum in terms of resources.

Mr Dollin: Do you want to round up all the mosquitoes, as well?

Mrs WILSON: They do not cost so much money, those mozzies. Because resources and research facilities were reduced to such capacity, the entire fruit industry has been put to risk through the introduction and non-detection or identification of the fruit fly. This Government is now providing accreditation programs and training for growers in order to contain their costs so that they can accredit their own sheds.

I would like to devote a little time to informing honourable members of some of the important initiatives that have been developed and implemented with the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, particularly programs and policies that are designed to provide a better range of services in the areas of child-care, family support and juvenile justice. Although it is important to have a wide range of services, it is of paramount importance to ensure quality in the services provided by the department. Family support services is an appropriate starting point because it underlines the basic factor in most of our policies that impact on families, youth and the community generally.

Family support services fulfil this Government's objective to be pro-active with a philosophy of prevention and early intervention in areas in which it can provide assistance and support to people before problems become insurmountable. The idea is not only to assist families but also to strengthen the fabric that holds families together. To this end, family support workers will be located within existing community organisations and will respond to particular issues concerning parents and families. I refer to services that will promote parenting as a vital role in the community and provide child and family support services which are relevant and timely and which will assist families and communities to care for and protect their children. There will be no service charge for those support services.

I turn to juvenile justice. The department is spending in the vicinity of \$49m on juvenile justice, which includes \$22m for a new detention centre. The Government is committed to providing appropriate responses to children in the juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Justice Act is founded on the basic idea that children who commit offences should be held accountable for their actions. The Act is based on a justice model, that is, that children should be subject to the due processes of law, replacing the previous welfare model of dealing with young offenders whereby the department had considerable discretionary powers. In administering the juvenile justice legislation, the department aims to ensure that young offenders are held clearly accountable for their offences. Adolescent resource workers will provide intensive support for children who are the subject of orders so that they can again integrate into the community and youth workers will be in place to maintain security and to assist and support the rehabilitation of children in detention.

Finally, I would like to talk about child-care services, which continue to be one of the most difficult areas of social planning for Government. The child-care industry continues to grow at a rapid pace, heading towards an estimated \$1 billion this year. Nowhere else in Australia is this growth greater than in Queensland. Over the past four years, growth has averaged around 20 per cent per annum. The difficulty is complicated by the differing roles and responsibilities of each level of Government. The Commonwealth, the State and local governments all have a part to play in child-care. Increasingly, industry is calling for planning strategies to address what is perceived as unfettered growth. Concerns include the pending oversupply of child-care services in some areas while others remain undersupplied.

The Cairns City Council has taken a lead role in the north and is working with child-care providers in planning suitable areas for new child-care centres to be constructed. A number of local authorities have developed planning guidelines for new child-care services and others have indicated their intention to move in this direction. In addition, the department will also provide a range of data to assist local authorities to ensure effective planning.

To conclude—despite the disgraceful financial blow-out of the previous Government, uncovered by the present Borbidge/Sheldon Government, families in Queensland will not be forgotten in the basic services of health, education, welfare and law and order.

Mr PEARCE (Fitzroy) (4.04 p.m.): Earlier today we heard the member for Cairns and former Treasurer, Keith De Lacy, deliver a knockout punch to Treasurer Joan Sheldon and the Government.

Government members interjected.

Mr PEARCE: Government members may laugh, but time will tell. The member for Cairns eloquently destroyed the argument put forward by the Government for increased taxes and the sell off of Government owned enterprises as a result of the Commission of Audit. He put the spotlight on the Premier and Treasurer for undermining the economic credibility of Queensland in a deliberate strategy to try to convince the people of Queensland that the State is in financial crisis. Government members may laugh and joke as much as they like, but that is the way they would like to see Queensland go. The reason that strategy is in place is so that the Government can justify its onslaught on the pay packets of every Queenslanders. However, I tell Government members that the people will

not wear it. They are starting to wake up to what the Government is about.

I believe that time will prove the former Treasurer right. The State will remain in surplus and the rubbish and untruths being peddled in this place and in the media by the Government will be seen for what they are. The coalition conned its way into Government, and since moving to the benches opposite it has done nothing but continue to mislead the public. As I said, the public is starting to see through the maze of figures and untruths that Government members have been peddling continually. They are waking up to the Treasurer and the Premier and they are asking where the Government got its mandate to sell off and to tax.

I turn to an issue that is of concern to people in central Queensland. Last Tuesday in this place, the member for Rockhampton raised the issue of Rockhampton Hospital. I am glad to see that the Minister for Health is present in the Chamber because I would like him to listen to what I have to say. The member for Rockhampton said that, since the change of Government, the Rockhampton Hospital had deteriorated. Before the election last year Mr Horan, who was then the shadow Health Minister and who is now the Health Minister, was often in Rockhampton running down the quality of the hospital and the services that it provided. What has happened since he took over as Health Minister?

Mr J. H. Sullivan: Nothing positive, I will bet.

Mr PEARCE: The member is dead right: nothing positive; it is all negative. I have to say that it does not give me any pleasure to say these things. I would have liked to have seen things managed in a better way.

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr PEARCE: I can hear the Minister interjecting. I ask him to give me a chance to say that when he first came into this place and became an Opposition spokesman, I personally had a lot of respect for him. What I am saying to him is nothing personal; it is a tough job. However, I have to say that I am a little bit disappointed in the Minister's performance because I honestly thought that he was a little bit more fair dinkum than he is. It is very hard to accept that someone for whom one has respect would twist the facts and not present them as they should be. It is really sad to see somebody such as the Minister doing that. I have to say that it must be hurting him to do that. He must be finding it hard to sleep at night.

What has happened in Rockhampton? As my colleague the member for Caboolture said, nothing positive. In Rockhampton we have no intensivists, and we have one fewer anaesthetist. People requiring intensive care have been transferred to Brisbane and wards have been closed. Sixty beds have gone. How can the Minister justify those ward closures considering all the noise that he made in this place when he was in Opposition?

Mr Horan interjected.

Mr PEARCE: The member was going to make things better in the Queensland health system if he became the Minister.

Mr Horan: At Rockhampton we've still got about 30 beds a day empty.

Mr PEARCE: I do not want to listen to the Minister's excuses. In Opposition he complained about the Labor Government closing wards. When he became the Health Minister, he said that things were going to be better for the health system in Queensland. It has gone backwards in central Queensland. The Minister should listen to a few of the things that I have to say. If he listens and he is fair dinkum, he will fix them up. I would love him to fix them up. Things in central Queensland have gone backwards faster than my old mate from Keppel, Vince Lester, can walk backwards. Speaking of the member for Keppel, in common with the Health Minister, before the last election he was very active in the media talking about the services at Rockhampton Hospital. Since the election, the member for Keppel has been very quiet. I know that the Minister is shaking his head and denying the claims that I am making. Let me tell the House just how bad things are in Rockhampton. I do not know whether the Minister is aware of it, but this afternoon the staff at the Rockhampton Hospital have stopped work.

Mr J. H. Sullivan: What about the nurses? He just told us the nurses are rapt. Why would they stop work if they are rapt? What are they going to do if they don't like you? Stop work for that?

Mr PEARCE: They stopped work this afternoon to discuss a shortage of staff and lack of consultation, because decisions are being made—and I am told that this is at the Minister's direction—without consultation with the union. Earlier today I was informed that the union was not invited to be a part of the consultation process about things that are happening at the hospital because, in the Minister's words, "it cannot be trusted". That is what I am told. I could be wrong; if I am, fair enough. There was also no consultation about

staff being no longer allowed to use the car park. The Minister championed security for nurses in this House, but at the moment the Rockhampton nurses are not allowed to use the car parks. At night time, they have to walk long distances to get to and from their cars. I would have thought that the Minister would have supported nurses being able to get to their workplaces via the shortest and best-lit route. At the moment, they have been told they cannot use those car parks. I hope the Minister will look at that issue.

This afternoon I was told that the staff of the Rockhampton Hospital were prepared to give the Minister a go. When he came to the job he had a lot of credibility, but now they are saying that the Minister's credibility has gone out the door. Places such as Blackwater do not have the funds to fix the light switch in the female patients' toilet. There is no light and no money to fix it, the broken doors or the holes in the wall. In the Blackwater hospital, there is not even an industrial iron to do ironing.

Mr Horan: Did they have an industrial iron?

Mr PEARCE: They did have, but there is no money to replace it.

Mr HORAN: Did they sell it when this Government came in?

Mr PEARCE: No. Like everything else in hospitals, and elsewhere, things break down. The same thing has happened at the Mount Morgan hospital. It upsets me very much when the people of local communities are expected to pay for essential hospital equipment out of money that they have raised at local rodeos, raffles and so on. A good case in point is the Mount Morgan hospital, which has been forced to find funds for an autoclave unit, which is a sterilising unit. The director of nursing has done a great job in the management of that hospital. She had some money left over in the hospital budget, as I understand, and the hospital needed a new sterilising unit. However, some money still had to come from the community to pay for a sterilising unit because the Department of Health had refused to provide a new unit. The department preferred to have minor surgery equipment transported to the Rockhampton Base Hospital for sterilisation. The Minister should look at that problem, although it is probably too late because the unit has been ordered and paid for.

It is totally unfair to expect local groups to use their hard-won dollars to purchase equipment which should be part of an equipment replacement program. It is unfair to ask hospitals to pay for equipment when it

should be the responsibility of the Health Department. This is especially upsetting when we see the Government involved in a million dollar spending spree for the funding of the Suncorp/Metway/QIDC merger—a merger which will ultimately lead to branch closures and job losses. I consider the refusal by the Department of Health to fund this equipment as the first step on the road to handing back responsibility for equipment replacement to hospitals and local communities. That is not good enough and we have to expect more. I give the Minister the opportunity to investigate the problems I have raised about the health system in central Queensland to see if he can solve them.

Turning to the issue of policing, there are problems with resources in the region. My comments are made on the basis that they are only resource and funding related; in no way would I reflect negatively on the region's police who are very highly regarded by me.

The little community of Gracemere, where I live, requires a police presence. As a community we know that at this time we cannot expect to have a police station established with permanent officers. We understand that. However, the people of Gracemere and I, as the local member, are being reasonable in insisting that the community receives a Police Beat program similar to that established in Toowoomba and Ipswich. I understand that those programs are working very well.

The Police Beat program involves a police officer working from a house in the local community. The officer gets to know the local community—he gets to know the youth and the local businesses, he becomes involved in sports and programs such as the Adopt-a-Cop program. He is policing in the streets where he can be seen. The CJC has looked at this proposal and the assistant commissioner supports it. As far as I am concerned, it should get the go-ahead. The police in Rockhampton have offered—and I appreciate the offer—to provide a police shopfront in Gracemere, but let us be fair dinkum: that will not work because the police officer is not allowed to leave the office. We do not want that. We want police on the streets, policing the community.

The coalition ran on a platform on the issue of law and order and supported an increase in police numbers. In central Queensland at places such as Gracemere and Mount Morgan, we see that as a joke. Unfortunately, criminal activity in Gracemere has increased significantly with many break-

and-enter incidents and vandalism. The whole town of Gracemere is totally covered by Neighbourhood Watch. We have worked very hard to get that program up and running, and we believe it is working. It could work better if the community was a little more involved, but at least we have been pro-active. We have organised ourselves and done what we can as a community. Now we are asking for some support from the Police Service.

Mount Morgan has the same problem, in that criminal activity has developed from very low levels two years ago when six officers were stationed in the town. Under the former Labor Government, those numbers were reduced to two. I dug my toes in over that issue and the numbers were put back up to four. However, since that reduction in police numbers criminal activity has increased significantly and occurs almost on a daily basis. When one takes into consideration holidays, sick leave, in-service training, court appearances and so on, quite frequently the officer in charge is left with only two officers for rostering. Two officers cannot police a town the size of Mount Morgan for 24 hours. Therefore, we must look at ways of replacing police officers when other duties are required of them which take them away from their normal policing duties. Criminals are very active, entering homes, stealing money from the unemployed, the sick and the elderly. They are walking into houses during the day and taking purses and handbags and those sorts of things. They are trashing homes. Vandalism within the town has increased quite significantly. We are very concerned about what is happening in Mount Morgan at the moment.

However, one cannot effectively police the town with only two police officers. Sergeant Stan Lean is very highly regarded in the community. He is very well respected by people who know him, but he cannot keep up with the workload. We have to take these sorts of things into consideration and get police onto the streets of the town to do the job we as taxpayers expect them to do—that is, community policing. Police officers should be on the streets where they can be seen so that offenders cannot be sure whether the police officer is around the corner, down the road or sitting out the back waiting for somebody to break into a house. We must have police in the community.

When in Opposition, the Minister talked about all the good things he was going to do when he got into Government. During the last sitting I asked the Minister a question on this very issue and his response was that he would not get involved in the allocation of police; that

that was up to the Police Service, not him. That is fine, if that is the way he wants to run it, but when campaigning he should not tell the people of Queensland that he is going to get involved in the process of providing more police when he cannot. He has simply walked away from his promises and he is leaving it to the police at the local level to cop the flack.

Mr Dollin: But he did get involved with the union.

Mr PEARCE: I do not want to get into that. I am not a vindictive person. I am just a country member who is trying to do the right thing by his electorate. Policing and health issues formed the main platform of the coalition campaign, yet, now that the coalition is in Government, all its promises and the great things it was going to do have faded into the back room of Government departments.

I wish to touch on another issue. I refer to a letter to the editor published in the *Morning Bulletin* on Monday of this week. It stated that we could lose the Community Justice Program in Rockhampton and the services it provides to the Capricorn Coast, Gladstone, Blackwater, Emerald and other towns in the region. I happen to know a bit about this program because I lobbied the Attorney-General at the time, Dean Wells, to establish the service in Rockhampton. In October last year I reported to my electorate that, in its first year of operation, the Rockhampton office had handled more than 400 inquiries from throughout the region, and of those cases which went to mediation more than 80 per cent resulted in agreement. Some of those issues which were mediated included: neighbourhood disputes, 29 per cent; commercial or business, 19 per cent; spousal, 12 per cent; family, 8 per cent; workplace, 16 per cent; and others, 16 per cent.

This mediation service, as members would know, provides a free, voluntary, confidential service to assist people in the community to resolve their disputes and disagreements. I am appalled that this Government is considering cutting such a worthwhile service. Such a move highlights the lack of commitment by the Government to the battlers of this State, those people who have real problems and who can least afford the cost of expensive representation. I make a plea to the Government to look closely at that service, because it is a great service and it benefits people in the community, particularly the battlers that Labor Governments like to help and that the coalition Government has claimed on many occasions that it also would like to help.

In conclusion, I will refer to the upcoming Government Budget. As a member of the Opposition representing a rural-based electorate, I wish to offer my support to the Local Government Minister, Mrs McCauley, in her push to retain funding of and to expand the guidelines of the Rural Living Infrastructure Program. I know the Minister for Local Government does not like very much the way that I do my job. She is quite open and has made that very clear on a number of occasions. However, I am not too concerned about that; that is politics. I wish to show that I am sincere and offer my support for her in her attempts to get funding for that program, which was introduced by the Labor Government and which is certainly beneficial to people living in small rural communities. The program should stay and, if possible, guidelines for funding should be broadened to cater for local authorities in rural Queensland with a population of more than 10,000 people, as currently applies under the guidelines.

A number of central Queensland shires, such as Duinga and Belyando, have a single population base—for example, Blackwater in Duinga, and Moranbah in Belyando—which rules them out for funding under the scheme. I see that as unreasonable, given that both of those very big rural shires contain a number of smaller communities that are unable to raise funds locally for projects—for example, restumping, hall renovations, and toilet facilities for sporting grounds. In the Duinga Shire there are small communities such as Dingo, Duinga and Bluff that have local projects which are ineligible for funding under RLIP, because Blackwater's population of 7,000 people or more takes the shire outside the guidelines. I encourage the Minister for Local Government to pursue this important initiative as it delivers benefits to those small communities who have often been neglected or forgotten in the past. The people who live in these towns have a right to be able to maintain their local facilities, and all rural members know that these communities need the financial support of Governments, be they at the State, local or Federal levels. I sincerely wish the Minister for Local Government luck in her endeavours to obtain the funding for this program. If she is successful, many people, local authorities and organisations in rural Queensland will applaud her.

Time expired.

Mr CAMPBELL (Bundaberg) (4.24 p.m.): It is a privilege to follow the member for Fitzroy, who is a genuine and dedicated member of Parliament and who is in close contact with his electorate. The concerns

he had about funding for a hospital in his electorate are mirrored in Bundaberg, as are his concerns about policing and a shopfront. In Bundaberg we had the plans drawn up and the go-ahead for a shopfront in Bourbong Street. The share of funding between the police department and the Bundaberg City Council was agreed to, but nothing has happened. That is an example of what has happened for so long under this Government. Basically, there have been nearly four months of nothing. As the member for Fitzroy outlined, the member for Cairns, the former Treasurer, has discredited the FitzGerald audit team.

Mr Stoneman: No, the Labor Party.

Mr CAMPBELL: I think the FitzGerald audit team has prostituted its profession by following its riding orders rather than questioning the erroneous assumptions and frames of reference. That will come back to haunt it. It has not given a clear and true report on the economy of Queensland. I am reminded of a quotation that I once heard—

"We trained hard, but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams, we would be reorganised. Later in life I was to learn that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganising, and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralisation."

That was penned by the Roman general Petronius in 66 AD. It seems to me that that is exactly what is happening with the incoming State Government. It has reorganised everything but basically achieved nothing. Literally cartons and cartons of Government stationery, under the orders of different Ministers, were dumped simply because there are now new names for the different departments. What a waste!

Yesterday, after we debated the open competition policy, my concern was whether we are going to learn from the lessons of history. It was a century ago that we had the great depression of the 1890s. The free marketeers' plans for openly competitive markets and industry just did not work. It was over the next 20 to 30 years that we really came to see Government intervention to correct and protect people from excessive market swings, to bring in price stabilisation and cross-subsidisation. Now we have gone full circle; the Government is breaking down those protections. People's basic needs, such as water, electricity, and communications, should be kept in the hands of the Government for the people. It concerns me

that those essentials could be removed from Government control.

We have heard a lot of talk about the FitzGerald audit report. However, this debate is on the Appropriation Bill and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill. I am concerned about a few issues that we need to address in my area. I refer to the need for water in the Wide Bay/Burnett region. Last week we held a land care conference in Bundaberg. There was a very good session about urban shift; in other words, the number of people who are coming to our region and the infrastructure needs of those people. Unless we start planning for them now we are probably going to have even greater problems than have been experienced in the south-east corner. The two needs that were identified were water and the treatment of the increased levels of effluent.

It is estimated that in the urban areas of our region there will be another 57,000 people, all requiring houses and land, and also another 23,000 people in the rural areas of the region. Given those figures, unless we are prepared now to look at where we are going to put our dams and how we are going to better utilise our water, we are going to be in real trouble. That part of the coastline is one of the driest in Queensland. We need to undertake the proper planning now to take account of that growth.

People are migrating to the Bundaberg district not only from southern States but also from places such as Cairns and Townsville. Some people from Cairns are coming to the Bundaberg region to retire simply because they want to return to how Cairns was 15 years ago. They want to escape the tourism mecca-type environment back to a smaller country-town feeling. I think that Bundaberg still has that.

I turn now to the appropriation for the Parliament. We have heard reference to waste, overmanagement, excessive compliance and administration and Government red tape. I want to highlight the cost of administering the accounts relating to members of Parliament. We have a very wasteful system. I had a taxi account for \$8 from the airport to my home. I want to outline how many steps it takes to process the payment of that \$8 account. After I incur that expense, I send a covering letter to Parliament House asking that the account be paid. After I have handled it, the letter is typed up, put into an envelope and a stamp is placed on it. It is then sent to Parliament House. That account has probably been handled four times already. On arrival at Parliament House, the envelope

goes to the mail sorting room. It will be looked at and they will say, "That is an account", and it then goes around to accounts. Accounts then looks at it and say, "That is an account for Mr Campbell. We have to make certain that it goes into the right area." They produce an invoice page. Then they decide, "Yes, we will pay it." There are probably two different signatures required to authorise the payment of that account. They then decide that the cheque goes off. Of course, the cheque does not just fly into the mailing room—it has to be handled; it has to have an envelope put with it; it has to be stamped and it has to be addressed, and then away it goes.

When the cheque comes to me, it is accompanied by a travel voucher which asks exactly what the money has been spent on. I then have to put my name on it and say, "On such and such a date, this expense was incurred in travelling to parliamentary sittings." I dutifully sign and date that and then it is put into my out tray again. My secretary then does up an envelope and it is then posted back to the Parliament. When it gets back to the Parliament, again it goes to the mailing room. It then has to be sorted out and it goes to accounts. When it gets to accounts, it will then have to be put into what they call an accounting package so that all the paper comes together. It will be finalised and it will be stapled together. That is our procedure for handling accounts. I suppose that we do need such a system, because the auditor would get very upset if we did not have that nice package. But in my view that system wastes a lot of time.

Mr J. H. Sullivan: That would be fifty bucks to do a single taxi voucher.

Mr CAMPBELL: I would say it would be \$50-plus. There must be a simpler way of doing it. Perhaps there should just be an allowance paid. If we know the approximate amount that will be spent on taxis, we should pay members an allowance and let them finalise those accounts.

We have been told that we have to save \$1m at Parliament House. The various committees are having to impose cutbacks, and other things will be done away with. We will probably once again have to reduce the number of people employed here and add them to the unemployment queue. But if we are not prepared to adopt easier and more simplified systems at Parliament itself, how can we then turn around to all Government departments and ask them to implement simplified management systems? It is important that we introduce more efficient

procedures to replace the excessive and wasteful compliance and administration systems currently in operation. During this debate we have heard of so many facilities that people need in various electorates. There are major problems with public housing. I hold grave concerns about the public housing policy proposed by the Minister. All members of Parliament will see the impact of that proposal.

I urge the Government not only to spend this funding appropriately but also in a manner that is efficient so that we ensure the proper use of taxpayers' money.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN (Caboolture) (4.35 p.m.): I am pleased to rise in the cognate debate on the Appropriation Bills to talk about a few things of concern to me, of concern to the population generally and specifically of concern to the people of the electorate of Caboolture. What we are seeing in Queensland now is the implementation of a new style of economics. We have had Rogernomics discredited in New Zealand, we have had Reaganomics discredited in the United States, and in Queensland we are beginning to see Sheldonomics, which no doubt in the future will also be discredited.

A basic tenet of this new philosophy of Sheldonomics is to do everything that the former Government decided not to do, such as allowing a \$66 increase in third-party insurance premiums—although, to be fair, the former Government rejected an application for an increase of only \$56, and this Government has approved an increase of \$66. I will have something more to say about that—

Mr Hamill: They're whacking the rego up as well.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: The Government is whacking up the rego as well. I will have something more to say about third-party insurance on another occasion.

The merger of the financial institutions to create the superbank—or something that might be more accurately described in a word that rhymes with bank but does not start with a "b"—is another action that the former Government decided not to take. One wonders in regards to the "Banana Bank" how long it will be before this Government, given the hairy-chested way in which it approached the fending off of a quite reasonable offer from St George for the Metway component, finds a way to force the Bank of Queensland into this new institution. That is what the Government will do. It is not going to sit back politely and accept the view of the board of the Bank of Queensland. Its time is limited. In

the main street of Caboolture, we will go from three banking institutions to one. There is just no way that in the future the people of Caboolture will have the choice that is available to them now.

The former Government rejected the concept of a fuel tax. We saw much play in this place this morning about a speech made by the current Leader of the Opposition at a time when he was on the back bench. If all Ministers were to be held to every word that they said whilst they were on the back bench in this place, the Government would be facing a very interesting conundrum.

But a more important feature of Sheldonomics is the new scheme invented by conservative Governments of weaseling out of their commitments by inviting some independent authority to do an audit. I have only the summary of the Commission of Audit report in the Chamber with me, but this report is the weasel-out document. It is the basis on which the Government will avoid doing all the things that it promised it would do. This document is best fitted to the description of "who pays the piper calls the tune", because that is what has happened.

In the last few days, we have heard the shadow Treasury spokesperson refer to the disappearance from this document of approximately \$350m. What a joke to be told that it does not count! Before I came into this place, I worked in the airline industry. On a number of occasions, I was rostered to sell tickets to people just like members opposite as they were travelling. Every morning when I was rostered to sell tickets, I picked up a float. I carried it out to the front counter. I took people's cash or their credit cards, I balanced up at the end of the day and I put the float back in the safe. By the Government's standards, the company that I worked for would not count all of those floats around Australia in the net worth of the company, yet I bet it did! The \$350m that the Government does not believe should be taken into account ought to be. What is more, by not showing it, Dr FitzGerald and his colleagues have fallen short of the first line of the task given to them by the Government.

Mr Hamill: I bet if they were farmers and they were selling the farm they would be counting the cash in the bank.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: It would depend whether they were selling it to a family member or somebody else, I suspect. If it were being sold to a family member they might consider hiding it.

The first line of the task that this Government gave Mr FitzGerald and his colleagues was "to review and report on the current and prospective state of Queensland's public finances", yet it allowed him to leave out \$350m. Mr FitzGerald was required to give "a comprehensive statement of the assets and liabilities"—a comprehensive statement of the assets that ignores \$350m, or one-third of \$1 billion. We must understand and accept that, because of that oversight which the Government is trying to defend, the document is critically flawed.

Mr Grice: The difference is we have had audits upon which to make decisions; you had committees so that you made none.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: The honourable member might like to adopt that point of view. But this audit was not about making decisions. It was about avoiding the actions that members opposite promised the people of Queensland, in the lead-up to the State election and the Mundingburra by-election, that they were going to take. I will get back to some of those that relate specifically to my electorate.

It is not about making decisions. The basic concept of having an audit of the State's financial position is not a bad concept. But to then have missed out one-third of \$1 billion and to still defend the document is a problem. The document is flawed. Its primary function will be to give the Government a basis on which to ignore all the promises that it made to the people of Queensland and to break its contract with the people of Queensland. Earlier in this debate one Government member talked about buying a business and said that one would not buy a business without doing a financial audit first. This Government bought the business, and it bought it by making expensive and extravagant promises. Now it is not prepared to pay for the shares in it. It is too busy paying for shares in Metway.

The thing about this "Gospel According to St Vincent" is that it really does show up the mean-spirited nature of members opposite. I can recall the former Treasurer, Mr De Lacy, and the former Premier, Mr Goss, visiting my electorate and standing up in front of groups of people in my electorate and saying during 1990, 1991 and 1992 that, basically, we inherited a State in a sound financial position. That is what this Government has done, but it will not say that. This document says that the situation in Queensland is basically sound. It says that the Government has to raise a few more taxes. Let us have some fun with that,

given the Government's promises. This document does say that Queensland is basically sound, but the Government will not publicly come out and say that, although members on this side of the House did when they were in Government.

Mr Hamill: All their Treasury publications say it.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: All their Treasury publications say it. This document says it, but the Government blithely ignores it.

Mr Stephan: The bottom line doesn't say it.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: Is the honourable member interjecting from his correct seat? Is that where he lives? No. Idiot!

One has only to leaf through this document to realise some of the things that should be being said by the Government about Queensland and are not. Instead, Government members have not got away from the position they adopted when they were in Opposition—tear everything down. There are things that are not being said. Let me find a couple. Here we go—

"Queensland's public hospital system, the core of government involvement in health services, is relatively efficient compared to those of the other States and there is no evidence to suggest that the quality of services is lower."

Why is the Government not saying that? It would not say that when it was in Opposition. It complained that it was the worst in the world. It is probably the best in the world. Certainly Mr Fitzgerald is telling us that it is the equivalent of health systems anywhere else. He states—

"Queensland school education is operating more efficiently than in other States."

I am not going to believe that that has been a turnaround in the last five months since Mr Bob Quinn, the member for Merrimac, got control of the Education portfolio. The report also states—

"Queensland is a relatively efficient and effective provider of Corrective Services."

It then goes on to blow the myth that we are soft on crime, because it talks about—

". . . strong increase in prisoner numbers in recent years."

That is the sort of thing that the former Government did. It states also that—

". . . the State ranks well in effectiveness of police service delivery with the exception of a few areas (eg personal safety).

. . .

The Queensland Fire Service appears to be more effective in its delivery of fire services."

These are the things that the Government is not telling people which came out in Mr FitzGerald's report. That shows just what a mean-spirited bunch they are. The sooner the community finds them out, the better off we will all be.

I want to talk about a few issues that relate particularly to my electorate of Caboolture. I have been the member for Caboolture for six and a half years, during which time I have tried to build up the area. I suppose that most people would regard it as an outer Brisbane area. It has a significant unemployment problem—very high youth unemployment and high unemployment amongst people generally in the area. One of the problems associated with outer regions—and I imagine the member for Albert would be aware of this from areas in his electorate—is that when an electorate is on the fringes it tends to be the area that imports a lot of social problems and unemployment because that is where people can live affordably. My electorate has those problems. I have spent six and a half years trying to build up my area, provide Government infrastructure, provide services, and create jobs in the community.

Every Government member who talks about the effect on a town of losing a single railway family would understand that it is just the same in an area such as Caboolture where these problems exist. If we lose a single Government-employed family then we lose kids from schools and money from local businesses. The regional office of community corrections in my electorate is to close. The region is to be shut down. It is the only region that is being shut down, but it is the one that is administered from Caboolture. A handful of jobs will go. There is no reason in my mind for those jobs to go. The staff are to be redeployed and will live and work in other parts of the State, not necessarily in Caboolture. We will lose them from our area and we will lose those kids from our schools. Why is it going to be closed down? There will be no saving in staff numbers.

My understanding—although it is an anecdotal understanding from talking to people in the real estate industry in town—is

that the lease on the premises has four years to run. The Caboolture Shire Council is building a four-storey office building about 200 yards away from that office. The community corrections office is probably not well located in terms of a desirable position. Therefore, it is unlikely that we will find somebody to fill the premises. So for four years the Government is going to be paying the rent on the premises and the salaries of those people. There will be additional costs if the Caboolture area office of community corrections, for example, is to be administered from Rockhampton, as I understand it is.

But it is worse. I understand also that the Sunshine Coast Q-Build regional budget was slashed by \$2m. This will have the effect of losing about 20 jobs in my community. We cannot stand to lose those jobs. Our community is suffering now. This Government is dismantling the good work that was done in the area over a number of years.

A number of members have spoken about police during this debate. In February and March 1995, Mr Cooper was making merry in the newspapers, saying that the Redcliffe district, including Caboolture, required an extra 100 police officers.

Mr Hollis: Where are they?

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: The member for Redcliffe asks, "Where are they?"

Mr Hamill: They weren't going to be in the intake mid year, were they?

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: I doubt whether they were going to be in the mid-year intake. Since he has come to office, Mr Cooper has suddenly become an advocate for the position of the former Government. He is now accepting the figures that were provided to the former Government to present to this Chamber.

I say in passing, because it bears being said, that the saddest aspect of the debate about police numbers is that both sides of the argument are correct. The Government position—the position that comes through the Minister and that which came through the former Minister—refers to the number of police salaries that are being paid. The Opposition position, previously the union position, refers to the number of people who turn up for roster every day. A gap exists between those two, and that is the figure that is sad. We need to take some sort of action to address the problem that is causing that gap. Whether it be caused by officers required for relief duties or officers on extended sick leave, that is the problem and we need to address it.

I turn now to Caboolture Hospital. The Minister for Health has indicated that Stage 2 will go ahead on schedule, for completion in 1999. We have to be grateful that he is committed to that. However, the former Minister, Mr Beattie, had indicated publicly that that capital works project was to be accelerated, and Stage 2 of Caboolture Hospital would have been completed in 1998. We are going to wait a little longer. I guess that, bearing in mind the way the place is being torn down in other areas, we have to accept that that is not a bad result.

Recently, the Minister for Families rose in this place and indicated that he has allocated an extra \$1m for Department of Families staff for certain areas. That is fine, except that in my community we have had a desperate need for a very long time for our own office looking after families. The Minister has given an undertaking that that will go ahead, subject to budgetary constraints. I am looking forward to seeing whether we are constrained by the coming Budget.

I turn now to the seeming reluctance of the Government to bring forward the Local Government (Morayfield Shopping Centre Zoning) Bill. That Bill was introduced into the Parliament on 16 May. It is necessary that that Bill be passed before work commences on the Morayfield shopping centre. That shopping centre is not in my electorate, but it is important to the people in my electorate. It is important because of the jobs that it will provide. I have mentioned the way that the Government is removing jobs from the area; this project will bring jobs into the area. Some 900 jobs will come to the Caboolture area during the construction phase, and 1,200 jobs will be available on completion of the project when the shops are tenanted and the centre is fully operational. That is employment that we cannot afford to have delayed, yet this Parliament has the Local Government (Morayfield Shopping Centre Zoning) Bill listed as No. 6 on the Notice Paper. It is an important Bill for my area. It ought to pass through Parliament relatively simply and quickly; yet we cannot find the time to do it. Why can we not find that time?

That shopping centre will provide the 100,000-plus residents of Caboolture Shire with something that all members probably take for granted—something that Mr Stephan takes for granted in Gympie, something that is taken for granted in Townsville and something that is taken for granted in Kingaroy—a movie theatre. Caboolture Shire has 100,000 people, and there is no movie theatre.

Mr Perrett: We don't have one in Kingaroy.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: Don't you? The people can watch the peanuts grow out there, so there is plenty of entertainment.

Mr Stephan: You have got to use the facility.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: If it does not exist, it cannot be used. I can tell honourable members that Caboolture businesses believe that it is worth while to advertise on the movie screens at the Strathpine shopping centres, because that is where the Caboolture community goes for a movie. For those who live on Bribie Island, travelling to the movie theatre at Strathpine is a rather long trip, particularly if one is taking young kids to watch the holiday movies. That project is extremely important to the people of Caboolture, not only for the jobs, not only for the movie theatre and the social infrastructure that will come with it, but also for the economic benefit generally to the town that such a shopping centre will provide by drawing people. As the honourable member for Barambah would know, a number of his constituents already travel regularly to Caboolture to shop at the shops that are already there. We would like to be able to provide a better shopping experience for our cousins from a little further west, and I am sure that, with the improvement to the D'Aguilar Highway that Mr Perrett is going to ensure occurs over the next few years, that trip down will be more pleasant.

Mr DOLLIN (Maryborough) (4.55 p.m.): It is little wonder that the people of Maryborough right across the political spectrum are starting to question the ability of the Borbidge/Sheldon Government to handle the job of governing this State. They are now witnessing a city that prospered under the previous Goss Labor Government grinding slowly to a halt, due mainly to the Government's freeze on everything. They are now remembering that, under the previous National Party Government, Maryborough was brought to its knees and many businesses went to the wall after the closing down of sandmining on Fraser Island with the subsequent loss of 500 jobs. The affected workers were dumped and not a cent of compensation or any assistance for relocation or to obtain jobs was forthcoming. Nothing has changed.

We saw the Minister for Environment—

Mr Stephan: Not for Gympie, it wasn't.

Mr DOLLIN: I represented my people very well. The honourable member did not do such a good job.

A couple of weeks ago, we saw that the Minister for Environment, Mr Littleproud, sack out of hand nine rangers in the Great Sandy National Park, a World Heritage area, again without any compensation or redundancy payments. Fortunately those workers had wisely invested in membership of the Australian Workers Union, and the union was able to secure for them a redundancy payment—something that Minister Littleproud fought against.

In 1989, Walkers engineering was at the crossroads and looked like being lost to Maryborough. At that time, 320 people worked at Walkers; today 650 people work there. Those figures speak for themselves. That turnaround is due to a considerable extent to the Queensland Rail contracts for trains, Gold Coast rolling stock, and the \$65m contract for the prestigious tilt train that is soon to be running up and down our coast.

There is growing concern in Maryborough and surrounding districts that this Government's freeze and deregulation of Government departments is turning the clock back to the eighties. I will give honourable members a few examples. The Consumer Affairs Office in Maryborough was staffed by an officer and an assistant. Without a doubt, it was one of the busiest offices in the State, with staff barely coping with the multitude of complaints and concerns that they had to respond to. What did this Government do? It transferred that officer to Brisbane and reduced the number of office hours for his assistance to five. That leaves Maryborough with a Clayton's Consumer Affairs Office. I can assure whoever is the Minister who is responsible for Consumer Affairs—

Mr J. N. Goss: Don't you know?

Mr DOLLIN: No, I do not know, because, if the honourable member looks at the list of portfolios, he will see that Consumer Affairs is not listed. That illustrates the lack of importance this Government places on seeing consumers get a fair go. That has not gone unnoticed by the citizens of Maryborough across the political spectrum. I ask Mr Goss: who is the Minister for Consumer Affairs?

Mr J. N. Goss: It is the Minister for Justice.

Mr DOLLIN: Is he? Why does he not list it in his portfolio?

The new Community Health Service office financed from the last Goss Labor Government Budget at \$1.2m has been completed for months and has been forced to try to service the total Wide Bay population of

about 70,000 people with—would members believe—one mobile telephone. That has caused great annoyance and inconvenience to the citizens who need to utilise those very important services. If one can get through on the mobile, most people in desperation ring the hospital board operator at the Maryborough Base Hospital, and a runner is sent 400 metres across to the Community Health Service office with a note. This Government had no trouble finding \$65m to play the share market and to give away \$200m in toll money, but it allows situations like that to exist in a very important health service. Is it any wonder that even its own supporters are beginning to wonder if they elected a Government that is not up to doing the job of governing this State?

Another instance is the \$5.5m Goss Government funded Wide Bay regional linen service which was finished in February this year and which should have been operational last April. About two weeks ago it just started trialing. This Government allowed that \$5.5m laundry to sit idle for months. I ask why? Is it incompetence? Is it because of the freeze? Or is it because the Government just cannot manage?

There are many other instances where this Government's freeze, applied by the Treasurer Mrs Sheldon, has brought planned and very often funded work in my electorate to a standstill. The much-needed widening of the Granville bridge, which was funded to the tune of \$2.2m by the Goss Government, still has not been started. It was to be started in March, then May, then June, and now the last promise is 22 July. I assure the Minister for Main Roads and Transport that the citizens of Granville are fast running out of patience with those delays. That bridge has been the scene of many close calls as hundreds of school children and workers are riding their bicycles across this bridge twice a day, mixing with timber trucks, cane lorries and general traffic. Sadly and tragically, there has been one fatal accident involving a bicycle. I certainly hope that there is not another accident while we wait for this Government to get on with the job. After all, the bridge was funded over a year ago.

To add insult to injury to the many people waiting for Housing Commission accommodation, this Government has stalled the construction of new units and the redevelopment of existing units in the Maryborough region. Nine units in Jupiter Street, Maryborough, sit vacant awaiting a decision from this no-action, cannot-do Government. It has been speculated that the

redevelopment of these units has been turned into a slap-up paint job rather than the refurbishing that was funded by the previous Goss Government. Builders who won tenders to construct units have contacted me wondering what is going on. Those people cannot sit around idle forever waiting for the Government to make a decision. The Minister who is responsible does not seem to be able to say "Yes" or "No"; he just leaves people hanging.

Similar problems have occurred with the Maryborough Wahrenonga nursing home. Units and cottages sit vacant while the waiting list for accommodation gets longer and longer. It appears that the residents of the home and those on the waiting list are being forced into units in private retirement villages, which most of them cannot afford. Most people on the waiting list would be quite happy to have the accommodation that is currently being left empty.

This Government appears to have little sympathy for the inadequate youth sporting facilities in Maryborough. The new community recreation centre, which was promised by the Goss Government, is now not being considered. The Minister for Sport has indicated that he is not interested in talking to the Mayor of Maryborough and community representatives about it. I hope that he will give it full consideration in the forthcoming Budget.

To add to this freeze, this Government has planned a \$100m cut in education spending. It would appear that this Government is going to turn back the clock to the time when, under the previous National Party Government, teachers in Queensland were the worst paid teachers in Australia and class numbers were the highest in Australia. If this cut in education is administered it will be the greatest disaster in education in Australia after what Kennett did to education in Victoria. It would appear that this Queensland Government is mimicking Jeff Kennett's slashing of the Victorian education system. In fact, this Government has even enlisted the same Victorian who was responsible for the debacle in that State to cut and slash here in Queensland. I say to teachers and students, "Look out." If those cuts go ahead in Maryborough and Hervey Bay up to 60 teachers could lose their jobs and school class numbers would go up to 35 or more. The most offensive part of this horrendous cutback, if it is applied, is that the education of students in my electorate would be severely compromised. Those young people are the

future of our region and our country. They need the best education possible.

I would like to turn the attention of the House to the Government's plan to sell off the farm, sell off the business, and virtually sell off most of the services provided by the Government. The first to go would be the State's electricity industry. In my electorate of Maryborough, the downgrading has started already. Five jobs have gone. Under this Government's proposal, the Wide Bay Regional Electricity Board would go, and that would mean more jobs lost for Maryborough—a town already reeling under the heavy hand of this Government's freeze on everything.

Maryborough's natural resources regional office has been downgraded from a regional office to a district office. That will result in more jobs being lost. The regional offices of the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development and Sport and Recreation are under a cloud. They will either be downgraded or closed, resulting in more jobs lost as this Government centralises everything in the south-east corner. The other entities earmarked for privatisation include water, roads, rail, sport, health, primary industries, housing, Treasury and industrial relations. I find it astonishing and incredible that this Government would want to privatise the State's forestry and sell off Crown land. In Maryborough that would have serious ramifications because one of Maryborough's biggest industries is timber.

It is hard to believe that this coalition Government has been in power for only a few short months. In that time it has foreshadowed selling off almost anything, including the profitable, efficient Suncorp, which put \$93m into Treasury last year alone. Maryborough will lose again because many of its citizens, who have banked or dealt with Suncorp for most of their lives, will probably have to find alternative banking arrangements because the Suncorp branch will go along with many other regional branches throughout Queensland.

Queensland's reputation for being a low-tax State is about to swirl down the gurgler. Under the Goss Government, Queensland was the only State not to have a fuel tax. That issue is well and truly back on the agenda. All of those cuts and trimmings, privatisations and freezes will have the biggest impact on ordinary wage earners, pensioners, low-income families and the unemployed who rely on subsidised services to make ends meet. That is where this Government is aiming its Budget cuts. Maryborough has a high

percentage of low-income earners and unemployed. Pensioners will be amongst the hardest hit by this Government's uncaring, privatise-everything attitude.

I am a strong believer that all essential services should remain the property of the people. I believe strongly that the selling off of our financial institutions, our rail, roads, power, water, forestry and public lands, is the absolute pits. It is stupid and it is without any moral fibre. If this Government goes ahead and sells off public utilities it will have betrayed our State and its people. I believe that this Government will have a hard time selling that sort of deceit to the National Party rank and file who, I am sure, will not cop this type of treachery. I ask: who will end up owning our country? Big business and big monopolies that would be mostly managed and financed from overseas! Those people would control totally all of our assets and we would become slaves to big, mostly foreign monopolies. I ask this Government, for the sake of our people and for our future, to step back from this madness. I think that the National Party members of this place would not be agreeing with it. I do not think that this is National Party policy. I think that they have been led up the garden path by the Premier, Mr Borbidge—who is half a National, half a Liberal—and by the Liberal Party. I ask the member for Gladstone, Mrs Cunningham, who has the power of veto, to not support the privatisation of our essential services. She has the power; she should use it wisely.

There must be many members sitting opposite on the Government benches who could not support the placing of our State resources and essential services into the hands of foreign monopolies. There is no need to do that. If those members who, deep down, do not want any part of this sell-off and do not do something to stop it, this Government will surely go down in history as the rotten Government that sold the farm and disinherited our people.

Mr ROBERTS (Nudgee) (5.09 p.m.): I wish to speak on four issues that affect my electorate. Firstly, I want to speak about the upgrade of the Banyo Railway Station. I want to follow that by speaking about matters affecting public housing in the Zillmere area. I also want to make some comments about the recent negotiations on the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement and, finally, say a few words about the need for a community recreation centre in the Zillmere district.

On 4 April I put a question on notice to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads in relation to the planned upgrade or redevelopment of the Banyo Railway Station. The Minister basically answered that the planned completion date for the upgrade works was the end of October 1996. I asked that question because the previous Government had given a commitment to upgrade the Banyo Railway Station and, as most members would do, I had advised the people within my electorate of that upgrade. However, soon after the change of Government a number of rumours started to circulate within the community, and within Queensland Rail, suggesting that a decision had been made that the station would not be upgraded. To clear the matter up, I put the question on notice and on 15 May I received an answer.

In his answer the Minister indicated, as I have said, that the completion date for the redevelopment project would be the end of October 1996, which is about 16 weeks away from today's date. I have every confidence that this particular station can be rebuilt within 16 weeks. Some of the features of the new station will include a modern, airconditioned office for the staff, new public toilets with access for the disabled, more shelter for passengers, a public telephone, a drinking fountain, increased security surveillance with the provision of additional security cameras, and also an additional shelter. In his answer the Minister said that the redevelopment cost would be \$275,000. As I have said, I am confident that this work can be completed within 16 weeks.

However, I am concerned—a concern which is based on the earlier rumours—that to date not one sod of soil has been turned in relation to that project. I am hoping, on behalf of my constituents, that work will commence very shortly. If the promised completion date of the end of October is met, I will personally invite the Minister to my electorate and we can jointly open the station buildings on 1 November. I and my constituents are certainly looking forward to that day.

Over a period I have received a number of complaints from constituents about access to public housing in my electorate. Of course, we are all aware of the waiting times that are applicable to various types of housing. Three homes are situated in Coxen Street, Zillmere, and eight or 10 seniors units in Rowell Street, Zillmere, which have been unoccupied for various periods. The seniors units have been unoccupied since August 1995—approximately 12 months. The three homes

have been unoccupied for periods ranging from just under nine months to 22 months. It seems unacceptable that this housing stock was apparently available, yet tenants were not being placed in them.

Therefore, on Tuesday 16 April I asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing about this matter, and on 14 May I received a response. The Minister advised me that the three departmental homes in Coxen Street would be sold for removal forthwith. I remind the Deputy Speaker that that was as at 14 May. Currently, those homes are still there and they are still unoccupied, and my constituents are still questioning why three homes in Zillmere are unoccupied when, with a little bit of work, they could well be used by public tenants. In making that criticism I acknowledge that those homes remained vacant for periods under the Labor Government. However, I believe that no matter who forms an administration, it is unacceptable to leave public housing unoccupied and unused for that period.

With respect to the units, again the Minister responded that they would be repaired to enable early reoccupancy if it was economically viable. It was anticipated that, subject to technical advice received, they would be reoccupied in June. In May a decision was made to do something forthwith about the houses, and, subject to technical advice, the units were to be reoccupied by June. However, it is now July and nothing has been done. I request the Minister—who is not present in the Chamber at the moment—to make some decision within the department to do something about the houses in Coxen Street and the seniors units in Rowell street as soon as possible so that we can start to get tenants into them.

A few speakers have already made reference to some of the matters arising out of the recent Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement negotiations and I agree with many of the concerns that have been raised in relation to this matter. I refer particularly to an article in the *Courier-Mail* of 17 June which reported on the COAG meeting where new funding arrangements for public housing were discussed, and the discussion paper that arose out of that particular meeting.

The key elements of the new proposal, as I understand them, are that tenants in public housing would be charged the market rent of their home. Another element is that the Commonwealth would then provide rental assistance at the same levels to both eligible private and public sector tenants. Further, the

Commonwealth would then withdraw from the provision of capital grants for things such as the construction and maintenance of existing premises and the purchase of new housing stock and that, as a result of those arrangements, the States would be required to finance these activities out of the profits they would receive from the increased amounts of money they got from rent.

In relation to my concerns about this proposal, I am pleased to at least hear the Minister indicate that he has strong reservations about these proposals. However, he has not ruled out the Government going down the track that is being proposed. If the Minister has strong reservations, I would have to say that I have severe reservations about these proposals and that I have concerns about a number of areas. My first concern relates to the level of rental assistance that will be provided to public housing tenants in particular. As members would be aware, at the moment public housing tenants pay a rent based on their income levels, and the gap between what they actually pay and the market rent for the particular property takes the form of a Government subsidy. The question that is going to be on the minds of many public housing tenants is: will the level of rent assistance provided by the Commonwealth under these new arrangements be enough to bridge the gap between what they currently pay and what the market rent is for the properties in their particular area?

Mr T. B. Sullivan: There are many concerned people fronting into our offices already, not knowing what is going to happen.

Mr ROBERTS: The member for Chermside is correct. I know that a number of members from the north side have received calls from many people, particularly the elderly, who are very concerned about whether the proposed rent assistance subsidy will be enough to ensure that they do not have to dig deep into their pockets to make up the difference between the market rent that is going to be charged and what they are currently charged.

Of course, the other issue—and the Minister touched upon it in his ministerial statement this morning—relates to whether the level of subsidy will be the same across-the-board or whether it will take into account the different levels of rent that might be provided between different suburbs in the city or between country and city areas. I am quite concerned, and until we get a clear answer from the Government on this issue

public housing tenants should be very concerned. They should be asking questions about the level of subsidy that will be provided if these arrangements are entered into.

As the Commonwealth will now be, in a sense, withdrawing from providing capital funding for new works and so on, the other concern that I have arising out of these arrangements is the level of commitment that the Government has to public housing itself and, in particular, the amount of money that will be allocated to public housing by this Government. I suppose that that concern is raised in the light of documents such as the Commission of Audit, where it appears that everything is up for sale.

The other main concern that I feel many public housing tenants will have arising from the discussion that is taking place at the national and State level is the issue of security of tenure for public tenants, especially when we talk about the possible privatisation of certain elements of the public housing sector.

The proposals being discussed at the national level may have the effect of trying to steer people away from public housing more into the private sector. In the private sector, if tenants cannot meet the market rent demanded by the landlord, out they go. Under the current situation with public housing tenants, security of tenure is enhanced by the method under which their rental levels are calculated. We know that there is a direct link between the rent that public housing tenants pay and their income levels. If their income level rises, their rent rises; if their income level drops, their rent drops. That principle will go out the door if these new proposals are implemented.

I am concerned also about a particular comment the Minister made this morning in his ministerial statement. He outlined the potential benefits of this new scheme. Then he went on to say that it will also mean that the housing and construction industry in Queensland will receive a boost. Of concern to me was his further comment that private developers can be expected to build accommodation specifically for people qualifying for subsidies. My question to the Minister and the Government is: what does the Minister mean by that statement? Does he mean that the private sector will start to rub its hands together because there will somehow be some market for cheap accommodation? Will this mean the end of the tremendous efforts that the Labor Government, particularly that which commenced under Tom Burns, put into improving the quality of the housing for

public housing tenants in terms of their design and features? Given his statement, the Minister has an obligation to explain fully what he means. What type of housing does he expect the private sector to build specifically for people qualifying for subsidies? That is an important question and one which deserves an answer.

In respect of the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement and the current negotiations—at the moment, we need a few commitments from the Government: firstly, that public housing tenants will not be charged more than the current proportions of their income for rent; secondly, that existing tenants will not be disadvantaged under these new proposals; and, thirdly, that at the very least current levels of expenditure are maintained in the public housing sector, and that a guarantee be given that any proceeds of sales of public housing stock will be reinvested into public housing.

The final issue that I wish to raise relates to the suburb of Zillmere, which forms quite a large slice of my electorate. I have spoken a couple times in this place about that area's need for community development, in particular the need for a community recreation centre. Today, I put a question on notice to the Minister in relation to this matter, and I will allow him to respond. However, I wish to raise the matter again, because it is a matter about which I feel very strongly.

The previous Government committed \$50m over five years for the Community Recreation Centre Program. Under the chair of Clem Jones, a committee was put together and a report was prepared for the department which identified the areas within Queensland most in need of these facilities. Zillmere was identified in the top 10 areas of need in this State for a community recreation facility. In Brisbane, Zillmere was identified as the area most in need of a community recreation facility.

I have raised this matter with the Minister on a couple of occasions. Indeed, he recently wrote to me and acknowledged the need for a facility within this district. That followed very closely on from an answer to a previous question on notice that I put to him in which he again acknowledged that Zillmere was identified in the top 10 areas of the State needing one of these facilities. I have asked, on the basis of those acknowledgments from the Minister, that funding be made available to allow a community recreation facility to be built in the Zillmere district. It is an area which deserves attention in this respect. It does have

some problems, and I strongly believe that community development—something which draws the community together—will be a great bonus to not only the young people who live in that area but also the many elderly and well-established residents who need facilities of this nature to improve their quality of life. I will continue again and again to raise in this place and with the Ministers responsible the issue of providing appropriate funding for a recreation centre in the Zillmere district.

Hon. D. J. SLACK (Burnett—Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier) (5.25 p.m.), in reply: These Appropriation Bills have been made necessary by the scheduling of the 1996-97 Budget for September of this year. This has proved to be a wise decision given the true fiscal position of this State—a position that is far worse than the former Government led us to believe was the case. This precarious position has been confirmed by the Commission of Audit headed by Dr Vince FitzGerald. For the first time, an assessment of the State's position has been made on an accrual basis. What it has revealed is not only a deficit of \$337m at this time but also a built-in worsening of the situation to the tune of \$200m to \$250m a year.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The Honourable the Minister is misleading the House. The Premier told the Parliament this morning that the estimated surplus in the National Fiscal Outlook was lower than the likely result to be achieved in 1995-96. They were the Premier's words.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stephan): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr SLACK: The Commission of Audit has shown that, again on an accrual basis, the starting position for the 1996-97 Budget is a deficit of \$820m.

I thank honourable Government members Dr David Watson, Mr Bob Harper, Mr Mark Stoneman, Miss Fiona Simpson and Mr Marc Rowell for their worthwhile contributions to this debate. I also thank the honourable Opposition members for their contributions, but I wish I could say that their comments contained merit.

The honourable member for Ipswich gave a very confused speech in which he displayed a very sorry lack of knowledge of State finances and the ways in which they can be measured. The honourable member complained that accrual accounting is not the usual form in which Government accounts are presented and that we were not comparing like with like. He is ignoring the fact that all

States, including Queensland, are moving to adopt accrual accounting as the formal basis for their finances. His own Government was trialing accrual accounting, which is the form of accounting universally used by the private sector as the most accurate form in which to record accounts. Indeed, the honourable member for Ipswich was being hypocritical in the extreme by attempting to malign accrual accounting when he himself used a different measure of Government accounts, the Government Financial Statistics method—GFS in common usage—when attempting to use the Commonwealth National Fiscal Outlook to criticise the Commission of Audit's report.

The National Fiscal Outlook data is prepared on Government Financial Statistics terms. That means that it includes superannuation and a wider range of Government authorities than did the Commission of Audit, but does not include the corresponding future superannuation liabilities. The superannuation component included in the National Fiscal Outlook figures averages about \$950m per year from 1996-97 to 1998-99. Over the same period, the National Fiscal Outlook surplus averages only about \$450m per year. Thus, the actual National Fiscal Outlook situation, excluding superannuation, is a deficit of about \$500m per year. The State currently uses a cash accounting system which is a separate method from both accrual and Government Financial Statistics accounting. On this basis, prior to the Premiers Conference outcome being known, the 1996-97 starting Budget position was a deficit of \$240m. This includes the previous Government's election commitments. When the \$185m Commonwealth funding cuts are included, the starting deficit worsens to \$425m.

The honourable Leader of the Opposition, in addition to continuing to mislead the public on the cost of the coalition's election commitments, also attempted to maintain the fiction that the State was in a position of negative net debt. Just as the reality of the cost of the coalition's commitments was a total of \$1.6 billion over three years, not the ridiculous \$7 billion that Mr Beattie is claiming, so the reality is that the State is in a position of real underlying net debt of \$5.9 billion. Just as Mr Hamill has ignored superannuation liabilities in his dodgy deficit claim, so Mr Beattie is ignoring them in his nefarious net debt statement. It is not acceptable to count an asset without counting any corresponding liabilities, as any business person would tell the honourable member if he bothered to ask.

The honourable Leader of the Opposition also assumed, with no cause whatsoever, that

we will be implementing all of the privatisation recommendations contained in the audit report. The Government has not yet formally accepted any of the report's recommendations, and so the honourable member is very much getting ahead of himself. We shall be setting up an Audit Commission Implementation Office to examine the report's recommendations and develop detailed implementation strategies for the broad themes of the report. Each of the individual recommendations will be evaluated according to its own merits and the Government will make decisions on each one in due course. No wonder the credibility of the honourable Leader of the Opposition is non-existent. People find it hard to believe anything a person who so blatantly uses false figures says.

Turning again to the honourable member for Ipswich—another example of his confused grasp of State finances can be seen in his analysis of the outcome of the Premiers Conference. He contended that the State would actually be getting \$72m more in 1996-97 than in the previous year, so how could we claim that there had been a cut in Federal funding? This is such a basic error that it seriously makes me doubt the ability of the honourable member for Ipswich to carry out the role of shadow Treasurer.

Financial assistance grants, determined by the Commonwealth, are adjusted for population increases and the relative size of the individual States. Queensland has had a population growth of around 2.5 per cent per year for some time, and also receives a positive weighting for the size of the State. When these factors are taken into account, the State has experienced a real drop in Commonwealth funding of \$185m, not the apparent increase of \$72m. I strongly suggest that the honourable member for Ipswich reads a copy of the Grants Commission report which details this mechanism.

The honourable member for Capalaba also indulged in the same sort of creative accounting that the member for Ipswich and the honourable Leader of the Opposition seem so fond of. He stated that the cost to the State Budget of the removal of the tolls on the Sunshine Motorway was \$200m. The cost to the Budget, on a cash basis, is a net \$7m per year in lost toll revenue, not \$200m. The honourable Leader of the Opposition showed his ignorance when he disagreed with the commission's statement that abolishing the tolls had added only \$4m to the deficit. The commission was referring to the impact on the 1995-96 Budget which, seeing the tolls were

abolished part way through the year, was obviously less than the \$7m for a full year.

Options for managing the outstanding debt are still being considered and final funding arrangements will be determined in the context of the Budget. One commitment is firm, however: whichever approach is finally adopted, the current level of funding for road programs will be maintained, and we have not gone against the recommendations of the Commission of Audit in taking the tolls off, as alleged by the honourable member for Ipswich. In recommending the use of tolls to provide additional transport infrastructure in the future, the commission nowhere stated that tolls should be put on existing roads, as was the case with the Sunshine Motorway.

The honourable member for Ipswich also criticised the Government for purchasing shares in Metway Bank to create a Queensland-based financial institution of national status, rather than using the funds for infrastructure. In response, I would like to point out to the honourable member that the money used for the purchase of those shares was the proceeds from the sale of shares in the Queensland Nickel joint venture. If the Opposition believed that this money should have been used for infrastructure, why did it not use it when it was in Government, instead of letting it sit idle? However, I can assure the House that this money will in fact be used for infrastructure. It will be used both in its own right when it is repaid out of the moneys raised by the listed trust and also used in the sense that the \$1.5 billion net proceeds from the sale of the Government equity in the new bank, whose creation was assisted by the use of these funds, will be spent on upgrading the infrastructure of this State.

The honourable Leader of the Opposition also referred to the purchase of the Metway shares and used the opportunity to try to spread further the myth that this Government was going to be reducing police numbers. What rubbish! We have made a commitment to increase total police numbers this year by 150. We shall meet that commitment. The Premier has already directed the Minister for Police to ensure that this commitment will be met, and it will.

The honourable member for Yeronga alleged that the capital base of the Regional Arts Development Fund was being cut from \$15m to \$10m. Speculation regarding reductions in funding to the Regional Arts Development Fund program is unfounded, and any funding considerations will be subject to the normal Budget processes. The State

Government is committed to continuing and increasing its partnership with local government across a range of programs such as the Regional Arts Development Fund in the future.

The honourable member for Ipswich also said that it was a shame that there was not an economic statement in May. I agree with him. It was a crying shame that we actually had no indication of the quantum of cuts to be made by the Commonwealth prior to the Premiers Conference. It would have been totally pointless to have published an economic statement with a shelf life of a month. It would have been a waste of scarce Treasury resources, and the Opposition would have been the first to criticise us for such a waste. We have also been suffering from Labor chickens coming home to roost, the latest of which, the workers' compensation fiasco, has losses which are only now becoming clear.

Another headless Labor chook—or, I should say, rooster—is the complete mess in which the current Leader of the Opposition left the Health Department. Health budget overruns and unfunded capital works commitments are only now crystallising. It is only now that the quantum of the problem is becoming clear that we are able to sit down and develop the strategies to counter these unexpected imposts to the State Budget. These strategies will inevitably involve pain, but better to face this pain squarely than to paint a false rosy picture which would lead the people of Queensland to even greater disappointment later. This is a lesson which the Opposition has yet to learn. It is in fact the reason why it is now in Opposition.

I again commend these Bills to the House.

Motion agreed to.

Committee

Hon D. J. Slack (Burnett—Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier) in charge of the Bills.

Appropriation Bill

Clause 1—

Mr FOURAS (5.39 p.m.): I want to speak on the appropriation for the Parliament. I have serious concerns that the Parliament will be asked to find \$1m worth of savings in the next Budget. As the previous Speaker, I went through two Budgets having to save \$1m and then \$2m. As members would be aware,

40-odd staff members left the service under voluntary early retirement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Members are speaking to the Appropriation Bill first.

Mr FOURAS: Not the parliamentary one?

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member want to speak to the Appropriation Bill?

Mr FOURAS: No. I want to speak to the parliamentary one.

The CHAIRMAN: We will deal with the Appropriation Bill first.

Mr FOLEY: I noted with interest the observation with respect to public funding in the capital base of the Regional Arts Development Fund. Members of the Committee will be deeply disturbed to hear the explanation proffered by the Government with respect to this matter. For what is being told to the Parliament and to the people of Queensland is that this will all be revealed in the Budget. The Budget is not to come down until September, yet the Regional Arts Development Fund was due to make its payments in May to local authorities and, through them, to artists throughout regional Queensland. So it would appear from the statement made to the House that artists, dancers and ceramic artists throughout the length and breadth of Queensland now have to wait yet another two months before they are to receive the support that was promised to them as a result of the initiative of the Goss Labor Government. I am mindful of my colleague, the member for Maryborough, who has been approached by applicants for grants through the Regional Arts Development Fund and, indeed, the council itself.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am advised that this debate should be on clause 2. I have only put clause 1. I will put clause 1, and then the member can speak to clause 2.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—

Mr FOLEY (5.41 p.m.): The sad fact of the matter is that the Regional Arts Development Fund has been left in a parlous state by this Government. Regional Arts Development Fund committees throughout this State have been working hand in hand with local authorities to develop projects and have been waiting and waiting to receive funding. It is the worst kept secret in the Government that it has slashed the capital base from \$15m to \$10m. Even more disturbing than that act is this constant delay in coming clean with the facts.

It is very important for the arts in Queensland that there be a system which is reliable and one in which there is good cooperation between the State Government and local government. That is why Wayne Goss, as Arts Minister, initiated the Regional Arts Development Fund and why my colleague Dean Wells, the member for Murrumba, continued it and led to its enhancement. That is why I continued to support it strongly during my term as the Minister for the Arts. I do strongly urge the Government to reconsider its position and to reconsider the slashing of that funding, because it has most adverse consequences. Over the past couple of weeks I have travelled to regional areas of Queensland to talk with members of Regional Arts Development Fund committees in Cairns, for example, who are most concerned about the uncertainty, the lack of information and the cut to arts funding which is apparent from the Government. It is important for all Queenslanders to support arts in their local and regional communities. That is why the fund has such an important role. Arts is not something which occurs merely in the winter palaces of the capital. Arts should be part of the everyday life of ordinary citizens, be they in Bardon or Biloela.

Mr McGrady: Or Mount Isa.

Mr FOLEY: Or, indeed, Mount Isa. I thank the honourable member for Mount Isa. I am mindful of his active interest in the arts in the Mount Isa region.

Mr Hamill: They have a shocking record already. Look at what they did to the project at the powerhouse at New Farm.

Mr FOLEY: I must say that I was deeply shocked by the failure of this Government to stand up for Queensland when we lost a national arts institute. I refer to the National Institute of Indigenous Performing Arts, which was to be established at the powerhouse museum at New Farm. That project was strongly supported by Labor Governments at Federal, State and local levels. It was a project that showed respect for the indigenous performing arts—not the sort of disrespect and embarrassing disparagement that we heard from the member for Beaudesert during his remarks on Aboriginal dance. This was a project which sought to put Brisbane well and truly on the national and international map and which sought to celebrate Brisbane and Queensland as a place of excellence in art and culture.

Mr Hamill: A considerable amount of funding was lost as a result.

Mr FOLEY: As the shadow Treasurer observes, a great deal of funding has been lost to Queensland as a result of it. Where has it gone? It has gone back to Sydney. For the life of me I cannot understand why this Government has failed to stand up for Queensland.

I should draw the attention of this Committee to one or two matters concerning the expenditure of public funds in my own electorate of Yeronga. In particular, I strongly urge the members of the Parliament to read carefully the 451 signatures that appeared on the petition that was read out by the Clerk of the Parliament today expressing the strong desire of the people of my electorate to resist any downgrading of the Annerley Police Station. I have been most disturbed by reports that the Police Service is undertaking a review which could lead to the reduction of police staff from the Annerley Police Station and their relocation to the Dutton Park Police Station.

The establishment of the Annerley Police Station as a 24-hour police station was done during a term of the Goss Labor Government. This upgrading of the police station was welcomed by the citizens of my electorate as being a manifestation of the strong actions on the part of the Labor Government to combat crime and to support community policing at the local level. I respect the views of senior police officers who undertake reviews to achieve administrative efficiency, but in this case the suggestion of downgrading the Annerley Police Station is one which should be rejected. Frankly, we need to be providing extra resources to enable police to be on the beat and to walk through the shopping centres at Annerley in order to build up the relationship between police and local members of the community. In that respect I strongly urge the Minister for Police, Mr Cooper, to resist any attempts to downgrade the police station at Annerley.

Furthermore, I strongly urge Mr Cooper, the Minister for Police, to listen sympathetically to the representations that I have made to him on behalf to the South West Brisbane District Chamber of Commerce in respect of the establishment of a police shopfront at the Moorvale Shopping Centre at Moorooka. That project was suggested by local businesspeople in response to the community concern arising out of the awful armed robbery at Moorooka late last year. Members of the local community would like to see the establishment of a police shopfront facility at the Moorvale Shopping Centre at Moorooka. I support strongly their wishes in that respect, and I urge the Government to give favourable

consideration to that proposal. It is one that has the support not only of local businesspeople but also local residents. The police shopfront facility could add to the fine work already being done by police officers at the Moorooka Police Station in the course of their duties.

The provision of police resources is an important part of public expenditure. I strongly urge the Government to make sure that the provision of police resources within the electorate of Yeronga is maintained and, indeed, enhanced for the benefit of my constituents, the local community and the good of the community as a whole.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: Mr Chairman, I have questions to ask the Minister in relation to each of the Bills currently forming part of this cognate debate. I would be interested if you could advise me of my entitlement to speak during the Committee stage of this cognate debate. Am I entitled to double the speaking time?

The CHAIRMAN: You can speak to both Bills for the normal allocated time.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: Does that mean that I would have six opportunities to talk?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: If I may, I shall deal firstly with the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: We are debating only the Appropriation Bill now.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: I can talk only to the first Bill now. In relation to the Appropriation Bill, what we have seen from the Government in respect of its dealing with the finances of this State has been an exercise in chicanery that is breathtaking in its recklessness. The people of the Caboolture electorate, specifically those living on Bribie Island at Ningi, at Godwin Beach, at Bribie Pines and areas between those towns and the Bruce Highway, were promised categorically in the 1995 election campaign that the Caboolture-Bribie Island road would be upgraded to four lanes in the first term of a National Party Government.

As a consequence of the result of the Mundingburra by-election, Queensland now has a National Party-led coalition Government. On behalf of my constituents I asked a quite reasonable question as to when work would commence on four-laning that road to the standard that is desired by the community of Bribie Island. It is certainly warranted. I received an answer from the Minister for Transport that indicated that he was not going

to do it for reasons that were somewhat disappointing to me as the local member, but even more disappointing to all those people who are dependent on that road for their access to and from their homes and work. The reason that was given was that that promise was an unauthorised local promise made by the local candidate which did not have to be fulfilled by a Government of National Party persuasion.

That is somewhat stunning in terms of its application, because that means that the modus operandi of the National Party is to say to each of its candidates in each of the electorates in this State that that candidate has its authority to make unauthorised election promises—in this instance, to the tune of \$30m. It costs \$30m to provide a road of four-lane standard between the Bruce Highway and Bribie Island. That candidate made that promise. He was unsuccessful and the Government resiled from that promise.

Mr Lingard: I heard that fellow say he would make better representations than you would.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: He probably would say that, but I know that he would say that with his tongue in his cheek.

Mr T. B. Sullivan: He also said he'd win.

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN: Yes, he also said that he would win. I am provoked by the interjection. Mr Newton is making noises about running for the position of mayor again. I urge him not to do that because I believe that Mr Newton can only afford to lose one more election in his political career and I would hope that it would be against me at the next State election, rather than waste his final loss on the mayoralty.

Returning to the chicanery—if National Party candidates can each promise a \$30m project in their electorates and that promise only has to be delivered if the electorate is won by the National Party, the bottom line is that the coalition in Queensland allowed 45 candidates to make such promises. That is \$1.2 billion worth of unfunded election promises that are involved through that modus operandi. It is no wonder that the Government is in the mess that it is now.

Progress reported.

Debate, on motion of Mr FitzGerald, adjourned.

MERGER OF METWAY, SUNCORP AND QIDC

Mr BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—Leader of the Opposition) (5.59 p.m.): I move—

"That the Parliament of Queensland calls on the minority Government to ensure the proposed merger of Metway, QIDC and Suncorp does not result in job losses and branch closures in Queensland, particularly in rural and provincial Queensland."

This is a serious matter before the House which is of importance to the whole State. Using Treasury estimates, the Opposition believes that the creation of a State bank will cost Queenslanders up to 1,600 jobs, more than 100 branch closures, higher bank charges and at least \$200m in lost revenue to the Budget. How can the Treasurer possibly claim that there will be no cost to Queenslanders? The only thing that the Treasurer can guarantee is that local branches and local jobs will be lost.

The Treasury briefing on what Treasury calls Q-Bank but what the media is calling the "Banana Bank" has a heading titled "Estimated savings and revenue benefits". In other words, why form a State bank? What are the benefits? I will quote the exact wording immediately under that title. I point out to those on the Treasury benches that I am referring to page 90 of the briefing. The briefing states—

"One of the key advantages of bringing together four individual entities is the potential to increase shareholder value through cost reduction (because of the high level of duplication) and an increase in revenue generating capacity. It should be noted that the additional value is unlikely to be fully realised in the first year and some savings will only be achieved at a significant upfront cost in the form of redundancy payments and other costs associated with the rationalisation process."

Redundancy payments! The document states that the first area in which those rationalisation savings could be achieved is branch rationalisation. That is what Treasury has been briefing in relation to this bank.

There are three points from this short section: firstly, Treasury says redundancy payments will cause significant up-front costs; secondly, redundancy payments occur only when people are thrown out of work; it does not occur with natural attrition; and thirdly, branch rationalisation has only one meaning—branch closures. Page 90 of the briefing also states—

"Significant savings are expected

from relatively conservative branch rationalisations, estimated at \$50 million annually."

All the nonsense that we have had from the Premier and the Treasurer on this matter shows gross dishonesty. They know that those closures are going to happen; they know that it has been mentioned in the Treasury briefing; and they have deliberately deceived the people of this State.

If anyone has doubts about the necessity for branch closures and job losses to take place under this proposal, page 131 of the briefing—which, of course, has been tabled already—states—

"The value that is attributed to Qbank arises from its capacity to achieve the cost savings of rationalisations and the additional revenue of the all-finance concept. Failure or a perception of a lack to achieve these benefits will affect value."

In other words, according to Treasury's proposal, branches and jobs must go, otherwise the value of the State bank will suffer. On page 91 of the briefing we are referred to the fact that—

"In practice, it is not expected that all duplicated branches will be closed."

It does not say that no branches will close; it does not say that only a few branches might close; it says that it is not expected that all duplicated branches will close, suggesting that most will close. The briefing gives an example of what might happen if just the duplicated branches in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast were closed. That is 87 branches. The briefing says that that would produce savings of \$50m a year.

I address the following statement to the Treasury benches and the member for Gladstone: for all of those Ministers who are reading the briefing, I point out that page 92 states—

"There would be rationalisation costs involved in redundancy and pay out of building leases for example."

There is that word "redundancy" again. The killer in relation to the Government's arguments about job losses is contained on page 94. A table on that page gives the head office staff levels. It indicates that Suncorp has 216 head office staff; QIDC has 268 head office staff; and Metway has 386 head office staff. That gives a total staff of 870. The briefing states that the new head office of a State bank would require a maximum of 580 staff. That leaves superfluous 290 staff. What

will happen to those 290 poor souls? Will they be left to disappear through natural attrition?

I will read a simple but brutal line from page 156 of the briefing—

"Head office redundancy is achieved solely through forced redundancy."

That is what Treasury said. Another line on page 156 of the briefing states—

"Branch redundancy is achieved 75 per cent through natural attrition."

In other words, one-quarter of all staff will get the boot; one-quarter of all staff will get the sack.

The Government has paid \$4.80 for each Metway share when earlier this year they were considered to be worth only \$3.10. Experts say that that price is far too high. It means that more people than expected will face the sack; it means that more branches will have to be closed.

In this debate, I challenge the Premier to answer these questions. Firstly, did Treasury prepare a briefing for his Government that says the value of the merged bank depends on rationalisation? Secondly, what level of branch closures does this briefing canvas? Thirdly, what level of forced redundancy does this briefing mention? Fourthly, when this briefing talks about job losses in branches, what percentage of the losses are estimated to be through natural attrition? I also ask him if he is prepared to guarantee any of the following points—even one of them. Can he guarantee that there will be no branch closures? Can he guarantee that there will be no job losses at headquarter level? Can he guarantee that there will be no forced redundancies at head offices? Can he guarantee that there will be no forced redundancies in the branches? I ask Mr Borbidge to answer those questions and those challenges.

The answers are also pertinent to each member whose electorate has a Metway branch, a Suncorp branch or a QIDC branch. In case the Premier did not make a note of the questions and challenges that I asked him, I table them so that he can go through them one by one. While I am asking questions, I wonder why the Queensland Government, which is talking about this bank in terms of a State of Origin battle, has ignored Queensland in the build-up to the main game. In which State did the Government find the person selected to head the merger planning group?

Mr Hamill: New South Wales.

Mr BEATTIE: I thank the member—New South Wales. In which State is the company the Government selected to lobby Metway shareholders based?

Mr Hamill: New South Wales.

Mr BEATTIE: New South Wales. In which State is the company the Government employed as its adviser and broker for this merger based?

Mr Hamill: Not New South Wales?

Mr BEATTIE: New South Wales! In which State is the company the Government is employing to perform the independent valuation for the merger based?

Mr Hamill: Let me guess—New South Wales?

Mr BEATTIE: New South Wales! The answers to those questions are New South Wales, New South Wales, New South Wales and New South Wales. What I do not know and what Queenslanders should be told is how much stamp duty the Government paid in New South Wales. How much money did the Government pay to the survey company in New South Wales? In fact, how much money has New South Wales earned so far out of the Government's "Banana Bank" fiasco?

I move to the very serious part of my contribution. For the information of the House, I table the merger fallout and the branches per city and per electorate that will close in this State. I table them both for regional Queensland and for south-east Queensland. Let me read them: in Kingaroy, a branch will close; there will be four closed in Cairns/Barron River; Burdekin will lose a branch; Toowoomba will lose two; Gregory will lose one; Gympie will lose two; Hinchinbrook will lose one; Mackay/Mirani will lose three; the great Mundingburra, which helped bring this Government to office, will lose three branches; Warwick will lose one; Western Downs will lose four; Aspley will lose one; Broadwater will lose one; Burleigh will lose one; Caloundra will lose one; Clayfield will lose one; Greenslopes will lose one—so much for the member's representation—Indooroopilly will lose one; Mansfield will lose one; Maroochydore will lose two; Merrimac will lose one; Moggill will lose one; and Mooloolah will lose one. All of those areas, which are represented by National and Liberal Party members in this House, will lose branches and their constituents will lose jobs. It is hard enough now to get a job in the bush or provincial cities without this Government throwing people out on the street.

If that is not bad enough, look at how the Government handled this matter. I refer to a

report in the Bundaberg *News-Mail* of 1 July. Harry and Beth Allard were reported as saying that they were harassed by the State Government and then left in the dark about the future of their shares in a tug of war to gain control of Metway Bank. The Bundaberg couple said that they received two letters and seven phone calls from State Government agents in an effort to secure their vote against the St George banking manoeuvres. That is how the Government treats Queensland. The Treasurer apologised for that, and so she should. She should have apologised to all Queenslanders.

People cannot believe this Government. This morning, Mr Borbidge talked about my so-called speech about a petrol tax. He misled everybody. He did not quote my speech in full. He did not say that, in that speech, I said that I would be the last to be out there crusading for a fuel tax. What a fraud! I hope that all of those people in the gallery who heard Mr Borbidge mislead Queensland know that. Wayne Goss was dead right about the Honourable Premier when he said, "You cannot trust him. He is the master of the half-truth."

Time expired.

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.09 p.m.): I am pleased to rise to second this motion. What we have seen with this merger is typical Sheldonomics. Right from day one, the Government paid too high a price—\$4.80 a share. When Frank Haly said that \$4.77 was too high and an unreasonable offer from St George, who made the decision to go to \$4.80 half an hour before shareholders were to meet again and decide on the merger? Was it Treasury? Was it Haly, as the Chairman of Metway? Or did Joan get on her mobile from the Ginza in Japan and tell them that she should go to \$4.80? At the end of the day it will be intriguing to find out where that \$4.80 bid came from, because, by going to \$4.80, one has to cut harder and deeper. There will be more rationalisation and severe job losses, because the Government paid too high a price. What has the Treasurer said about this? During a tour of Japan, she claimed that what Japanese investors wanted was a major financial institution in Queensland and that business decisions were made on the basis of whether or not there was a major financial institution in Brisbane. I do not know of any decision made in the last six years—when we were in Government—which was based on having a large financial institution in Queensland.

Mr Fouras: How long will they have it?

Mr ELDER: Exactly. They will have it for more than five years. When this State bank arrives, it will not even rate in the top 100 companies in Australia. What decisions would be made because it was here? None. The Treasurer has not produced one name, not one business person, not one example of investment that has gone south because there has not been a bank head office in Queensland. The reason for that is that there simply is no such example.

The Treasurer suggested that there would be job losses through natural attrition, but nobody believes that. Advice from Mrs Sheldon's own Treasury office states that there will be between 87 and 100 branch closures—and without the Bank of Queensland that figure will be on the higher side—and there will be a minimum of 1,000 jobs lost—and without the Bank of Queensland that figure could be up to 1,500. I can tell honourable members that those job losses will be in regional and rural Queensland and the south-east corner. That will hurt Government electorates.

Bob Katter is the only bloke who is close to the mark on this issue and who wears a National Party hat. He was right when he said that this merger between Suncorp and the QIDC, in terms of his National Party constituents, was most "unhelpful". He knows exactly what the Government's decision means, and so do Government members. That is why they are sitting quietly, because they know that when those three entities are merged two of the entities will be gone because, as the Treasurer has said, there will be some rationalisation of branches. The Treasurer was caught on this point. Anna Reynolds asked the Treasurer whether there would or would not be job losses or branch closures. The Treasurer said, "There will be a branch in all rural towns and cities that will offer all forms of banking and insurance." She painted a really rosy picture. "These services will be available to everyone in every town", she said. Anna Reynolds then asked whether there would be a branch in every town and she quickly retracted. She said, "No, where there is a branch of any of these institutions at the moment, there will be a much bigger branch."

The Treasurer has already determined that there will be at least one branch in the towns and she has already determined that there will be no job losses other than through natural attrition, but who runs the bank? Does John Lamble as CEO run a private bank in

which he determines job losses, branch closures and what happens in the organisation? Or do we have—as Government members say we do not—a State bank? Government members cannot have it both ways. If the Government determines the number of branches and staffing levels, we have a State bank. If Lamble is allowed to cut in order to "outplace", as he says—as he has done in New South Wales and South Australia—we will have job losses and branch closures, and that will happen in Government electorates. It surprises me how Government members can sit there and cop Sheldonomics. It will bite into their constituencies because every one of the branches closed means a loss of at least 10 jobs.

Time expired.

Mr HARPER (Mount Ommaney) (6.15 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I rise to put a few facts straight in this debate. Much has been said about the employment implications of the merger between Suncorp, QIDC and Metway and much of what has been said has been misinformation peddled by the Opposition, and that is continuing tonight. The Opposition has embarked upon a scaremongering campaign aimed simply at causing alarm and distress amongst the employees of the three entities involved in the merger. Opposition members are not really worried about the people; they are only worried about the political implications for themselves and blow the people.

Clearly there will be some rationalisation of branches and staffing arrangements. However, it is expected that most of these changes can be accommodated largely through natural attrition. That rationalisation process will be the responsibility of the new board when appointed. It is important to note that changes are expected to occur over a period of several years and staff will be given ample opportunity to adjust to the new arrangements. It will not happen overnight. In addition, it is expected that new and expanded job opportunities will be generated from the growth of this new entity because of its enhanced size. The Opposition conveniently ignores this fact.

There has been some concern about possible job losses implied in a Treasury report quoted from today and quoted by the Opposition on numerous other occasions. Notwithstanding that this is an outdated report, prepared in December 1995 for the previous Government, it is worth quoting some of the salient elements of the report, those points having been conveniently ignored by the

Opposition. The report quite clearly states that branch staff rationalisation is to be accommodated through natural attrition and achieved "with minimum recourse to forced redundancies". Moreover, the report did not take account of the need for expanded operations at each branch of the new bank. For example, it assumed that all duplicated branches in any centre would be closed and all of those jobs lost. It made no allowance for the expanded staffing requirements of the branches of the new bank left at those centres which would service the same or increased volumes of customers as the previous multiple branches had done and which would be providing an expanded product range as well, including insurance, superannuation, investment management and other financial services. That point has been totally ignored by the Opposition in its argument. What a shallow argument!

Further, the report takes no account of the jobs saved or the additional jobs created by a major head office located in Brisbane. Up to 600 jobs in Metway's head office would have been lost if the St George takeover had proceeded. What have Opposition members said about that? Nothing at all. Those jobs would have gone. In addition, retaining a major head office in Brisbane will reserve jobs not only in Metway but also in businesses providing support services. These include professional services in accounting, legal, marketing, public relations and information technology. Also impacted are other support services such as stock registry, printing and communications. One small example in this regard relates to the Metway share registry which is maintained by Douglas Heck and Burrell. The 17 employees involved in maintaining the Metway register there would have lost their jobs if the St George takeover had gone ahead. Once again, that fact has been ignored by the Opposition. Not only will those jobs now be saved but also additional jobs will be created to maintain the much larger register resulting from the Government's merger proposal.

It is also worth reflecting on the comments of the chairman of the merger planning group, Mr John Lambie, in a recent interview with the *Courier-Mail* when he said that it was important to recognise that our greatest asset is the people who are in the bank. He said it was important to treat those people in a way that respects the value that they provide to the enterprise. These are the principles upon which human resource management will be based in the merged entity and upon which the staff will be able to reply. Indeed, the

heads of agreement with Metway bank includes specific provisions in relation to staff. In particular they provide that all parties will use their best efforts to keep the level of redundancies to a minimum and outplacement and counselling services will be provided for those redundancies that do occur.

If Labor had remained in Government, Metway would have been gone, Suncorp and QIDC would have come under increasing competitive pressure and their viability would have been threatened. In this context there could be few guarantees about the longer term employment prospects in those organisations. That was what the Opposition was going to do when it was in Government. In contrast, the merger creates a national financial institution headquartered in Queensland. In the longer term, this will mean more secure and rewarding jobs.

Time expired.

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich) (6.19 p.m.): One can see the fraud within the arguments put forward by such members as the member for Mount Ommaney. The members uses all the buzz words—rationalisation, outplacement, attrition. We know damn well that there will be more than simply attrition and outplacements, which are just euphemisms for "losing one's job". We are going to see massive job losses across the State.

The member for Mount Ommaney might not care too much about his own electorate in Brisbane, but he may be surprised to learn that some 540 people will be displaced—put out on their ears, lose their jobs, find their way out the exit door—from the new merged bank as a result of the policy which he endorses. Some 540 people in south-east Queensland alone will lose their jobs. The National Party members who are getting dragged along by the Liberal Party on the share market deal hatched by the Treasury boffins will be very interested to learn that the figure that has been factored in for job losses per branch is 10 people. Ten real people will lose their jobs for every branch that closes. In the Cairns area, that means 40 jobs, that is, 40 outplacements—40 job losses—as a result of the National/Liberal Party "Banana Bank" proposal. In Toowoomba, it is 20 jobs. In Gladstone, it is 10 jobs. In Gympie, it is 20 jobs. In Innisfail, it is 10 jobs. It is very difficult to find employment in a town the size of Innisfail. In Mackay, it is 30 jobs. In Townsville, it is 60 jobs, with half that number in the electorate of Mundingburra. Bless the little heart of the member for Mundingburra for

putting 30 people on the unemployment queue as a result of his support of the "Banana Bank"! In Dalby, it is 20 jobs. In Rockhampton, it is 30 jobs. In Roma, it is 20 jobs. In Bundaberg, it is 20 jobs. In Maryborough and Hervey Bay, another 20 jobs will be lost thanks to the "Banana Bank" proposal so warmly supported by this National/Liberal Party Government. Not only the jobs in the branches will be affected. As the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, lots of job will go in the head offices as well. About 300 jobs will go in the head offices of the existing Suncorp, QIDC and Metway organisations.

When we talk about the benefits to Queensland, we need to look at all the benefits, not take a half-hearted look at the profit and loss account as we have seen so often from this Government. We saw the Government taking only "half a look" via the FitzGerald Commission of Audit. We need to look at all the issues. One of the issues that we have not heard too much about from this Government, but one which is certainly exercising the minds of a lot of policyholders of Suncorp in the community, and a lot of investors with QIDC, is the loss of the Government guarantee. People are genuinely concerned that the Government will no longer stand behind the policies issued by Suncorp and certainly not the policies that will be issued by the "Banana Bank".

What is more alarming for those people is that this merger does nothing to address what was identified as a particular weakness that Suncorp had, and that was its extensive market exposure to south-east Queensland. When we throw Suncorp together with Metway we will have a larger market exposure to the domestic housing market in south-east Queensland. But what the policyholders will not have is the assurance that was there by having the Queensland Government to back up the value of their policies.

What is more, in relation to the QIDC and so on, we know only too well that the new bank will not have access to the cheap funds which have been available to Suncorp and QIDC because of the Government's credit rating. The lesser credit rating will mean higher costs of finance for the customers of the new bank. What is more, they are spending money hand over fist down south on consultants. Potter Warburg is on a structured fee. How many millions of dollars is the Government sending off to Sydney to back the "Banana Bank"?

The investors have no confidence. Lots of people are now selling their shares at \$4.60

on the market. Government members should bear in mind that 60 per cent of the shareholders were more than happy to accept the \$4.77 offer from St George, rather than waiting around and placing any confidence whatsoever in the Government's \$4.80 offer.

Time expired.

Mr SPRINGBORG (Warwick) (6.24 p.m.): Until recently we had never seen a greater performance since Henny Penny ran around the countryside years ago proclaiming that the sky was going to fall in. The shadow Treasurer, Mr Hamill, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have been running around the State talking down this project over the past few months. They have no idea.

Members opposite, including the honourable member for Woodridge, were happy last week to say that they would have preferred to see the St George Bank remove Metway, its resources and staff from this State and to occupy premises south of the border. They were very, very happy to see that happen. They are supposed to be proud Queenslanders!

What about the job losses if St George Bank had taken over Metway? It would have had absolutely no obligation to Queensland. The claims of members opposite are completely speculative. They have no idea and no sound facts on which to back up their claims. They are pulling numbers out of the sky. Potentially, rural and regional Queenslanders will be among the greatest beneficiaries of this merger.

We heard speculation earlier from the Leader of the Opposition that there is going to be a closure in Warwick. If we have to rationalise a building, that may be okay; if we can maintain the staff, that will be well and good. In many of these places we will see enhanced services. In future, where we have a QIDC office, insurance services will also be offered. I am afraid that members opposite are unable to back up any of their speculative claims.

Many centres will benefit from access to a broader range of services. Indeed, a specific condition of the heads of agreement with Metway Bank is that any centre presently with a Suncorp or QIDC branch is guaranteed a branch of the new bank. In rural and regional centres presently with only a QIDC branch, there will be a considerable upgrading of services. This contrasts with the views of members opposite who are happy to see the St George Bank take it all down over the

border. The hypocrisy and audacity of members opposite!

Equally, centres that presently do not have a QIDC branch will also experience an upgrading in services with the merged entity's extension of QIDC's specialist business banking expertise. Indeed, QIDC's specialist expertise in lending to primary producers and to small and medium-sized businesses will be an important resource for the merged group. Moreover, rural lending is to be maintained at current QIDC levels, ensuring continued access to loan funding for the State's rural producers. Again, this is a specific provision in the heads of agreement with Metway and underscores the Government's concern to ensure that the needs of rural and regional Queenslanders are accommodated.

This upgrading of services in non-metropolitan areas stands in stark contrast to the record of the previous Labor Government. Under Labor, services to rural and remote communities were savagely curtailed in the name of economic rationalism. We saw the Leader of the Opposition trotting up and down disused railway lines on the Darling Downs only recently, saying, "We're sorry." Those people are onto the Leader of the Opposition. Courthouses were shut, Government offices closed down and rail lines closed. The impact on rural communities was severe. However, it is these same Labor members who sit across the chamber and dare to criticise the Government for taking measures that will actually benefit the bush.

Further exemplifying either the ignorance of Labor members or the deliberate deceit they have been practising are recent comments in the media by the Leader of the Opposition regarding interest rates to be charged to farmers by the merged entity. The Opposition has claimed that QIDC will lose the benefit of its AAA credit rating, resulting in a higher cost of funds and therefore higher interest rates charged to farmers and other borrowers in rural areas. The fact is that Labor made sure that QIDC would not be able to borrow with the benefit of the Government's AAA rating. It was Labor that corporatised QIDC, gave it a strictly commercial charter and made sure it was subject to competitive neutrality. To do this, the QIDC corporatisation legislation provided for QIDC to be charged a guarantee fee. This fee represents the difference between AAA cost funds and the cost of funds to QIDC on a stand-alone basis—that is, without the benefit of a Government guarantee.

Mr D'Arcy interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I will be the Premier before the member for Woodridge is. If the QIDC was able to borrow at 10 per cent with its Government guarantee but had to pay 10.5 per cent if it did not have the Government guarantee, it was charged the extra 0.5 per cent by Treasury. This means that the Labor Government made sure farmers and other rural borrowers paid the same interest rate as that available from any other lender with a rating similar to that of the QIDC on a stand-alone basis. Members opposite are running around the countryside peddling untruths.

Mr MULHERIN (Mackay) (6.29 p.m.): I fully support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I believe that the actions taken by this minority coalition Government to create a State "Banana Bank" will have an adverse effect on jobs and services in provincial Queensland. Already the Government has spent \$65m in obtaining a 10 per cent stake in Metway and could be forced to underwrite up to \$670m for the buyout of Metway shares before creating the State bank.

Banking today is very competitive, and the margins are tight. The new State bank will have to achieve massive savings to remain competitive. There will be savage job cuts and branch closures in combining the three separate organisations and their different cultures into one. In my home town of Mackay, there could be at least three branch closures with the loss of at least 30 jobs and a further loss of \$1.5m from the local economy.

The Treasurer claims that there will be no job losses and that everything will be done by natural attrition. This might be fine on paper, but how does one explain to a staff member in Mackay that their job will be okay but, because of natural attrition, they might have to go to Emerald to keep it?

Mr Hamill: Frank Haly said that if there were to be losses, it wouldn't be just natural attrition.

Mr MULHERIN: But he does not live in Mackay.

Mr Hamill: Yes, but he runs Metway.

Mr MULHERIN: Yes. Imagine the upheaval in the family—sell the house in a depressed market, buy another house, find new schools for the children and find new friends.

After job losses and branch closures, the Government will then try to sell off its holding on the stock market. This raises the question: how much will the market pay? Will the Government receive back its full \$65m, the

\$670m for the Metway buyout and the \$1 billion current worth of Suncorp and QIDC to the Government, which includes dividends and taxes?

Already, independent commentators are saying that the Government faces a potential \$1 billion shortfall in anticipated income from the sale of the State bank. This would affect infrastructure spending as promised by the Treasurer. The Treasurer said that the sale could realise \$2.5 billion net for the Government, of which \$1 billion would be invested to replace proceeds from dividends and tax equivalent income flowing from Suncorp and the QIDC and another \$1 billion would be available for investment in infrastructure.

People in Mackay are asking: what will happen to the Queensland economy if the Government does not get it right and cannot realise the \$3.6 billion gross it anticipates from the sale of the State bank? Would it mean further cuts in services? Would it mean that schools in provincial Queensland would be closed, class sizes would increase and teachers would be sacked? Would it mean that small country hospitals such as the one in Sarina would close, nurses would be sacked and hospitals such as the one in Mackay would be privatised? Would it mean the sell-off of the Mackay Electricity Board and the sacking of electricity workers? Would it mean the sell-off of Queensland Railways and the sacking of railway workers? The list goes on.

Consider what happened in Victoria and South Australia after the collapse of their State banks. Teachers and nurses were sacked, hospitals and schools were closed, the electricity and railway industries were privatised and there were fewer services overall. Only recently in Mackay I had breakfast with the former Premier of Victoria, Mrs Joan Kirner, who said to me, "What is happening in Queensland? Why do they want to create a super State bank? Haven't they learned anything from the eighties?" Joan Kirner should know!

At the last election, this minority coalition Government did not promise to buy a super State bank, but it did promise to provide an increase in services and more jobs. By creating this super State bank, not only will we see job losses and branch closures in provincial Queensland but also, if the Government does not get it right, the people of Queensland will suffer and experience what happened in South Australia and Victoria.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone) (6.33 p.m.): I would like to move an

amendment to the motion. That amendment is that the words "job losses and branch closures" be deleted and that in their place be added "forced redundancies or forced retrenchments or diminution of services". That will mean that the motion will read—

"That the Parliament of Queensland calls on the minority Government to ensure the proposed merger of Metway, QIDC and Suncorp does not result in forced redundancies or forced retrenchments or diminution of services in Queensland, particularly in rural and provincial Queensland."

I move that amendment for a number of reasons. Firstly, I believe that the amendment more realistically reflects commercial reality. It protects current jobs—those who are currently working for the companies and for the statutory authorities. No responsible Government, no company, can predict or promise jobs into the future, because job needs change. That has happened through rationalisation. It has happened in councils; it has happened in private business. It is what we call "more for less". We seek 1 per cent higher productivity from the same number of staff or a reduced number of staff. Wise businesses have made way for that reduction in staff through natural attrition.

In my briefing on the Thursday evening of 23 May, I asked particularly about jobs. I was told that there would be no forced job losses, no forced redundancies. I hold the Government to that. But I say that I believe it is totally irrational to expect no changes in the number of positions over an unknown period. Cathy Border asked about that possibility—

Mr Hamill interjected.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I am sorry, but I cannot take the member's interjection because I do not have a lot of time. All companies have staff turnover, and if staffing levels are reduced as people leave, then there is a minimal amount of pain. The other point complementary to this is that if Metway went interstate—if St George took over—then St George's commitment to Queensland is much less. Some of the advantages of the merger are these: if Metway were purchased by St George, the whole corporation would leave Queensland. The proposal would create significant financial service institutions in the State, and the headquarters would be retained in Queensland. Rural lending will be maintained in the current QIDC level.

The second part of the amendment refers to no diminution of services in Queensland. Again, I believe that is defensible. To say that

there will be no branch closures refuses to accept commercial reality. Whether it is Government commerce or private enterprise, if there has to be a review done and there are two of the same companies—if Suncorp and Metway are geographically side by side—practical reality could be that, over time, they will merge into one. But if the Government makes a commitment to no forced redundancies and no forced job losses, current employment remains the same. If it supports no diminution of services to Queensland and especially rural Queensland, we are protecting the services to the State. We are protecting our rural people. We are saying that they will have access to banking, they will have access to insurance—they will have access to those facilities that are currently there. But we cannot guarantee them jobs if Metway goes to New South Wales.

I believe that the amendment accurately reflects what the Government should be required to commit to, that is, a protection of the current services and a protection of the current jobs. I commend the amendment to the House.

Mr GRICE (Broadwater) (6.38 p.m.): I second the amendment moved by the member for Gladstone. The Opposition has been critical of the Government's decision to propose the merger of Suncorp and QIDC with the Metway Bank. This criticism needs to be viewed in the context of the Labor Government's record on this issue and in the context of what will happen to these businesses if nothing is done.

Let us consider Labor's record first. Back in 1993, the Premier flagged the possibility of Suncorp being sold. He is on the public record as saying that Governments should not be in the banking or insurance business. But it never went anywhere. It was opposed by the Treasurer at the time and by the Left of the Labor Party. It surfaced again last year after the State election. Treasury was commissioned to prepare a report, which it duly delivered at the end of last year. That report, which Labor has selectively released to the media, drew certain conclusions about the future of Suncorp and QIDC and made certain recommendations. Ironically, that report foreshadowed the possibility that Metway would be taken over by a southern financial institution. Again, Labor did nothing.

As predicted by Treasury, Metway became the subject of a takeover offer. The Labor Government knew that the findings of the Treasury review meant that something had to be done. These businesses were under

competitive threat from other lenders, other insurers, new forms of lending and new forms of delivery of financial services. The Labor Government knew that these businesses needed more capital to grow and to remain competitive. This point is important: the Price Waterhouse review foreshadowed this need, and just last month the Chief Executive of Suncorp wrote to Treasury indicating that its capital requirements were such that it would need to keep all after-tax earnings for the next three years. This means that no dividends would be paid to Treasury. Moreover, a capital injection for the building society of \$100m over the next three years would be needed. That changes the whole perspective and takes the belly out of the Opposition's argument.

In summary, it was clear that Suncorp and the QIDC were already beginning to become a drain on consolidated revenue. Labor members knew that these businesses represented a significant contingent risk to the State—a risk totalling about \$12 billion and growing. They knew that these businesses served no social objective. It was Labor that gave them their strictly commercial charter. They knew that these businesses would be increasingly marginalised, their viability threatened and their values would ultimately decline. They knew that, in the long term, with their viability threatened, jobs would be threatened. They knew all this but chose to do nothing. That is what they did with the workers' compensation scheme, and now it is plain for all to see just what a disaster that turned out to be. What a mess Labor left for us to clean up. Labor did nothing and offered no viable alternative. It simply offered to let Suncorp and the QIDC wither on the vine and let Metway be lost to another southern takeover merchant.

In May, when the Suncorp Insurance and Finance Amendment Bill was being debated, members of the Opposition lamented the loss of Metway to the south. They said that it was incumbent on the Parliament to be protective about the existing Queensland control in the marketplace of the State. So when Labor members were in Government and had the opportunity to do something, they sat on their hands again and did nothing. In Opposition they decried Metway's loss and urged protective action to preserve Queensland control of companies like Metway. Now that something positive has been done, all they are doing is looking for the negatives.

The reality is that Labor's inaction offered no future to Metway, Suncorp or the QIDC. Metway would have been lost to the south, with the consequent loss of many Queensland jobs. Suncorp and the QIDC would have come

under increasing competitive pressure and, with their viability threatened, would also have sacrificed jobs. The squeeze on profits would have reduced dividends to the Government and the value of these businesses would have declined. Clearly, doing nothing was not an option. The coalition Government has taken positive steps to secure an outcome that is in the best interests of all concerned: the staff and the customers of the three entities, the shareholders of the Metway Bank and Queenslanders generally.

Mr PALASZCZUK (Inala) (6.42 p.m.): I intend to confine my comments to the impact that the proposed merger of the QIDC, Suncorp and the Metway Bank will have on rural Queensland, for I believe that it is in this part of Queensland—the National Party heartland—that National Party members have not considered the full impact that the merger will have on their electorates.

Rural Queensland is still reeling from the effects of the drought, the decline in the rural economy, the rising cost of living and a lack of incentive and encouragement for workers to live and work in rural Queensland. Yet the single biggest issue in rural Queensland is the withdrawal of services by Government and the private sector. One only has to look at the recent withdrawal of the National Bank from a country centre to understand the feelings of frustration and anger that are evident when these services are withdrawn, for the withdrawal of services causes a chain reaction of adverse results for the local community.

I can best sum it up by using the analogy of the decision of a Rockhampton baker to deliver bread into Longreach. Sure, this saves the locals a few cents per loaf of bread, but I ask members to consider the impact of this small decision on the baker, his staff, the related suppliers and distributors of the bakery in Longreach. Similarly, the merger of the QIDC, Metway and Suncorp will also have that ripple effect of tearing out of rural communities much-needed services and, in particular, one of the rural community's most precious commodities, that is, its work force.

I have considered in detail the amendment that the honourable member for Gladstone has moved. After careful consideration, I am sorry but I cannot support the amendment, simply because I believe that the honourable member does not understand or is confused by the terms "forced redundancies", "forced retrenchments" and "job losses". Surely the honourable member knows that with job losses people will move out of the town of Gladstone. With the

proposed merger of the branches and their closure, people will definitely lose their jobs. The jobs in the town will disappear. Redundancies and VERs are, in effect, transfers out of the town. The people of Gladstone who lose their jobs will not stay in Gladstone, they will drift out of Gladstone, with the resultant loss of other jobs. There will be fewer children going to school. There will be the loss of a schoolteacher, and so on. Those are the results of forced redundancies and job losses for local communities.

Mr Elder: If you had two people who didn't want to go into one position, one would be told to transfer, wouldn't they?

Mr PALASZCZUK: That is exactly right, and that person will definitely go.

Mr Hamill: Mr Springborg would not care two hoots about the 10 people going in Warwick.

Mr PALASZCZUK: That is the member's problem. I understand that there is a QIDC branch in Stanthorpe. With the merger that will occur, the QIDC will lose its identity for the local people. I intend to mention that in a moment.

For the benefit of the member for Gladstone, I ask: why is the Government doing it? It is doing it for a quick quid and an ideological crusade by two members of this House, one who is based on the Gold Coast and the other on the Sunshine Coast. Together they have sold rural Queensland short.

As I travel around western Queensland the single theme that is repeated to me by producers and town people alike is that the support of the National Party is at breaking point. They feel that they have been betrayed by a party which they have followed blindly all their lives. They keep pointing to the Clarence by-election result in New South Wales as an example of what can happen when the bush gets angry. This is one issue that rural Queensland is angry about—the likes of which I have never seen before.

For rural producers, the QIDC is seen as a sacred cow, the producers' bank, with specialist rural expertise. It has a special kind of person working for it—a person who, more often than not, comes from a rural background. With the merger, that expertise will be lost forever. So what are we looking at for rural Queensland? Branch closures, hundreds of jobs gone and the loss of the QIDC. I predict that the Bank of Queensland—even though it has rejected merger plans at this moment—will eventually

be swallowed up by this new entity with further job losses. Further down the track, when this new bank will have to compete with big banks, it will have to act big and compete on big bank terms which, once again, means further branch closures in rural Queensland.

Time expired.

Dr WATSON (Moggill) (6.47 p.m.): The Government's decision to propose the merger of Suncorp and the QIDC with Metway Bank underscores the fundamental difference between the coalition Government and that of its predecessor. That fundamental difference is that the coalition in Government has been prepared to make the tough decisions that are in the best interests of Queenslanders. The former Labor Government was one of inertia, indecision and excessive bureaucracy. It was a Government that lacked a strategic outlook for the State; it had neither the vision nor the conviction to do what had to be done, and ultimately lost the confidence of the electorate.

The coalition Government has provided true leadership. We have shown that we are prepared to stand up for the people of Queensland. Fighting off the St George challenge for Metway was not fundamentally about parochialism. Rather, it was an action taken to maximise the benefit to Queenslanders. There was only one chance to secure for the State a major national financial institution in a move which, at the same time, would maximise the value of the Government's own business interests—businesses for which the Government has stewardship on behalf of the people of Queensland. This was a once-only opportunity that would be lost forever had we not acted quickly and decisively. It was an opportunity that was almost lost to the State because the former Labor Government procrastinated and equivocated on what should have been a straightforward decision in the interests of the State. It was a decision that was not taken lightly. Over a long period Suncorp and the QIDC have become woven into the economic and social fabric of the State.

The QIDC and its predecessor, the Agricultural Bank, are a vital financial link not just for rural producers but for businesses generally around the State. Suncorp is a Queensland icon that has evolved over time from a provider of workers' compensation insurance into a diversified financial services business.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Ashgrove!

Dr WATSON: Its growth has mirrored and, indeed, has been synonymous with the outstanding economic performance of the State as a whole. However, with the deregulation of the financial markets in the 1980s, the economic and financial landscape has changed immensely. The open and competitive financial markets of today are almost unrecognisable from the highly regulated and comfortably protected financial market from which Suncorp and the QIDC have evolved.

Treasury's comprehensive review of State financial institutions indicates quite clearly that the ongoing viability of those businesses in their current form is under severe threat. Suncorp and QIDC are already under severe pressure from other regional banks and non-bank financial institutions competing for a share of the Queensland market. The outlook was for a declining dividend and tax-equivalent payments from both Suncorp and QIDC. Over time, increasing competitive pressures would have impacted severely on the profitability of those businesses.

Rationalisation is occurring in the financial services industry all over the place. Investment in technology is leading to rationalisation of branch networks. Suncorp has closed 24 agencies and four branches since July 1995 under Labor's stewardship. The member for Greenslopes knows about Suncorp closing in his electorate. When did the letters go out—2 February, the day before Mundingburra. The same applies to Babinda. Further branch rationalisation is inevitable for Suncorp, Metway and QIDC—even if they remain as separate entities—in order to reduce costs and meet competitive pressures. That demonstrates the hypocrisy of Labor. It gave QIDC and Suncorp strictly commercial objectives—no CSOs. It allowed closures to occur because it looked to the bottom line, to the achievement of a commercial rate of return. Those agencies were operated by small-business people, but when Labor was in Government it was not concerned about the impact of the loss of those businesses upon people or the employees. Now in Opposition, Labor does a backflip and demands that those organisations no longer act in accordance with commercial principles that it set for them.

Mr Foley interjected.

Dr WATSON: Because of my throat, I could move to have the rest of this speech incorporated in *Hansard*. Shall I do so?

Time expired.

Mr D'ARCY (Woodridge) (6.53 p.m.): It is quite obvious that the member for Moggill has been used as a scapegoat. I do not know who is making the decisions on that side of the House, but nobody is aware of who is actually giving the Government advice. The fact is that it is using southern agents, Potter Warburg; yet the Government is saying that it is protecting Queensland. That in itself is an insult to the people of Queensland.

Nobody believes that this merger is going to go through. The current highly inflated price of \$4.60 ex-dividend, as one member pointed out, is still above the \$4.80 that is supposedly being offered. People are accepting that, not even believing that the Government can pull off this deal. The real price of those shares is closer to \$3.70. Everyone is aware of that. What is the Government trying to do to the taxpayer of Queensland? That comes back to the bottom line, that this whole operation is a farce. Queenslanders are being asked to pay for a hillbilly political stunt organised by this Government and are being asked to accept political interference in business that is way and beyond anything that any businessman would accept. No business anywhere in this State could ever accept what is currently being done in this field by this Government. It is interfering in business. It is doing all of the things that the State banks of the seventies and eighties did.

Time expired.

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

AYES, 38—Barton, Beattie, Bird, Bligh, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Campbell, D'Arcy, De Lacy, Dollin, Edmond, Elder, Foley, Fouras, Gibbs, Hamill, Hayward, Hollis, McElligott, McGrady, Mackenroth, Milliner, Mulherin, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Purcell, Roberts, Robertson, Rose, Schwarten, Spence, Sullivan J. H., Welford, Wells, *Tellers*: Livingstone, Sullivan T. B.

NOES, 39—Baumann, Beanland, Borbidge, Connor, Cooper, Cunningham, Elliott, FitzGerald, Gamin, Gilmore, Goss J. N., Grice, Harper, Healy, Hegarty, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Laming, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, McCauley, Malone, Mitchell, Perrett, Quinn, Radke, Rowell, Simpson, Slack, Stoneman, Tanti, Veivers, Warwick, Watson, Wilson, *Tellers*: Springborg, Carroll

Pairs: Nunn, Stephan; Goss W. K., Woolmer; Ardill, Sheldon; Smith, Davidson; Woodgate, Santoro

Resolved in the **negative**.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

GRIEVANCES

Esher Street-Birdwood Road Bikeway

Mr RADKE (Greenslopes) (7.02 p.m.): I wish to draw the attention of the House to an unsafe bikeway between Esher Street and Birdwood Road within my electorate. Originally, this bikeway was a pedestrian walkway. Brisbane City Council then altered it to become a joint pedestrian walkway and recreational bikeway. Today, that bikeway is categorised as a commuter bikeway and pedestrian walkway.

This situation is totally unsatisfactory. Over this past week, the Brisbane City Council has started to mark a yellow dividing line down the centre of the concrete path. That implies that one-way commuter bikes and pedestrians need to share a width of path of less than one metre.

Another unsatisfactory safety issue is that driveways to houses at Amulree, Stepstone, Pemberton, Arkwright Streets and Birdwood Road also share the commuter bikeway. This unsafe bikeway also suffers from three hairpin bends. I estimate the visibility at the Stepstone Street hairpin bend to be seven metres; similarly so at the Birdwood Road-Arkwright Street hairpin bend. I was advised that the latter hairpin bend was constructed deliberately in an attempt to slow down bike traffic. These are valid safety issues and I support the concerns of the local residents.

Coopers Creek

Mr PALASZCZUK (Inala) (7.04 p.m.): The proposal to grow cotton on the Cooper is potentially the most divisive issue before the people of rural Queensland today. The proposal could potentially change the nature of inland Queensland for all time.

Coopers Creek, along with the other rivers of the Channel Country, supports some of the most important cattle-grazing areas of Queensland. Currently, graziers in the area are promoting grass-fed beef as a clean, green product—a marketing strategy that could have immense export potential. To introduce intensive agricultural and irrigation into this area places a threat to the beef industry and the grazing practices that have evolved over the past 100 years.

The Minister for Natural Resources is taking a far too short-sighted attitude to this issue. It is uniting the west in a way I have never before seen. As shadow Minister for Natural Resources, I have conducted numerous meetings with people who are concerned about the proposal. I agree with

those people that the Cooper is far too valuable an asset to even take the risk. We need to look no further than the Macquarie Marshes in western New South Wales to see what can result from such an irrigated cotton project.

I believe that the issue is of such importance that the Minister should convene an all-party parliamentary committee to investigate the issue and report to the Parliament as soon as possible. Failure to do this will see the area's clean beef image destroyed, its wildlife placed at threat and its tourism potential stymied.

The people out west are so united against this proposal that the word out Windorah way is that the next time the Minister visits, there will not be an effigy of the Minister hanging from the flagpole outside the Windorah Hotel but the Minister himself, hanging by a very tender portion of his anatomy.

Time expired.

Redlands Hospital

Mr HEGARTY (Redlands) (7.06 p.m.): Plans for the redevelopment of Redlands Hospital are on track with the recent approval of engineering contracts worth \$1.18m. That funding provides for support consultants in the areas of civil and structural, mechanical and electrical engineering, hydraulic services, lift consultants, communications and security services, programming services and quantity surveying.

Already the planning process for the new hospital—sketch plans and service profiles—are currently being developed and are at an advanced stage. A project director for the redevelopment has been appointed and is located on site.

Shortly, I hope to be announcing approval for the next stage to commence, which will be the development of detailed working drawings prior to calling tenders to build the hospital. The new hospital redevelopment will bring improved medical and surgical services, a new service for women and birthing, increased ambulatory care services as well as upgraded medical imaging, emergency and rehabilitation services.

The incorporation of a further 25 mental health beds on top of the planned expansion to 120 beds will complete a full range of medical services. The decision to fast-track the redevelopment by a minimum of six months to bring the completion date to mid 1998 instead of 1999 is a further commitment to our strategic yet caring approach to hospital

services and facilities. It is also a further commitment to the Government's plan to deliver a new era of professionalism to Queensland's hospital rebuilding program and to restore confidence in Queensland's public hospitals.

The recent establishment of the Bayside Health District, of which the Redlands Hospital is a part, will have its own district health council, which comprises an eight-member board that will contribute to the hospital's management with input into the formulation of strategic plans, business plans, overseeing hospital budgets, prioritising minor works, capital works and providing representation when selecting senior executive personnel. The Government's initiative is further enhanced by the Redlands community, which is in the fortunate position of having hardworking service clubs, such as the Cleveland Rotary Club.

Time expired.

Rockhampton Base Hospital

Mr SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton) (7.08 p.m.): Tonight I rise to correct the misinformation that was put before the Chamber this morning by the Health Minister when he assured us that all was well in Queensland.

I have a handwritten letter that yesterday was dropped into my office. It states—

"How is this for neglect. On Wed 12 of June Mr Wimers 48 . . . and a patient of Dr Kane was put into intensive care at the Base Hosp Rton with breathing problems.

He suffers with bad lungs however on Fri morning Dr Kane asked him which Hosp he would like to be moved to the Mater or St Andrews.

They were unable to supply him with the required amount of ox for his complaint at the base.

He moved to bed 217 at the Mater at midday.

So much for Mr Horan's care of the sick.

Have not signed for obvious reasons my job."

Government members stand over those sorts of people. We are back to those times. I also have a letter from a registered nurse, which states—

"Bed cuts to the hospital"—

and this is referring to the Rockhampton Base Hospital—

"is causing great concern. Nowhere to place patients. Winter conditions are causing an increase in influenza, whooping cough, asthma, croup in children as well as the elderly being affected due to the winter conditions.

Staffing levels are critically low partly due to no staff available, sickness and stress levels.

. . .

Ask Mr Horan is he a great believer in euthanasia with the regional cutbacks he is making in this region and rural Queensland with the cutbacks in money and staff patient care of our general population will become intolerable. Comfort and dignity of the personal level of the patient has become an illusion. Our forgotten hero's. Perhaps he should be a Minister up in the Northern Territory where a lot of his problems would become self solving."

Time expired.

Queensland Health

Mrs WILSON (Mulgrave) (7.10 p.m.): Despite the concerns of the member for Rockhampton, this State is on track with health, which has recently secured an additional \$3m from the Commonwealth Government for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health programs in Queensland.

Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mrs WILSON: If the honourable member listens, he will find out. Of the fund, \$2.5m has been earmarked to improve access to medical services for indigenous people throughout the State, especially those living in isolated communities. Under the program the Commonwealth has agreed to provide a grant to Queensland to pay the salaries of medical practitioners working in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The savings generated to the State can then be directed towards improving primary care services through initiatives such as employing more Aboriginal health workers and nurses or purchasing more equipment and supplies, even oxygen supplies.

Queensland Health will work with the Commonwealth to identify and fund the communities in which the new program will enhance medical services. We will also be involving members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the

planning and organisation of health services to be introduced under this program with a view to placing them under community control. By the end of the 12 months we would aim to get to a point where an ongoing subsidy is possible through the Medicare benefit system. It is time that the Commonwealth and State Governments coordinated their efforts so that we can finally do something about solving the health problems of indigenous people.

The program aims to ensure that the boundaries between the levels of Government do not impede improvements to the delivery of health services in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The remaining \$500,000 within the \$3m package will be used to develop information-gathering systems and planning processes. This will ensure that the indigenous health initiatives are coordinated and the best possible use is made of resources and available funding. The coalition Government sees the successful negotiation of this additional funding as the first step in a series of initiatives that will be introduced to close the health gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Queenslanders.

Prince Charles Hospital

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN (Chermside) (7.12 p.m.): The residents of the Chermside electorate have cause to be concerned at how the Prince Charles Hospital will be affected by the report of the Queensland Commission of Audit. Page 177 of Volume 1 of that report is titled "Which Business Activities Should Government Sell?" It states—

"Having regard to the business activities the State is involved in, the need for structural reform, and the types of activities which have been successfully privatised in other jurisdictions, there are a number of activities which are potential candidates for sale in the short-term."

Table 8.1 lists some of those candidates, which include, among others, the Golden Casket Office, the TAB and the port authorities, including airports. It goes on to state—

"In addition there are a number of business units within departments and non-commercialised departmental activities, which are not part of the Government's core business and which could be sold in due course. Activities not specifically listed in the balance sheet notes or included in Table 8.1 are—"

and a number of things are listed, including, under the heading of "Health", in-patient care,

ambulatory care, hotel services, microbiology and pharmacy services, and pharmacy services. In other words, they are looking at selling off services to do with wards, outpatients and day surgery, catering, laundry and cleaning, pathology and the pharmacy services. What is going to be left? The morgue, the gardens and the administration block—that is all.

This is Mrs Sheldon's and Mr Borbidge's first step towards dismantling our free public hospital system. They are saying, "These are not our policies. They are just recommendations from Dr FitzGerald, our financial expert. We are simply going to implement the report's recommendations." They are using Dr FitzGerald's report in a most dishonest and cowardly way. They are using Dr FitzGerald as a screen to hide behind. They have always wanted to sell our public hospitals, but they dishonestly hid their plans. They did not go to the people at the last general election saying, "We are going to privatise the best public hospital system in Australia." They said, "We are going to keep it the same", but they dishonestly and purposefully hired a financial expert to come up with this report. Now they are hiding behind a report saying, "This is what the good doctor says. We must implement that." The people of Brisbane will be let down and the people of Chermside will lose a word-class service if the facilities there are sold.

Millmerran Christian Outreach Centre

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (7.14 p.m.): I wish to speak about the Christian Outreach Centre at Millmerran. That organisation has approached Queensland Rail seeking to lease a building previously leased to Primac. One would think that that would be a simple matter, but Queensland Rail is concerned because the building in question is close to the railway line. One can imagine how much railway traffic there is at Millmerran; it is not really what one would call hectic! I have spoken to the Minister about this matter—

Mr FitzGerald: When is peak hour?

Mr ELLIOTT: Rush hour may be in December when a bit of grain rolls in. I have had discussions with the Minister about a similar situation that arose in Springsure. In the case of Springsure, a safety fence was built in such a way as to ensure that people using the building in question would not be in danger from railway traffic. I urge the Minister to follow that up. I will be in touch with him about it.

It is important that the request of this organisation be granted. These young people have a good record. They are trying to do something for their own community. The building is surplus to requirements. It would cost a lot of money to move it, and it would cost the shire council a lot of money to find another building for these people to use. I thank the Minister for giving me his support and I look forward to overcoming the concerns held by Queensland Rail. The availability of this building for use by this organisation is something that is of great importance to the community of Millmerran.

Environment Department

Mr WELFORD (Everton) (7.16 p.m.):

This morning I spoke about how Treasurer Joan Sheldon has inflicted the death of a thousand cuts on the Department of Environment. Despite the fact that she has \$200m to spend on her own private road on the Sunshine Coast, and despite the fact that she has \$80m to spend on the share market, there is no money for the environment in Queensland any more. A \$50m cut is planned and our national parks are going to be handed over to the white-shoe brigade and cronies such as former National Party associate Sir Frank Moore.

I will mention Sir Frank's record. He has been involved in such wonderfully environmental developments as the Toowong Village and the Roma Street Transit Centre. Who can forget Sir Frank's failed attempts to vandalise Florence Bay on Magnetic Island—twice! He became a legend in his own lifetime as the architect of such eco-tourism developments as the failed Pioneer River marina project in Mackay, the ill-fated Shute Harbour fiasco and the Inskip Point development near Gympie. All of those sites are located in national parks and Mr Moore wanted to develop them. Who better to let loose in our national parks with a chainsaw and an earth mover? Given half a chance, this Government would have toll booths at the entrance of every national park in the State, staffed by the good old boys of the white-shoe brigade and serviced by four-lane highways.

What can one say about the Minister himself? Has he stood up for the excesses of "Slasher" Sheldon or kowtowed to her hatchet? To quote Mr Dickie from the *Sunday Mail*, "Mr Littleproud would seem to be aiming for the award of the least effective Minister in a nominated portfolio." A disciple of the barbecue and picnic table theory of conservation, the much-lampooned Minister is

intent on encouraging powerlines over the Daintree River, dams in the Wet Tropics rainforests, private resorts in national parks and the gutting of the Wet Tropics Management Authority. The days of slash and burn environment policy have well and truly returned, courtesy of Joan "The Slasher" Sheldon and Brian "National Parks For Sale" Littleproud.

Mundingburra, Townsville and Thuringowa

Mr TANTI (Mundingburra) (7.18 p.m.): I wish to point out what this Government has achieved in the Mundingburra, Townsville and Thuringowa electorates. Firstly, I thank the Premier, Deputy Premier, Treasurer and all the Ministers involved. Those achievements include: \$494,000 for leasing arrangements, refurbishment and airconditioning at the interim north Queensland Police Academy; \$94,563 for extra equipment for the Townsville General Hospital; a further \$900,000 has already been given to provide a neurologist for TGH; \$277,000 has been provided for specialist monitoring equipment at the Townsville General Hospital; \$105,000 for the purchase of a mobile child health unit vehicle; \$320,000 for a new hockey field; \$1m for three indoor basketball courts; \$13m for two new airconditioned schools, Deeragun and Willows; \$1m for the Townsville land use study; \$360,000 for shade cover at the Mundingburra State School; \$27m for contracts for 10 new locomotives; a \$42,000 gaming grant for the Softball Association, for dugouts and shade covering; \$36,000 for music instruments for 26 schools in the Mundingburra, Townsville and Thuringowa electorates; a \$12,000 gaming grant to various sporting clubs; a \$10,000 gaming grant for removing trees at the Holy Spirit School; a \$6,000 TAFE grant for the panel beating school survey; \$10,000 for the Schizophrenia Association; \$4.8m for roadworks from Forest Avenue to Thuringowa Drive; the part-opening of the Office of the Premier in Townsville; announcements of a one-for-two allocation for the Pandora Museum in Townsville; the start of Sun Buses in Townsville; \$9m for Federal roadworks to build a four-lane road past the Lavarack barracks; additional magistrates for the courts in Townsville; the opening of Kirwan Police Station 24 hours a day, seven days a week; and the training of civilians for radio work in the police stations. That is not bad for a so-called no-do, no-action Government.

Queensland Police Service

Mr BARTON (Waterford) (7.20 p.m.): Today is a very important day and one which the Parliament should note: Gough Whitlam's eightieth birthday. I well remember that, when I was a young union official, Federal logs of claims frequently included a demand for a public holiday on Gough Whitlam's birthday. I suggest that this Parliament note this occasion.

However, this is a Grievance debate, and I wish to speak about a grievance that many people have. I refer to the failure of Police Minister Russell Cooper to improve policing in Queensland and his allowance of the service to slide away from its previously high standard. The Minister promised additional police, but he is not delivering. In many areas, the service is being reduced. On the north side, two 24-hour police stations at the Gap and Red Hill have been reduced to shopfronts that are open only during office hours. The Government has also reduced from four to three the number of cars that serve those areas over a 24-hour period. The remaining cars now have to cover huge areas. The service operating out of Alderley covers the area from Mount Glorious to Stafford, and that operating from Toowong covers the area from Red Hill to Bellbowrie.

The Gap community fought for that police station, which was opened only in 1992. Of course, it appears that the Government is reducing the number of active police in Labor electorates to utilise them elsewhere. Over on the south side, the Government is attempting to close the Annerley Police Station and to centralise all operations on Dutton Park. I attended a very well attended meeting with residents along with the members for Yeronga and South Brisbane. The residents are totally opposed to losing their police station's effectiveness and having it reduced to a shopfront only. They are concerned about the fact that they have a very good community relationship with their Police Service at this time, and they know that it is essential that they maintain those links; because, unless they are maintained, they will not have effective policing.

Gun Control Laws

Mr SPRINGBORG (Warwick) (7.22 p.m.): Tonight, I wish to address the greatly vexed and much-discussed issue of gun law reform. I wish to inform the House that, over the past month to six weeks, I have conducted three public information meetings in my electorate so as to be able to explain to the electorate at large what is actually

proposed within the resolutions adopted at the conference of Police Ministers in Canberra on 10 May.

I wish also to indicate to the House that 1,000 people attended those three meetings. On one of those nights, I was competing with the State of Origin. That probably added to the turnout of 300 people in Stanthorpe. It is fair to say that there is a great deal of concern and misunderstanding in the electorate about the implications and what is proposed on the gun laws. I say that of both the people who are advocating the laws, and of the people who are opposing them. Many people have written to me and discussed their belief that the ban goes only to military-style weapons. However, it does not. The ban goes much further than that. Many people have written to me saying that the ban covers all firearms. It does not. There is probably 95 per cent support for the ban on semiautomatic military-style weapons, but that is probably where it starts to evaporate, and other areas are much more ambivalent.

I have an opinion—and this is not necessarily the view of the Government—that crimping should be allowed. That would encourage compliance. I do not think that semiautomatic shotguns, which are used greatly by women and disabled shooters, should be taken out of the community. We can simply crimp these weapons such that they permit only two shots before reloading. It is wrong to say that those people are going to reverse the crimping. They want to keep their weapon. They do not want to risk the penalty. They want to comply with the law, and they would not wish to lose their licence. It is a fallacy to say that these people are going to reverse the crimping. If they were capable of doing that, they would be occupying their time with more lethal weapons, if that were their particular bent.

Dictionary of Queenslanders—Past and Present

Mr DOLLIN (Maryborough) (7.24 p.m.): I wish to bring to the attention of the House a unique historical record tool, the *Dictionary of Queenslanders—Past and Present*. The *Dictionary of Queenslanders* is the initiative of two Wide Bay women, Janet Reakes and Eileen Johnson, whose aim is to record pocket biographies of as many Queenslanders as possible in time for the celebration of Queensland's one hundred and fortieth year of Statehood in 1999.

The first of many volumes of the *Dictionary of Queenslanders—Past and*

Present was released on 1 April this year and already has been extremely well received by historians, genealogists and the general public. Each volume will include the ordinary Queenslanders along with the historically recognised figures, and is arranged alphabetically together with the contributors' names and addresses for further contact.

This dictionary is of great benefit to the social, local and family historians and will instil a sense of pride in all Queenslanders. The intention is to produce as many volumes as possible each year with submitted and researched biographies. The last volume is anticipated to be ready for Queensland Day June 1999. Besides being published in print format, the final product will also be released on CD-ROM. This will allow each field to be sorted into a format whereby researchers can discover, for example, how many blacksmiths lived in Tiaro in the 1880s, how many people arrived in Queensland in the 1870s from Denmark or how many Queenslanders have originated from Victoria.

The Commonwealth Government, under the CES/DEET scheme, supplied four database operators for the first 12 months of production. Any assistance the Government could give to help with this unique, valuable and mammoth task would be greatly appreciated. I table Volume 1 of the *Dictionary of Queenslanders* for inclusion in the Parliamentary Library on behalf of two very dedicated ladies, Mrs Reakes and Mrs Johnson.

Department of Health, Budget

Mr GRICE (Broadwater) (7.26 p.m.): I inform the House that a recent audit of the Health Department has revealed that the previous Labor Government attempted to hide a \$14.4m blow-out in its Health budget by deliberately failing to pay its bills on time. This breaks down to \$11.1m in Queensland Health accounts being outstanding for more than 30 days at 30 June last year, with a further \$3.3m in bills unpaid between 61 days and a year.

Members should also be aware that the level overdue increased dramatically between 30 June 1994 and 30 June 1995. What is most interesting is that this disgraceful practice was the sole responsibility of the former Labor Minister for Health, Jim Elder, who now finds himself as the Deputy Opposition Leader. Another skeleton in his closet!

Financial mismanagement seems to be a prerequisite for the Labor leadership. On 30 June 1993-94, the amount in unpaid Health

bills was \$3.3m. By 30 June 1994-95, Mr Elder had allowed this figure to blow out to an amazing \$14.4m. Is it any wonder that he has become the laughing stock of the community which sees him as one of Labor's economic stooges? This disgraceful legacy of Labor has had a significant negative impact on small businesses waiting to be paid by Queensland Health. Full credit must be given to the new Minister for Health, the Honourable Mike Horan, who upon learning of this practice within the department issued immediate instruction for it to cease.

Minister for Local Government and Planning

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba) (7.28 p.m.): I do not think that the Minister for Local Government is anything less than a scrupulously honest individual. Nevertheless, even such people can get into bad habits. It is widely believed in Redcliffe that, before her directive to Redcliffe City Council to decide the issue of a development application by the developers Transtate, she and her officers were shouted lunch by the development company. I have reason to believe that this is so.

Ministers have lunch with all sorts of people. Timing is important. A Minister should be careful of being feted by a company to which the Minister could deliver a direct and immediate pecuniary benefit. People would get the wrong impression. Obviously, if the company provided hospitality to the Minister, it would be desirable for the Minister to explain the circumstances. She needs to send a clear

signal to developers that feting the Minister is not a way of getting ministerial directives, otherwise her naivety will leave her as a lamb among the wolves in white shoes.

By the way, the directive that the Minister sent to the Redcliffe City Council was invalid. She purported to instruct them under section 5.1(5B) of the Act, which is a section concerned with subdivisions. The issue at stake is not subdivision but rezoning. She should have instructed them under section 4.4(4B) if she wanted that result. I expect that Redcliffe City Council could now lawfully disregard her directive, but I suggest it take legal advice. That was a silly, little error by the Minister. Perhaps she signed the letter too soon after lunch.

Timber Industry

Mr STEPHAN (Gympie) (7.29 p.m.): I take this opportunity to speak about the renewable resource of timber. The timber industry in this country plays a great role in the economy of this State and the rest of Australia. For example, each year \$42m in timber royalties is paid by millers.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr FITZGERALD (Lockyer—Leader of Government Business) (7.30 p.m.): I move—

"That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 23 July 1996."

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**35. Calamvale, Police Station**

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to the Queensland Police Service "Towards the 21st Century: Resource Priorities for the Queensland Police Service" report tabled in Parliament in 1995—

- (1) Will he adopt the recommendation contained in the report to construct a Police Station at Calamvale?
- (2) Will he match the commitment by the previous Minister to build this police station before July 1998?
- (3) When will work commence on this new Police Station?

Mr Cooper:

- (1) The Coalition Government is committed to the principles of the 21st Century document.
- (2) That document contains provision for a new police station at Calamvale to commence in the financial year 1998-99 and to be completed in 2000-01.
- (3) Whilst not diminishing the commitment to the 21st Century document the time of individual projects may be subject to some amendments.

65. Deferral of Government Projects

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry—

- (1) What projects did he include in the list of Government funding commitments, the implementation or continuation of which could be permanently curtailed, scaled back or deferred, which was requested by the Treasurer by 16 March 1996?
- (2) What is the cost of each project?
- (3) How many person hours of work were involved in each project?

Mr Perrett:

1. The Government has made it clear that it intends to review all of the previous Government's funding commitments arising from the annual Budget context, post Budget election commitments, the accelerated capital program and the Mid-Year Review of the Budget. Such a review is a legitimate action for a new Government to take in order to assess the initiatives and projects against the new Government's priorities and strategic direction and to provide capacity for the implementation of high priority Coalition commitments. This task is also essential because the commitments put in place by the previous Government are not sustainable from an overall funding perspective.

The initiatives and projects under review are documented and described in recent Budget Papers and subsequent announcements by the previous Government. Those projects initiated by the

previous Government have continued under the various contractual arrangements.

2. & 3. As noted in (1), the costs and other details such as employment effects of projects and initiatives were documented by the previous Government and can be sourced from those documents.

113. Cleveland, Police Station

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister For Racing—

With reference to the extremely urgent need for a replacement police station in Cleveland—

- (1) Where will this new station be sited?
- (2) When will tenders be let for its construction?
- (3) When will its construction begin?
- (4) When will the station be available for use?
- (5) What is the estimated cost of this facility?
- (6) Will the new Cleveland Court House be situated adjacent to the new station?
- (7) Will the station also incorporate the Wynnum Traffic Branch?

Mr Cooper:

(1) The Cleveland Police Station, Watchhouse and Magistrates Court occupy a site in Cleveland. Redland Shire Council requires that this new collocated facility be located in Middle Street, Cleveland as it has designated this area as a government precinct. The area has subsequently been reduced by the sale of three key allotments for commercial development. The remaining area available for the Police/Justice complex is inadequate and no longer viable. The feasibility of obtaining additional land through a partial road closure of Middle Street and access through adjacent park land has been investigated. This option would however impose substantial financial burden due to the presence of unstable fill, possible decontamination and diversion of the existing storm water and sewerage connections. Other sites in the Cleveland area are also under investigation.

(2) Any decision to locate to the Middle Street site is essentially a Justice prerogative as the Service requires collocated facilities. It is understood that the previous Minister for Justice and Attorney-General recently held discussions with Redland Shire Council to resolve the issue. The result of this meeting is unknown. Construction issues cannot be considered until a decision is made as to an appropriate site.

(3) It is expected, subject to the resolution of site issues, that construction could commence in late 1996/97.

(4) Construction would take approximately 40 to 48 weeks from acceptance of tender dependent upon any extensions of time for wet weather etc.

(5) A total amount of \$600,000 has been allocated for land acquisition and \$3.5M has been allocated for construction of the new police station and watchhouse.

(6) The Queensland Police Service is committed to the construction of a new police station and watchhouse that adjoins a new Courthouse in Cleveland.

(7) It is envisaged that the new facilities will incorporate the Wynnum Traffic Branch which is currently housed at Chandler.

115. Sunshine Motorway

(Additional information in answer to Question on Notice 115 by Mr Hamill, *Hansard*, 16 May 1996, p. 1284)

Mr Johnson: I wish to clarify certain points made in reply to Question 115. Please note that this material is to clarify, and not intended to replace the original reply, either in part, or in whole.

Point 1

While the employees referred to in the question employed by Sunshine Motorway, not all 47 were directly employed by Queensland Motorways Pty Ltd (QML). 37 were employed by an agent of QML—ADT Group 4 Securitas Pty Ltd.

In addition to the \$75,000 ex gratia assistance package which was recently offered to the employees, other payments relating to the redundancies amounting to \$341,000 were made some time ago.

The Department of Main Roads will reimburse the forementioned \$341,000 as well as meet the \$75,000 ex gratia assistance package, in total \$416,000. This has already been funded by an appropriation from the Consolidated Fund.

Point 8

In addition to the appropriation to cover the cost of redundancy payments, a further appropriation of up to \$2 million from Consolidated Revenue has been made to cover the costs of demolishing and removing the toll plazas.

Normal road funds will fund the annual maintenance of the motorway.

I will consider funding for new works and enhancements, when developing the relevant Roads Implementation programs.

117. Acacia Ridge Police Station

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to the recent justified increases in staff that have outstripped the out-of-date accommodation at Acacia Ridge Police Station—

Will he advise when work, foreshadowed in the 1995 Budget Speech of the former Treasurer, will be undertaken to construct a new building at Acacia Ridge to upgrade the totally inadequate facilities at that Police Station and for which an initial allocation was made in the 1995/96 Budget?

Mr Cooper: The Acacia Ridge Police Station has been tendered on the basis of a two stage design and construction management delivery system.

The tender for stage 1 was accepted in January 1996. The Department of Public Works and Housing have advised that the acceptance of the stage 2 tender is likely to occur in approximately one month.

Upon acceptance of the stage 2 tender, construction is anticipated to be 28 weeks. The total cost of the project is currently estimated at \$1.847M.

120. Annerley Police Station; Police Shopfront, Moorvale Shopping Centre

Mr FOLEY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

- (1) Will he give an assurance that the Annerley Police Station, upgraded during the term of the Labor Government, will not be downgraded?
- (2) Will he support the establishment of a police shopfront facility at the Moorvale Shopping Centre as requested by the South-West Brisbane Chamber of Commerce and Industry?

Mr Cooper:

(1) The policing of Annerley and Dutton Park is currently being examined with a view to determining whether service delivery could be improved by the amalgamation of both Divisions.

There is no intention to close Annerley Police Station and the service currently provided from that station will continue.

There will not be any changes to the current policing arrangements unless the study reveals that a more effective service can be provided by amalgamation.

No decision will be made without the prior approval of the Police Service Board of Management.

Local public sentiment is a factor which will be taken into consideration when the review is being evaluated. No matter what decision is reached, there will not be a downgrading of the service provided to the community.

(2) The request for a Police Beat Shopfront at Moorvale Shopping Centre was raised following the tragic shooting at the Moorooka Westpac Bank. The establishment of Police Beat Shopfronts is a matter for the Queensland Police Service and I, as the responsible Minister, will support whatever decision the Service makes concerning the Moorvale Shopping Centre at Moorooka.

Current crime figures do not support the establishment of a Police Beat Shopfront at this time. Commissioned Officers from the Oxley District Office have been liaising with members of the South-West Brisbane Chamber of Commerce and they are aware of the current situation.

170. Performance Management Dividend

Mr GIBBS asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry—

With reference to his department—

- (1) What savings options have been offered by his Department in order to achieve the Government's budget policy of a 1 percent "across the board" efficiency dividend?

- (2) Which of his savings options have been adopted by the Government?
- (3) What is the specific dollar value of each of these options?
- (4) What new initiatives in his portfolio have been announced by the Coalition Government since 19 February 1996?
- (5) What is the estimated full year cost of each of these initiatives and what is the source of funding for each initiative—Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds or borrowings?
- (6) When will each of these new initiatives be implemented, or in the case of capital projects, when will the project commence and what is its estimated date of completion and its costs?

Mr Perrett:

1. In order to fund election commitments, the Coalition proposed introducing an 1 per cent efficiency dividend on the Consolidated Fund published expenditure forward estimates. However, in view of the scale of the previous Government's election promises and other post Budget expenditure initiatives it has been necessary to institute a review of expenditure commitments across all departments and agencies. The findings of this review will be taken into consideration in developing the State Budget for 1996-97.

Further, the commission of Audit currently is examining the state of Queensland's finances. The Commission is due to report by the end of June. The Commission's report will provide valuable input into the preparation of the 1996-97 State Budget. In the course of preparing the Budget, all relevant funding sources will be considered, including any efficiency dividend that may be considered desirable and necessary.

2. Refer to 1 above.

3. Refer to 1 above.

4. Ministers have foreshadowed a number of initiatives since the Coalition came to office. The precise scope of these, their implementation plans, and funding details, will be finalised as part of the Budget process.

5. Full details of new initiatives announced by the Coalition will be provided in the 1996-97 State Budget.

6. Refer to 5 above.

200. Effluent Treatment

Mr PALASZCZUK asked the Minister for Natural Resources—

With reference to the ongoing problems in finding sites for further water supply dams, and the pollution problems waste water puts back into the streams after urban and rural use, especially blue-green algae—

Will he provide information whether his department is carrying out any research into tertiary treatment of effluent?

Mr Hobbs: The emphasis on managing waste water should include consideration of all options for making use of this resource, after it has been appropriately treated, rather than just discharging it to streams. This will effectively reduce the impact on streams. It should also be noted that tertiary treatment is not essential for a number of potential uses of effluent, for example, for the irrigation of certain crops.

Tertiary sewage treatment processes are fairly well documented in the technical literature. What is needed at this time is to encourage use of the most cost-effective technology.

My Department will shortly be issuing guidelines covering re-use of effluent which will include advice on the treatment processes that should be installed to achieve the effluent quality required for any particular use. The guidelines will include the latest overseas information on this issue.

With the cooperation of local governments and funding from the National Landcare Program my Department has established a number of artificial wetlands pilot installations throughout the State to determine their effectiveness in improving the quality of final effluent. A trial wetland has also been installed at the Burdekin River Irrigation Area with funding from the Land and Water Resource Research Development Corporation to evaluate the process for irrigation tailwater.

The Department has previously developed a biological nutrient removal package plant, again with assistance from the National Landcare Program, to demonstrate this new technology to Queensland local governments. After a period of operation in southern Queensland, the plant is currently operating at Cairns so that it can be inspected by northern local governments. Information from operating the plant in various modes can be used by local governments to decide the optimum process for their purpose.

The Department is also investigating the use of effluent for irrigation. The results of this work will be particularly relevant to sugar areas where waste water source is close to areas that can be irrigated.

As part of this investigation, my Department has developed a software package which can be used as an irrigation planning and management tool to help landholders optimise the application of waste water to land in a way that will not cause land degradation, environmental or health hazards.

In summary, I am pleased to be able to say that on this question, my Department is doing a great deal to identify best practice approaches to treatment and re-use options for effluent.

205. CAPELEC, Rockhampton

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to reports and discussions concerning the probability of centralising electricity billing services in Brisbane and thus removing some 30-40 jobs from CAPELEC's Rockhampton operation—

- (1) Will he give an unequivocal guarantee that he will intervene to prevent this loss of jobs from proceeding?
- (2) If it is to proceed what options will be available to the displaced staff?
- (3) How much will be saved by this proposal to centralise billing?
- (4) What reasons are there for not centralising billing operations in Rockhampton?
- (5) Are there any other functions in the electricity industry which could be centralised in Rockhampton and thereby offset these losses to the Rockhampton job market?

Mr Gilmore:

1. I sought advice from the Chief Executive Officer of CAPELEC, Mr Kim Griffith in order to answer this issue. Mr Griffith advised me that CAPELEC has embarked on a major business improvement initiative to improve service delivery and prepare the organisation for the introduction of a competitive market in Queensland.

- (a) It is understood that an area which CAPELEC has targeted for improvement is the revenue management area. This is because a large number of CAPELEC customers have indicated that they require more flexible payment options and a more informative electricity account service. It is therefore proposed that CAPELEC will maintain responsibility for electricity billing in the area but source account production and dispatch from Brisbane. The transfer of CAPELEC's account production and dispatch to Brisbane will save the equivalent of 2 jobs (ie not the 30-40 jobs quoted by Mr Schwarten).
- (b) While I will not directly intervene to prevent the transfer of CAPELEC's account production and dispatch to Brisbane, I have already written to the Chair of the Queensland Transmission and Supply Corporation, Mr Bill Blair, expressing my concern that any rationalisation proposal must give careful consideration to the possible regional employment implications and that any proposal should not result in a deterioration of services provided to regional Queensland.

2. Mr Griffith has informed me that there will be no forced redundancies or job losses and staff who find that their positions are made redundant will be offered redeployment elsewhere in the organisation.

3. The new arrangements for the revenue management area will save CAPELEC \$850,000 per annum.

4. It is proposed to source account production and dispatch from Brisbane as the capability to print the form of electricity account requested by CAPELEC's customers is only available in Brisbane.

5. The Queensland Transmission and Supply Corporation, consistent with Government policy, is committed to maintaining current regional service delivery standards. However, at the same time the corporation is looking to strengthen cooperative development between the different electricity distribution corporations, improve service delivery, establish centres of excellence for different areas

where it makes sense to streamline processes (ie the account production area will be centralised in Brisbane) and maintain competitive electricity prices.

All electricity distribution corporations, including CAPELEC, will host centres of excellence. The specific areas or functions which may be carried out by CAPELEC have not been determined but will be decided as part of this process.

213. University of Queensland, Proposed Ipswich Campus

Mr HAMILL asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposed University of Queensland campus in Ipswich—

- (1) Is the Government considering a request from the University to obtain either (a) the existing Challinor Centre site, or (b) the existing Ipswich Showgrounds site, or (c) the existing Ipswich Country Club site, or any or all of these sites?
- (2) What is the value of each of these three sites and the improvements located on each of these sites?
- (3) If the Government supports the University's request, what compensation and assistance will it provide (a) the residents of the Challinor Centre, (b) the Ipswich Show Society, (c) the Ipswich Greyhound Racing Club and (d) the Ipswich Country Club to relocate and re-establish their activities?
- (4) Noting the University's claim that it requires approximately 80 weeks of construction time to open its new campus for the commencement of the 1998 academic year, what is the deadline set by the Government for its final decision on the siting of the new campus in Ipswich?

Mr Quinn:

(1) No formal request has been received from the University regarding any of the sites mentioned.

(2) No action has been taken to value any of these sites, or to assess the improvements located on each of them.

(3) The Government is yet to receive a request from the University for funding of any site, or sites, other than the Ipswich Railyards site.

(4) The Heritage Council is due to consider the heritage implications of a university development on the Ipswich Railyards, at its June meeting. The State will have discussions with the University, with respect to its intentions, in light of the outcome of this meeting.

If the University wishes to proceed on the Railyards site, adequate time remains for construction, to achieve a 1998 opening.

214. Education Department Capital Works

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the Education Department's proposal to defer \$23.3m in capital works as outlined

in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996—

Will he detail each of the capital works projects which his department has identified should be deferred from the 1995-96 budget as a cost cutting measure?

Mr Quinn: With respect to the \$23.3 million in capital works, outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996, there are no projects that have been deferred as a cost cutting measure.

The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

215. Housing Development, Sandgate

Mr NUTTALL asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to 7th Avenue housing development and in view of his recent comments regarding public housing stock and waiting lists—

Will he confirm that the public housing development in 7th Avenue, Sandgate will proceed as originally planned?

Mr Connor: My Department is seeking to meet the housing needs of those Queenslanders who are in greatest need. I have directed the Department to especially target areas where applicants have waited for more than four years.

The project proposed for 7th Avenue, Sandgate, will provide a range of accommodation including 2, 3 and 4 bedroom housing. Some tenants will have waited up to five years, when they move in.

The Department has developed a sensitive design and layout which will yield 19 units of accommodation and provide for the sale of heritage-listed "Allambie".

Currently, the land is being rezoned and tenders for the construction will be called in about three months' time.

This project will contribute to the public housing needs of those seeking accommodation in the Sandgate area.

217. Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to the Premier's promise during the 1995 election campaign to provide \$1.5m up front to fund the Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service (CHRS) and since this has been confirmed by the Premier when he visited Central Queensland recently—

- (1) When will the CHRS receive the full \$1.5m funding?
- (2) Has Treasury agreed to increase the Emergency Services budget by \$1.5m to pay for the Premier's promise or will this have to be found from existing budget resources?
- (3) Will he honour the commitment to the CHRS made by his Labor predecessors to provide \$1.5m over 5 years?

Mr Veivers:

(1) The original estimate of \$1.5M for the establishment of the helicopter service at Rockhampton was based on the need for the CHRS to actually purchase a helicopter. As the previous Government did not provide funding for this to occur, the Department of Emergency Services devised a wet leasing alternative as a method of establishing the service.

Wet leasing involves the contracting of a commercial helicopter provider to supply a fully equipped helicopter and crew for a fixed monthly charge (referred to as a standing charge) and a fixed rate for each hour flown but working to service delivery standards established and monitored by the Department of Emergency Services.

The implementation of the wet leasing option has substantially reduced the need for start-up capital and ensured that the operational and logistical back-up for such operations is vested in an experienced commercial helicopter provider.

The annual recurrent cost of operating the CHRS in Rockhampton under the wet lease arrangement is estimated at about \$800,000. After receiving the current level of Government grant of \$300,000, this leaves a \$500,000 funding gap to be made up from corporate and community sponsorships.

As the wet lease arrangement is tied to a five year Service Agreement, the urgency to provide a large amount of start-up capital no longer exists and the Government can now consider the provision of funds for the CHRS in conjunction with the formulation of the State budget.

(2) CHRS is funded to \$300,000 per annum as are all other community based helicopter services. As mentioned above, wet leasing arrangements remove the need for large amounts of start-up capital.

(3) The provision of \$1.5M over a five year period (ie—\$300,000 per annum) has been incorporated into the budget of the Department of Emergency Services and will continue to be available over the period of the 5 year Service Agreement.

The Government remains committed to continuing close consultation and liaison with the organising committee of the CHRS, health services, and Local Government in the region.

218. Building and Construction Industry Inquiry

Mr MACKENROTH asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to the inquiry into the building industry—

- (1) What is the anticipated cost of this inquiry?
- (2) What are the details of these costs including (a) daily fee to chairman and total fees (b) daily fee to members and total fees and (c) travel costs?
- (3) From which fund or funds will the costs of this inquiry be drawn?

Mr Connor:

- (1) It is anticipated at this stage that the total cost of the Inquiry will be approximately \$350,000.
 - (2)(a) The daily fee to the Chairman has been approved by Governor in Council at \$1,000 per day plus actual expenses incurred in the performance of duties. Total fees are estimated at \$130,000.
 - (b) The daily fee to Members has been approved by Governor in Council at \$360 per day plus actual expenses incurred in the performance of duties. Total fees are estimated at \$100,000.
 - (c) Travel costs inclusive of accommodation are estimated at \$58,000.
- (3) Costs of the Inquiry will be drawn from the Public Works Building Funds and Housing Trust funds of my Department, being the two areas of relevance to the matters of the Inquiry.

221. Education Department Capital Works, Murrumba Electorate

Mr WELLS asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the Education Department's proposal to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 budget—

Which capital works in the Murrumba electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The Education Department has no plans to defer any capital works in the Murrumba electorate, that are a part of this project.

222. May Mini-Budget

Mr BEATTIE asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

With reference to the article in this weeks Business Queensland entitled "Freeze chills business", which describes how a company went into liquidation as a result of the new Government's indecision and to persistent rumours across the Public Service that consideration of many frozen programs will be postponed until Government policy is determined through the 1996-97 Budget process—

Will her May Mini-Budget resolve once and for all which programs are to be axed and which are to be saved, or will programs be put into deep freeze, extending the uncertainty for business through until the September budget announcement?

Mrs Sheldon: The process of reviewing previous Government initiatives is the first phase of the 1996-97 Budget and will be finalised and announced in that context. In relation to general programs and capital works, Ministers have full discretion to proceed with these programs.

223. Mr Kevin Davies

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Natural Resources—

With reference to the appointment of Mr Kevin Davies as Acting Director-General of the Department of Public Works and Housing and to his previous employment with the former departments of Geographic Information and Mapping and Surveying—

Will he detail (a) all travel and expenses incurred by Mr Davies for each year he was Surveyor-General, including purpose of travel or entertainment, all costs, destinations, accommodation and related entertainment activities, (b) all entertainment conducted by Mr Davies, in-house in the department, including functions, lunches and dinners, guest lists, catering costs and purpose of each event, during his previous employment and (c) the commissioning by Mr Davies of a Pro Hart painting, at a cost of \$35,000 for his office while Surveyor-General?

Mr Hobbs:

(a) Mr Davies was appointed Surveyor-General in October 1982 and remained in that position until August 1990. In accordance with Public Finance Standard No. 401 all vouchers showing details of expenditure up to 30 June 1990 have been destroyed. Vouchers retained by the Department indicate the following details of travel and expenses incurred by Mr Davies and acquitted during the 1990/91 financial year—

EXPENSE—LOCATION—DATES—AMOUNT

Meals & accommodation—Hotel Adelaide—
2/2/90—\$84.60

Meals & accommodation—Hotel Conrad Gold
Coast—7-8/5/90—\$186.45

Meals & accommodation—Hilton Int. Cairns—
9-11/5/90—\$366.95

Meals & accommodation—South Mole Is. Resort—
9-11/6/90—\$399.90

Total—\$1037.90

I have been advised by the Department that no details as to the purpose of above travel are indicated on individual vouchers and no other departmental records which contain these details are known to exist.

(b) Refer to answer (a) above. There are no vouchers or other departmental records for the period July-August 1990 detailing any entertainment conducted by Mr Davies.

(c) I have been advised that there are no departmental records indicating that Mr Davies commissioned a Pro Hart painting, at a cost of \$35,000 for his office.

227. Courthouse Land, Bundaberg

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice—

With reference to the allocation of half a million dollars in the 1995-96 Budget for the purchase of land adjacent to the new police station in Bundaberg for a Court House—

- (1) Have those funds been spent to purchase land for the new Court House?
- (2) Will the funds allocated for the acquisition of land be spent in 1996-97?
- (3) Will he give an assurance that planning and construction of the new Bundaberg Court House will commence in 1996-67?

Mr Beanland:

- (1) No
- (2) No. The cost of the land required for the Court House has been estimated by valuers of the Department of Natural Resources at \$865,000. This is \$300,000 above the funds allocated by the former government. A further proposal to resolve the issue will be advanced during the consideration of the formulation of the 1996-97 budget.
- (3) No. My department will not be constructing a new Courthouse in Bundaberg in 1996-97.

228. Moorooka State School

Mr FOLEY asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the concern of parents at the Moorooka State School over traffic hazards in dropping off and picking up children at the school—

Will he take steps to establish a drop-off zone outside the school in order to improve safety for parents and children?

Mr Quinn: The safety of people, in and around school property, is of paramount concern to the Department of Education, and myself.

In addressing the concern of parents at the Moorooka State School, I would advise the Honourable Member that current government policy dictates that the provision of vehicular setdown, or parking facilities, outside schools, is a matter for consideration by the local authority. If a school considers this matter to be a problem, then the school, or a subcommittee of the school parent group, should approach their local council seeking improvements.

In consideration of the application, the council may seek financial assistance on a subsidy basis from the Transport Department, under the School Safe Program. Should space limitations dictate utilisation of some of the school reserve for the construction of the drop-off zone, the Education Department would give consideration to making available the necessary portion of land, if possible, to allow its excision from the school reserve, to road reserve.

The Department of Education will consider funding the cost of title transfer, survey and fence relocation, in cases where excisions are necessary.

230. Education Department Capital Works, Archerfield Electorate

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Archerfield electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The capital works deferred to 1996-97 in the Archerfield electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the construction of a covered area at Pallara State School
- the upgrade of classrooms at Calamvale State School

231. Education Department Capital Works, Ipswich West Electorate

Mr LIVINGSTONE asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Ipswich West Electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The capital works deferred to 1996-97 in the Ipswich West electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the upgrade of classrooms at Ipswich North State School
- the construction of a covered area at Brassall State School
- the construction of a covered area at Haigslea State School
- the construction of a covered area at Glamorgan Vale State School
- the construction of a covered area at Karalee State School

232. Education Department Capital Works, Currumbin Electorate

Mrs ROSE asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Currumbin Electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The capital works deferred to 1996-97 in the Currumbin electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the upgrade of a classroom at Currumbin Valley State School
- the construction of a covered area at Ingleside State School

234. Bowen State School

Mrs BIRD asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the application by the Parents and Citizens Association of Bowen State School for funding for a much needed multi-purpose shade building for the pupils—

- (1) Will he recognise the need for such a shade building at the school?
- (2) Will he provide funding, at the very minimum dollar for dollar, to the Parents and Citizens Association to protect the children of the Bowen State School from the northern sun?

Mr Quinn: (1) & (2) No applications for funding towards a multipurpose shade facility have been received from the Bowen State School.

However, the Building Better Schools program has identified a need for additional covered play area at this school. Funding has been allocated in the current financial year to address this issue.

236. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinics, Indooroopilly and Ashgrove

Mrs EDMOND asked the Minister for Health—

- (1) Will he confirm for the House and concerned members of the community the planned closure of the Indooroopilly and Ashgrove Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinics, leaving a void in child and youth mental health services from Enoggera to Inala?
- (2) What considerations were given to the continuing needs of young people at risk and their families, given that these services were well utilised and demand high, and that this level of service will not be met by the hasty closure or merger of these services in a totally unsuitable site with recognised access problems?

- (3) Is this closure linked to Treasury initiated funding cuts to the child and youth mental health teams and the Mental Health Implementation Strategy?

Mr Horan:

(1) No, no clinics are to be closed and no void in service will be left. Rather, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) at Indooroopilly and Ashgrove Clinics are being relocated to enable consolidation of the five existing clinics into three (at Nundah, Pine Rivers, and Enoggera). The five clinics (which were all established under Coalition Governments) were sited, between 1959 and 1970, to reflect the demographic profile and community needs of that time. The teams, as they are currently organised, are too small to meet the needs of the community for a specialist service. In addition, the clinics have ill defined and overlapping catchment areas. Consolidation into three sites will provide three larger clinical teams, which will then have the critical mass of staff required to better meet today's specialised mental health service needs.

(2) The relocation of services in the health district has not been a hasty move. Rather it represents the phased implementation, commenced under successive Labor Ministers Hayward, Elder, and Beattie, of a wide ranging external review of mental health services provided to the children and young people in what was then Brisbane North Region. The report of this review was completed in January 1994. The review included consultations with staff, community and relevant agencies.

The consolidation of services to an expanded service at the Enoggera site is occurring in a planned and phased manner to ensure that any disruption to services is minimised.

The Enoggera service will provide greater accessibility to a wider range of consumers, and is within a few minutes walk of a major bus-rail interchange.

The catchment population south of the Brisbane River, some of which previously attended Indooroopilly is now serviced by the Yeronga mental health service with clinics also operating at Inala and Greenslopes. Collaboration with these clinics is occurring to facilitate the transfer of specific families who have been receiving their services from the Indooroopilly site.

(3) No; in fact, I have announced new, additional, and significant allocations of capital works funds which will see the major upgrade of CAMHS on Brisbane's Northside. It is a demonstration of the commitment of the Coalition Government that one third of the entire \$1.275 million allocation for Brisbane North was dedicated to child and adolescent mental health.

Further, and in contrast to the behaviour of the Goss Government, there have been no Treasury initiated funding cuts to the child and youth mental health teams, nor to the Mental Health Implementation Strategy. Under the administration of the Goss Government, of which you were a member, and specifically during the Health Ministries of your now leaders, Messrs Elder and Beattie, funding for mental health services were bled by the wasteful regional

system. For example, between 1992/93 and 1993/94, \$1.8 million of new funding was provided to Regional Health Authorities by Mental Health Branch, and yet mental health expenditure only increased by \$0.5 million. With Queensland's population growth, this actually resulted in a per capita fall in mental health expenditure by over 2%.

This Government is committed to ensuring mental health services, including those for children, adolescents, and families, are improved. I also guarantee that funds allocated to these services will go to delivering services, and no longer be siphoned into other areas.

238. Education Department Capital Works, Mackay Electorate

Mr MULHERIN asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Mackay Electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The capital works deferred to 1996-97 in the Mackay electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the upgrade of classrooms at Mackay Central State School
- the construction of a covered area at Victoria Park State School

239. Mr Kevin Davies

Ms BLIGH asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to the appointment of Mr Kevin Davies as Acting Director-General of the Department of Public Works and Housing—

- (1) Is he aware of the serious allegations made in the Parliament, and documented in *Hansard* 1979-1983, regarding Mr Davies' suitability for

appointment to a senior public service position?

- (2) Will he provide (a) details of Mr Davies' membership, positions and activities in the Queensland Liberal Party, both past and present and (b) details of private sector companies and organisations with which Mr Davies has or has had an association involving a pecuniary interest, including directorships, shareholding, property interest and partnerships, including any silent partnerships?
- (3) Given a possible conflict of interest between Mr Davies' connections with private sector companies and his new role in the process of awarding public contracts, what assurances can he give that any conflict of interest can be eliminated?

Mr Connor: The question from the Member for South Brisbane about my Acting Director-General is a good illustration of how bereft the Opposition is of original thought.

To put things into context, the Member's contribution to the House in 1996 is to parrot the baseless allegations made almost 20 years ago by that renowned mud slinger—the former Member for Archerfield.

If the Member took the trouble to check, she would realise that Ministers at the time completely refuted the criticisms made and placed on the record the great advances made in the organisations under the administration of Mr Davies.

Kevin Davies has a proven record of achievement as a public servant during his 11 years under the former coalition government.

You may be interested to know that the Minister at the time of Mr Davies' departure from the Public Service, Bill Eaton, personally gave him no fewer than four letters of commendation for his work!

I am pleased to have a man with such experience and ability as the Chief Executive in my portfolio.

With regard to the specific questions asked, I can advise:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)(a) Mr Davies resigned from the Liberal party in 1978 prior to being appointed to the Public Service.
- (b) I remind the Member that all company and share information is available for public search.
- (3) I have no evidence of conflict of interest.

241. Education Department Capital Works, Bulimba Electorate; Morningside State School

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Education—

- (1) Will the proposed capital works freeze for the 1995-96 Education Budget affect the schools in the Bulimba electorate?
- (2) Will he detail capital works that are being frozen in the Bulimba electorate?

(3) Why has \$40,000 for capital works at Morningside State School disappeared?

(4) Will he tell the parents of state school children when capital works programs will start again in schools that are in need of urgent repair?

Mr Quinn:

(1) & (2) There are no capital works in the Bulimba electorate that are being frozen by the Department of Education.

(3) At the request of the former federal Labor candidate for the electorate of Griffith, Mr Kevin Rudd, the former Minister for Education, the Honourable Member for Ipswich, directed that Education officers and Q-Build staff visit Morningside State School to consider the needs of a particular classroom. It was considered that the needs of the school could be better addressed through the Building Better Schools (BBS) conversion/upgrade program. Consequently work has not been undertaken and will now progress under BBS.

(4) All work programmed on the 1995-96 Education capital works program is progressing.

243. Building and Construction Industry Inquiry; Subcontractors and Suppliers

Mrs CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

Whilst recognising the current review of the building industry by the committee chaired by Mr Scurr—

What assistance is proposed by the Minister for subcontractors and suppliers financially disadvantaged by the non-completion of Government projects in Mt Isa, Cairns, Yeppoon and Gladstone?

Mr Connor: Discussions held with organisations of subcontractor groups in Mt Isa, Cairns and Rockhampton and with the Trustee in Bankruptcy have resulted in an agreement which I detailed in Parliament on May 15, 1996. Basically, the agreement gave affected subcontractors access to an immediate payment and will ensure uncompleted projects are finalised by disadvantaged subcontractors where possible.

245. High School, Burpengary

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the provision of a high school at Burpengary—

- (1) What is the current timetable position regarding the provision of the school?
- (2) When will a site be acquired for the school?
- (3) Will he guarantee that plans for the school will receive the highest priority?

Mr Quinn:

(1) The construction of a high-school in the Narangba/West Burpengary area is included on the 10 year indicative plan for capital works of the Department of Education.

(2) It is anticipated that proclamation of a suitable site will occur later this year.

(3) Planning for the construction of this school is a high priority within the Department. However, I can give no guarantee with respect to the date that construction will commence.

247. Wynnum State High School

Mr BURNS asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the Parents and Citizens Committee of the Wynnum State High School who are extremely upset that the school's planned home economics upgrade has been eliminated from the State's Capital Works Program and as the former Federal MP for the area had announced a grant of \$651,529 for Wynnum High home economics upgrade and the Parents and Citizens understood that it was a "specific purpose" payment and that it was irrevocable—

- (1) Why has his Government made such a blatant political decision to discriminate against students in a Labor electorate, given that the project had progressed so far that it has been suggested that up to \$100,000 has already been spent on planning and design?
- (2) As the existing facilities are grossly inadequate, with only one sink per classroom, forcing the 400 students using the facility to carry hot water across rooms with the result that the Occupational Health and Safety Adviser has raised serious concerns for the safety of the students, will he, as a matter of urgency, reverse this decision and provide the students of the school seeking jobs in the hospitality industry with the opportunity to train and work in safe, modern facilities that had been agreed to and funded by both State and Federal Governments?

Mr Quinn: (1) & (2) In recent weeks there seems to have been some confusion concerning Wynnum State High School and, more specifically, the possibility of upgrading its home economics block with funding provided by the Commonwealth. The source of this confusion can be traced back to last year's inexplicable decision by the previous Labor Government in Canberra to change the way in which projects were identified and approved under its Capital Grants Program for 1996.

Prior to the change, it was accepted practice that Queensland would submit a schedule of projects by December 31 each year, detailing estimated funding needed until the following June 30. This would be followed by a second schedule after the State Budget, detailing estimated expenditure for the full grant. A two part schedule was designed to accommodate the fact that Queensland is a high growth State with rapidly changing needs and enrolment patterns.

High growth makes it extremely difficult to forecast future requirements with any degree of confidence or accuracy, more than six months in advance. Until last year, the special situation of Queensland, in this

regard, was understood and accepted by the Commonwealth Government. This arrangement worked perfectly well until the former Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, Ross Free, directed that a comprehensive schedule of all projects for 1996 be submitted by 31 December 1995. The State Government complied with this request, directing the Facilities Development Section of the Education Department to provide the information necessary to prepare a schedule.

There seems to have been no valid reason for his directive beyond the rather obvious fact that such information could be used to bolster the re-election chances of Federal Labor MPs, in Queensland, who were, even at this early stage, feeling decidedly nervous about their prospects. This blatant political interference by the Labor Party, in the efficient administration of Commonwealth grants, shows a total disregard for the many school communities, like Wynnum High, who have been cruelly misled as a consequence.

The major problem with this surprising directive, from Mr Free, was that the Queensland Education Department does not finalise its own capital works program until April or May of each year. In other words, the best it could provide by December was a preliminary schedule of projects, to be followed by a revised list after the State budget this year. As a consequence, a number of projects that met the criteria for the Grant, and that were scheduled for planning only, were placed on the list.

The Wynnum State High School, which was scheduled, by the Department, for planning only, in 1995-96 was placed on this list because the upgrade of the Home Economics block met the criteria for the Grant. The former State Minister for Education was warned of the risk associated with such a move, before the level of funding was advised and the project approved.

In a brief, prepared last October, the Department warned the then Minister, Mr Hamill, not to place undue reliance on this preliminary schedule, because of the likelihood of change. This crystal clear warning is noted in the following quote:

"As the final draft of the 1996-97 Capital Works Program is not expected to be finalised until early April 1996, a number of projects earmarked for Commonwealth funding under the December 1995 schedule may be withdrawn from the program due to funding issues or other circumstances.

Care would need to be exhibited by the Commonwealth in any announcements of proposed projects prior to the State Budget."

The former Minister must surely have understood the importance of the last sentence.

But such an understanding was not evident in the subsequent action of most Labor members. These people, your colleagues, ignored the advice of the Department.

Let me quote this brief passage from the *Wynnum Herald* of February 7, this year:

"Wynnum State High School is the big winner out of a Federal Government grant of more than \$900,000 to Bayside schools.

Federal Member for Bowman Con Sciacca announced that Wynnum High had received more than \$650,000 out of a Commonwealth capital grant.

The money will go towards building a catering kitchen in upgrading the home economics block."

Unfortunately for the P&C Association of Wynnum State High School, this project was not confirmed—and because of such blatant political opportunism, the Coalition Government has been left to clean up yet another Labor mess.

I am advised that the home economics block upgrade initially proposed for Wynnum State High School is one of 13 projects—worth almost \$6.5 million statewide—which the Department has been obliged to withdraw from its capital works list, because of changing circumstances. These are the same changing circumstances that were predicted, in October last year, in the brief to Mr Hamill.

I stress again that this was a departmental decision—not a personal decision by me—not a political decision by this Government—but a soundly based administrative decision made by the dedicated, expert staff entrusted in the Department with that responsibility.

As a responsible Minister, I am not prepared to interfere with the efficient administration of my Department, so that the irresponsible actions of Labor members can be redeemed.

In so far as future improvements to home economics facilities at the Wynnum State High School, the Honourable Member would be advised to refer to discussions that were conducted by the Metropolitan East region, with its high school principals. These discussions considered how all subjects could be made available to students, using facilities available in the region.

Following these discussions it was determined that the region would embrace the cluster concept. The cluster concept is designed to ensure that subjects which lead to vocational education are available to all students regardless of facilities available within their school.

The Principal of Wynnum State High School was involved in these discussions and selected two subjects which his school could provide to its particular cluster. These subjects were:

- Business, Clerical and Retail
- Engineering and Metals

Wynnum North State High School, another school in the Wynnum cluster selected:

- Tourism and Hospitality
- Arts, Media and Entertainment

It is therefore envisaged that the students of Wynnum State High School will access the home economics facilities at the Wynnum North State High School.

248. Education Department, Staffing Levels

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the facts that 80 per cent of recurrent expenditure in the Education Department relates to wages and salaries and that all departmental Budgets are being considered for possible savings—

Will he ensure that this will not result in reductions in staffing of deputy principals, classroom teachers, relief teachers, specialist teachers such as music, librarians etc, and essential support staff and teacher aides?

Mr Quinn: The policy of the Coalition Government is to place more resources through the school gate.

As staffing in schools is a critical factor in the delivery of quality education services, it will be my intention, where possible, to ensure that there are no reductions in staffing levels at Queensland schools.

However, the level of staffing in schools has, and always will be, subject to budgetary considerations.

249. Education Department Capital Works, Cleveland Electorate

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Cleveland Electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The Capital Works deferred to 1996-97 in the Cleveland electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the construction of a covered area at Cleveland State School
- the construction of a covered area at Dunwich State School

250. Education Department Capital Works, Redcliffe Electorate; Humpybong Infant School

Mr HOLLIS asked the Minister for Education—
With reference to his proposal to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

- (1) Will these cuts affect the redevelopment program of Humpybong Infant School?
- (2) What other capital works in the Redcliffe Electorate, will be discontinued as a result of the Government slashing costs in Labor electorates?

Mr Quinn: (1) & (2) The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

There are no plans to defer any capital works in the Redcliffe electorate, that are a part of this project.

251. Taxes

Mr HAMILL asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

Is the Government considering the introduction of (a) a fuel tax, (b) increased tobacco tax, (c) financial institutions duty and (d) increased BAD tax?

Mrs Sheldon: The Government currently is reviewing initiatives as part of preparation for the 1996-97 State Budget, to be delivered in September 1996. All relevant funding issues will be considered in the preparation of the State Budget, including variations to State taxes such as the Coalition's election commitments to increase the payroll tax threshold by discrete amounts and phase out land tax over time. We have already delivered by legislation stamp duty relief on the refinancing of principal place of residence mortgages.

Decisions on individual components of the State Budget, such as expenditure initiatives or revenue measures, cannot be made in isolation and will be announced with the delivery of the State Budget in September.

253. Land Tax

Mr De LACY asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

Will she honour her promise to provide at least \$20m in Land Tax relief with effect this calendar year?

Mrs Sheldon: The Government remains committed to the gradual phasing out of land tax.

In this regard, the Government currently is reviewing both expenditure and revenue initiatives as we prepare the 1996-97 State Budget.

Decisions on individual components of the Budget, including the gradual phasing out of land tax, cannot be made in isolation and will be announced with the delivery of the 1996-97 State Budget in September.

254. Boating Fees

Mr DOLLIN asked the Premier—

With reference to a promise before the election by the Coalition to cut boat registration fees by up to more than half, with the fee for boats up to three metres set at \$40 and all other boats up to 20 metres set at \$70 and that drive fees and boating facility fees would be dropped—

Will the Coalition keep this promise; if so, when?

Mr Borbidge: As with all election commitments, the Coalition Government intends to deliver on the undertakings given. I have asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to commence action on this matter, which represents a reduction in registration fees for all boat owners paying full registration. Given the revenue implications, proposals for concessional fees, and the administration arrangements necessary to change the computer and renewal notices, this initiative will be implemented in line with the upcoming State Budget.

255. Danpork Piggery, Warwick

Mr NUTTALL asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to an announcement by Danpork Australia that their plans to site a 10,000 sow piggery, one of Australia's largest, near Warwick have cleared all regulatory hurdles—

- (1) Has the piggery been licensed by the Department of Environment?
- (2) If so, what discharge/emission levels have been set for both air and water?
- (3) What controls have been required of the company to meet these levels?
- (4) Will he give a guarantee that these controls are adequate to address the discharges from a piggery of this size?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) The piggery has not been licensed by the Department of Environment under the Environmental Protection Act 1994. No application for an environmental authority (licence) has been made to the Department of Environment. A licence is not required until the activity actually commences and in addition, there is no current requirement for a piggery of this size to be licensed as the environmentally relevant activity does not commence until 1 July 1996 under the Environmental Protection (Interim) Regulation.

- (2) Given the answer to (1) above, not relevant.
- (3) Given the answer to (1) above, not relevant.
- (4) The Department of Environment will not issue an authority under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 unless it is satisfied that the requirements of the Act are met.

258. Walla Weir, Burnett River

Mr NUNN asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the proposal to erect the Walla Weir on the Burnett River at Johnson's Rocks upstream from Bundaberg and with regard to environmental concerns—

- (1) Has an environmental management plan been prepared for the project?
- (2) If so, does it address the concerns expressed by the University of Queensland lungfish expert Anne Kemp?
- (3) If not, will he require further studies to be undertaken?
- (4) Will he release the environmental management plan for public scrutiny?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) An Environmental Management Plan (the Plan) was prepared by the consultant (Kinhill Cameron McNamara) commissioned by the Department of Natural Resources as part of the impact assessment for the Walla Weir project. The most recent environmental management plan was included with the Impact Assessment Study Supplementary Report (dated November 1995). The Environmental Management Plan has been reviewed by the Department of Environment and other reviewers, and recommendations to revise and improve the Plan have been made as part of the Department of Environment review of the impact assessment.

(2) The Environmental Management Plan includes measures to manage impacts to aquatic flora and fauna, including lungfish, during both construction and operational phases of the weir. If the weir proceeds, Environmental Management Implementation Plans, prepared by the Department of Natural Resources to address the environmental management procedure requirements in the Plan, will need to be approved by the Department of Environment. These will include more specific operational controls including details on maintaining water levels in the weir storage during lungfish breeding season. Dr Anne Kemp of Queensland University is of the opinion that the effects of the weir on recruitment of juvenile lungfish into adult age groups remain unknown because it is not confirmed whether impoundments provide appropriate habitat for juvenile development. Specialists from the Department of Primary Industries Fisheries and Forestry who have conducted research into lungfish as part of the impact assessment for the weir considered that even in a worst case scenario of no recruitment of juvenile lungfish into the adult population (and this is not certain), this would not lead to extinction of lungfish in the Burnett River system. There is therefore a variance in the

expectations of "specialists" with regard to lungfish survival in the impoundment and the Burnett River.

(3) Notwithstanding the issues raised in (2) above, officers of the Department of Environment and the Department of Primary Industries Fisheries and Forestry have provided recommendations for further monitoring and environmental management of lungfish under the Environmental Management Plan and Environmental Management Implementation Plans if the weir proceeds.

These recommendations include: further baseline study on the conditions required for re-establishment and maintenance of lungfish breeding habitat in the storage; further investigation of the requirements of juvenile lungfish (about which there is limited information); ongoing monitoring of the lungfish population in relation to the construction and operation of the weir; and provision for lungfish movement through a fishlock in the weir.

(4) The Environmental Management Plan was included in a draft impact assessment report which was placed on public exhibition from 24 April to 29 May 1995. Numerous submissions were received. Following responses from government, community and industry, a supplementary report and revised plan were prepared. Advice of the availability of this documentation was provided to those parties who reviewed the earlier draft, and key conservation groups and other reviewers provided with a copy of the supplement and revised plan.

On this basis the draft Environmental Management Plan has already been available for public scrutiny on two occasions.

259. Dugong, Hinchinbrook Channel

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to a report prepared by Professor Helene Marsh for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park on dugong numbers on the Great Barrier Reef—

- (1) In giving the Port Hinchinbrook Resort its final approval did he consider this report?
- (2) If so, what controls has he put in place to ensure the dugong population in Hinchinbrook Channel is not impacted by increased boat traffic generated by the resort?
- (3) Is he comfortable with Mr Williams' prediction that boat traffic in the channel will double as a result of the resort?
- (4) Will he guarantee that the 12 knot speed limit to be imposed on these boats is sufficiently low enough to prevent injuries or death to dugong in the channel?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) No, the report was not considered as it was not available when approvals, such as the State Marine Park permit, were given in October 1994.

(2) Whilst the answer to (1) is no, the Deed of Agreement for Port Hinchinbrook requires the company to "comply with any management plan or draft management plan prepared by the Department and notified to the Company. Where the Company's

proposed activities may result in new or significantly increased commercial activities in national or marine parks, or in increased visitation to sites listed on any statutory register of heritage places, the Company and the Department will consider these proposals within the context of jointly developed . . . environmental resource management programs for these activities and sites" (Clause 19.2).

Approval has recently been given to commence a comprehensive planning program to develop a Strategic Plan for Hinchinbrook Channel; this plan will address all relevant issues including the dugong and will make recommendations to minimise any impacts on the dugong population in Hinchinbrook Channel.

(3) It is extremely difficult to predict the likely numbers of vessels using the channel as a result of the resort; any such prediction is no more than a guess.

(4) No such guarantee can be given. The speed limit in the Deed of Agreement is binding only on displacement vessels over 25 metres. However the Strategic Plan currently being developed for the Channel may also consider the regulation of other vessel speeds in specific areas.

260. Rural Fire Brigades

Mr MULHERIN asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

- (1) What is the 1995-96 Budget for Rural Fire Brigades?
- (2) How many Queensland Rural Fire Brigades are assisted by voluntary levies placed on residents by local authorities?
- (3) What are the names of these brigades?
- (4) Which shires currently strike a levy on their residents to support Rural Fire Brigades?
- (5) Which shires do not support such levies?
- (6) Does he intend to alter the existing 1995-96 Rural Fire Brigade Budget in any way; if so, in what regard?

Mr Veivers:

(1) Rural Fire Brigades are managed by the Rural Fire Division of the Queensland Fire Service. The budget for the Division for 1995/96 is \$7.924M. Individual Brigade budgets derived from fundraising activities and donations are not available.

(2) As at 7 May 1996 it has been reported that 35 Local Authorities have imposed levies on all or part of their Council areas. This covers 626 Rural Fire Brigade Districts located either wholly or partially within those Shires. Not all Brigades have requested assistance.

(3) The names of those Brigades are tabled.

(4) The list of the 35 Shires making contributions are also tabled.

(5) In many parts of Queensland, especially in the western areas, a levy is either irrelevant or impractical. The Rural Fire Division is aware that many Shires have chosen to provide financial

assistance from general revenue rather than strike a levy or provide assistance by way of Council services.

The absence of a levy in a Shire area cannot be taken to mean that the Shire does not support a levy. The Department of Emergency Services does not maintain a list of Shires which support Rural Fire levies.

(6) The 1995/96 budget of the Rural Fire Division has been reduced by \$50,000, such amount having been allocated as new initiative funding to special equipment and found to be in excess of this year's requirements.

No rural fires program will be adversely affected and all are on target for completion by the end of the financial year.

261. Housing Department Loans

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

- (1) When will he fulfil the Government's election promise to reduce interest rates his department charges for loans for home buyers?
- (2) Is his department charging 12.5 per cent and higher on these loans when bank loans for housing can be locked in at 8.5 per cent?
- (3) As loan repayments are based on a borrower's ability to pay, is the borrower's principal increasing on any loans?
- (4) How many loans have increased?
- (5) By how much?
- (6) Are these people building a debt rather than buying a home?

Mr Connor:

(1) I am not aware of a specific commitment or timetable for implementation with respect to reducing interest rates. However, I commend as essential reading the amendments to the Stamp Act 1894, during the last session of Parliament, and the implications of these amendments to make home loan interest rates less costly through increased competition.

(2) Yes, but only on 978 loans granted under the terms of Labor's thoroughly discredited and cancelled Home Ownership Made Easier scheme which offered 10-year fixed-interest loans at interest rates of 12.9% to 14.9%.

(3) Yes. Both under Labor's failed H.O.M.E. Scheme, and under another Labor scheme, the Deposit Assistance Loan, introduced in September 1994, and offered in conjunction with the Queensland Housing Loan, which was introduced at the same time.

(4) Of the current 4607 H.O.M.E. Loans, 2829 have a loan balance greater than originally advanced, while of the current 302 Deposit Assistance Loans, 241 have a loan balance greater than the original amount.

(5) For the 2829 H.O.M.E. loans, the average increase is \$5259 or 106.6% of the original balance, while for the more recent 241 Deposit Assistance

Loans the average increase in principal is \$244 or 102.1% of the original advance.

(6) Yes, and I am still trying to work out why the previous Labor Government would have introduced schemes which allowed family tragedies of this magnitude to have occurred.

263. Management of Behavioural Problems in Schools

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to continuing reports regarding inappropriate behaviour in Queensland schools—

- (1) What programs has he introduced to combat unacceptable classroom behaviour by students?
- (2) What specific programs does he intend to introduce into Rockhampton schools?
- (3) What funding will be made available to Rockhampton schools to cater for programs aimed at addressing school discipline problems?

Mr Quinn:

(1) The Government is currently investigating a range of possible alternative programs that could be introduced in conjunction with providing principals with additional powers to suspend students whose behaviour is unacceptable.

(2) & (3) These are matters that will be decided in the context of formulating the State budget.

264. Women's Health Centres

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Health—

Will he give an assurance not to cut the funding of independent, community based women's health centres?

Mr Horan: Of great importance to the Coalition Government is its recognition that ". . . at the heart of a healthy society is the family . . ."; thus the Coalition's mandate includes a commitment that ". . . health services will be structured towards ensuring family health."

In delivering on this commitment, the Coalition recognises that women are primary care givers and as such need to be supported and educated for this role. The Coalition also acknowledges the unique health needs of women with regard to pregnancy, childbirth, menopause and related conditions (such as post-natal depression) and is committed to cater for those needs in the most appropriate manner. The Coalition also promotes the use of the General Practitioner by families as a source for information and health care.

The eight women's health centres in Queensland are currently funded through the National Women's Health Program, a joint Commonwealth-State Initiative. Set up in 1989, this Program is due to expire in its present form in June 1997. Its future after that will be determined by Commonwealth and State evaluations of the Program (which are now

taking place), foreshadowed changes to Commonwealth funding systems, and the obligation of the Queensland and Federal Coalition Governments to meet their commitments to the Australian people. In all, the position will not be clarified until after the Federal budget comes down on 20 August 1996.

265. Suicide

Mr WELLS asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the fact that some studies have shown that people who attempt unsuccessfully to commit suicide are 30 times more likely to make a subsequent and successful attempt, and to the fact that the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care does not receive information about these attempts (other than by existing clients of his department) and therefore provides no counselling for them—

- (1) Does the department's Suicide Research and Prevention Program have a register of people who make such attempts?
- (2) If so, will he make this information available to the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care, so that these people can be given assistance should they wish it and their families be offered counselling of an appropriate kind, given that most of these people are not suffering from physical or recognisable psychiatric illness?

Mr Horan:

(1) I am advised that it does not. The Suicide Research and Prevention Program is based at Griffith University and funded in part by a grant from the Department of Health. It does not include a register of people who attempt suicide, although part of its work focuses on this group.

(2) Even if the University's Program had such a register, and even if that register were available to my Department, it would still not be the practice of my Department to provide information about individual clients to other agencies. This is unless it is required or authorised to do so by legislation or by the consent of the individual. To do otherwise would be to breach confidentiality and privacy provisions which operate within health services. Referrals are made to other agencies on an individual basis and with the individual's consent.

266. Environmental Education Centre, Griffith University

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the Goss Government's \$500,000 funding for Griffith University's much needed environmental education centre—

- (1) Does he support the construction of this centre?
- (2) Does he support the \$500,000 funding the Goss Government committed to the project; if not, where does he see funding for this project being found?

- (3) Will he meet with senior Griffith University staff handling the project to discuss the funding issue?
- (4) If the project does not proceed, what impact will this have on the availability of qualified environmental educators in the future?

Mr Quinn:

(1) The concept of the Centre reflects a whole-of-government approach to the environment, that will serve the needs of; and foster a link between, state government departments, the Brisbane City Council, Griffith University and the community.

I am committed to the improvement and preservation of our environment. It is important for Queenslanders to have the opportunity to be educated about the value of ecologically sustainable development.

(2) With respect to funding, the then Department of Environment and Heritage paid \$250,000 to the University for this project, in 1995. The previous Minister of that Department committed a further payment of \$250,000, which was scheduled to be paid in late 1996. The Department of Environment is reviewing this payment as a part of its overall budget considerations.

The Honourable Member would care to note that the Department of Education has never been involved in the funding of this project.

(3) As this matter is not a responsibility of my portfolio, it is not appropriate for me to discuss the issue of funding, with relevant University staff.

(4) The Department of Education operates presently several environmental education centres. If this project was not to proceed, for whatever reason, the Department would need to examine the role of the existing centres, in light of the need to provide comprehensive environmental education programs.

267. Kangaroo Point Boardwalk

Ms BLIGH asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to Treasury documents indicating an intention to abandon phase 3 of the Kangaroo Point boardwalk—

- (1) Will he clarify the future of pedestrian and bicycle access to the area from the current boardwalk to the Story Bridge and beyond?
- (2) Will he support alternative pedestrian and bicycle access, if the boardwalk proposal is scrapped?

Mr Connor:

(1) I know of no Treasury document that indicates an intention to abandon Stage 3 of the Kangaroo Point Boardwalk. As part of a review of all potential Capital Works projects being considered by my Department, the Kangaroo Point Boardwalk has been discussed. I understand that the Lord Mayor of Brisbane has raised a number of issues in relation to further stages of the Boardwalk, and until these matters can be resolved and the scope of work for Stage 3 can be better clarified, the project has been deferred.

(2) Further to my answer to the first part of the question, if the range of matters to which I referred can be resolved with the Brisbane City Council, I would support continuation of further stages of the Kangaroo Point Boardwalk, when funds permit.

268. Education Department Capital Works, Sunnybank Electorate

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Sunnybank Electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The Capital Works deferred to 1996-97 in the Sunnybank electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the construction of a covered area at Runcorn State School

270. Education Department Capital Works, Waterford Electorate

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Waterford Electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: There are no capital works in the Waterford electorate, that are a part of this project, that will be deferred to 1996-97.

271. Land Degradation from Acid Sulphate Soil

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to newspaper reports of a major research project in south-east Queensland which

shows that severe land degradation from acid sulphate soils is threatening large tracts of coastal wetlands, including Bribie Island in the Caboolture Electorate—

- (1) Is he aware of increasing community concern regarding acid sulphate soil and its potential outcomes including environmental degradation, fish kills, crop losses, and release of heavy metals?
- (2) Will he establish a specialist unit within his department to research and manage this problem, not only with respect to risks to the environment, but also to industry and local communities?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) Yes. Soils capable of acid production from sulphur compounds are present in most of the low-lying areas along Queensland's coastline. Bribie Island is one of the areas identified as being at risk. Where these soils are disturbed and the iron sulfides they contain are exposed to air, they produce sulfuric acid. This acidifies soil water, groundwater and eventually, surface waters. These acidic waters can cause a range of serious environmental impacts including chemical release of other pollutants, loss of habitat and the death of a range of aquatic life forms.

(2) No. Management of potential acidification resulting from the disturbance of acid sulphate soils is being addressed broadly across government. The Department of Natural Resources is undertaking research to identify the extent and location of acid sulphate soils, with the objective of developing guidelines to prevent environmental damage. The Department of Environment ensures that development proposals in susceptible areas investigate the possibility of acid sulphate problems and when necessary implement actions to prevent environmental damage.

The Queensland Government is working with other States to develop a National Acid Sulphate Soils Strategy, due for release in April 1997. The strategy will serve to raise public awareness of the need for proper management of these soils.

273. Education Department Capital Works, Whitsunday Electorate

Mrs BIRD asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Whitsunday Electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The Capital Works deferred to 1996-97 in the Whitsunday electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the upgrade of a classroom at Proserpine State School
- the construction of a covered area at Bowen State School
- the construction of a covered area at Gumlu State School

275. National Institute of Indigenous Performing Arts; Indigenous Arts Festival

Mr FOLEY asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

With reference to the proposed location in Brisbane of the National Institute of Indigenous Performing Arts (NIIPA) supported by Labor Governments at Federal, State and local level, and to the decision by the Federal Coalition Government to locate NIIPA in Sydney rather than Brisbane—

- (1) Why did she fail to stand up for Queensland and argue for Queensland to retain this national arts centre?
- (2) Why did she fail to consult Queensland indigenous artists before abandoning NIIPA's location in Queensland?
- (3) Will she give an assurance to maintain the Indigenous Arts Festival announced by the Labor Government in 1995?

Mrs Sheldon:

(1) Not only did I stand up for Queensland as the appropriate location for the proposed NIIPA on 29 March 1996, I wrote a letter to the Federal Minister, the Honourable Senator Alston arguing that the New Farm Powerhouse site represented the best location for the new institute. I subsequently met with Senator Alston on 15 April to further outline the advantages of Brisbane over any other proposed sites for NIIPA. I also expressed to Senator Alston Queensland's concerns at the proposed Federal decision not to proceed with NIIPA in Queensland.

(2) Since 3 November 1995 there has been a Queensland Consultative Committee which has been advising both the Commonwealth Department of communication and the Arts and my Department about issues to do with the formation of NIIPA. I understand that this committee has advocated directly to the Commonwealth about the NIIPA proposal. I was able to reinforce my own advocacy to Senator Alston by reference to the views of the

local indigenous community as outlined by the advisory committee.

(3) The Coalition Government is committed to the maintenance of our unique indigenous heritage and culture. The Government will be studying a number of initiatives in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture in the 1996/97 budget.

277. Glenala State High School

Mr PALASZCZUK asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the staged development of Glenala State High School—

Will he give an assurance to the House that Stage 3 of the program will be funded as originally planned?

Mr Quinn: The redevelopment program at Glenala State High School is being funded by the reinvestment of funds from the purchase of the former Richlands State High school by TAFE Queensland.

The Department has always planned that Stage 3 of this redevelopment was to be funded to the extent of the money that remained available following the completion of the initial two Stages. I am happy to inform the Honourable Member that this is still the case.

It is important to note that cost increases in Stage 2 in particular will affect the residual amount available from the sale of the Richlands site. The Department of Education and the Glenala State High School community are exploring opportunities available to augment funding for Stage 3.

279. Payroll Tax Exemption

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

Will she honour her promise to lift the payroll tax exemption level by \$50,000 to at least \$775,000 effective this calendar year; if so, (a) how many businesses will become exempt from paying payroll tax and (b) what will be the cost in terms of reduced payroll tax receipts for 1995-96 and 1996-97?

Mrs Sheldon: The Government remains committed to periodic increases in the payroll tax threshold in order to reduce this cost imposition on business. However, decisions on individual components of the 1996-97 Budget, such as the payroll tax initiative, cannot be made in isolation. In this regard, the Coalition strategy for the implementation of this initiative will be announced with the delivery of the 1996-97 State Budget in September.

281. Tannum Sands High School Site

Mr HAMILL asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the Government's decision to relocate the proposed Tannum Sands High School from the Boyne smelters site (Lot 6 on R.P. 613528) which had been strongly favoured by the Member for Gladstone—

- (1) What is the real property description of the site which was selected for the school?
- (2) What is the area of the site?
- (3) What is market value of the site?
- (4) Who is the registered proprietor of the site?
- (5) Is the site serviced with water supply and sewerage?
- (6) If not, which agency will bear the cost of providing this infrastructure and at what cost?
- (7) Is the site accessed by suitable road infrastructure?
- (8) What is the nature of the existing road access?
- (9) What improvements, if any to the road infrastructure will be required to meet the needs of the school community?
- (10) Which agency will bear the cost of providing this enhanced road infrastructure?
- (11) Will the proposed high school be provided with an off-road bus set down area?
- (12) If so, which agency/agencies will provide a set down area and at what cost?
- (13) What is the cost of providing school infrastructure to accommodate year 8 and year 9 enrolments in 1998?
- (14) What is the projected enrolment for the school in 1998?
- (15) What is the expected saving in school transport costs and/or how many fewer students are expected to travel to other State high schools as a result of years 8 and 9 being offered at Tannum Sands in 1998?
- (16) How do these figures compare with estimates of school transport costs and enrolment impacts prepared by the Department of Education in consultation with the Department of Transport for alternative high school sites at Canoe Point and the Boyne smelters site?
- (17) Is the site that has been chosen for the new Tannum Sands High School the same site which the Department of Education investigated and rejected for the new high school on grounds that it (a) had "severe gullying", (b) was "well outside the developed area of Tannum Sands", (c) had inadequate road access and (d) did not sufficiently reduce the need for bussing of students?
- (18) On what basis other than political direction did the department change its view as to the relative suitability of the site when compared with the Boyne smelter site and the school reserve at Canoe Point?
- (19) Is the department to dispose of the existing school reserve at Canoe Point; if so, will he ensure that the Canoe Point land will be protected as an environmental reserve in line with community wishes?

Mr Quinn:

- (1) The real property description of this alternative site on Portion 37 is part of lot 37 on Plan CTN 1320, Parish of Iveragh, County of Clinton.

(2) The area of this site will be approximately 12.5 hectares.

(3) At this initial stage, an indicative value only, is available. This value estimates that the land is worth \$300,000 to \$325,000.

(4) Portion 37 is Crown land and thus the proprietor is the Department of Natural Resources.

(5), (6), (7), (8), (9) & (10) The management of infrastructure, including roads below the level of major arterial, water supply and sewerage is vested in local government. Discussions with the Calliope Shire Council have indicated, to date, that the Council is willing to advance the additional connections required for the specific high school purpose.

The Calliope Shire Council has indicated that it will extend water supply and sewerage services to the site. Similarly, the Council intends to construct additional, and extend existing, roads to ensure access to the proposed site. The Council also intends to incorporate the provision of a second road, within the requirements for future urban development of Portion 37.

The confirmation of the agreement by the Council to provide these services is a condition for acceptance of the site as being suitable for school purposes. Therefore, the Calliope Shire Council is the appropriate authority to provide advice on the estimated cost of the infrastructure in question.

(11) & (12) The Calliope Shire Council has indicated that it will provide off-road bus and car set down and parking for the new school site on Portion 37.

The School Safe program is available to provide financial assistance for Council, in this regard.

(13) The cost is estimated to be approximately \$7.47 million.

(14) The number of students in year 8 and year 9 who are expected to enrol, at this school, in the opening year is 322.

(15) It is expected that the saving to the government, in terms of transport subsidy costs, during 1998, will be in the region of \$256,000. This saving will increase annually as each year level is progressively incorporated at Tannum Sands State High School.

(16) No detailed estimates have been undertaken to evaluate the differential in student transport costs that may have resulted if either of the other sites was chosen.

The agreement by Calliope Shire Council to construct part of Coronation Drive, and connect Cremorne Drive to Coronation Drive, overcomes the distance factor that had previously affected consideration of the southern part of Portion 37.

(17) Portion 37 comprises in excess of 109 hectares. Previous investigation of a site on this land concentrated on land that was served by existing road frontages to Tannum Sands Road, or Dahl Road.

The difficulties associated with student travel distances, on these roads, were a predominant reason for the initial inclination of the Department to

reject this site. The willingness of the Calliope Shire Council to construct a new road, and road connections, has resulted in a suitable resolution of the distance problem.

The physical quality of the land comprising Portion 37, in its entirety, is variable. The new road, and road connections, has enabled the Department to access better, quality parts of the lot.

(18) At no stage, whatsoever, did the Coalition Government direct the Department of Education to make a specific decision with respect to a site for the proposed Tannum Sands State High School. The Government did, however, ask the Department to investigate the proposal presented by the Calliope Shire Council, in relation to this proposed school.

On investigation, the Department recommended the site selected as its preferred option.

This recommendation was influenced by the fact that Boyne Smelters Limited refused to accept a covenant to preserve the environmental amenity of the Canoe Point site, if an exchange was completed. The acceptance by the Government of community concerns regarding the environmental significance and sensitivity of the Canoe Point site, was also of significance. It is my understanding that these concerns were recognised by the previous Government.

(19) The Government has acted decisively to provide for a school at Tannum sands, without jeopardising the environmental values of the Canoe Point site. This, I might reiterate, was a decision that was in accordance with community wishes.

The decision to preserve the environmental value of the Canoe Point site, will inform consideration of any need for the Department to retain the site.

Any future dealings with this site will occur within the parameters of the Government Land Management System and will take account of the need to ensure that any future use of the site is appropriate.

283. North Queensland Power Supply; Tully/Millstream Hydroelectric Project

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to his reply to my Question on Notice (No. 2) received on Tuesday 30 April—

- (1) In view of the peak load of North Queensland, stated by him to be 810 mW and annual growth rate estimated to be 4.5 per cent and a present generating capacity of only 3.4 per cent of the State generating capacity, will he now acknowledge the desperate need for a North Queensland base load power station of at least 700 mW?
- (2) In view of the likely expanded power requirement for the North Queensland area resulting from downstream mineral processors such as Korea Zinc and other likely projects together with expansion of existing processors such as Queensland Nickel and MIM Copper, who will require certainty of electricity supply from local sources, will he acknowledge some

- future projects and expansion of existing processors could be in jeopardy if the Government does not guarantee a secure North Queensland power supply?
- (3) Will he put aside once and for all the failed concept of a reduced capacity Tully-Millstream power source and have his department investigate the options of (a) a coal fired, (b) a methane gas fired or (c) a natural gas powered base load station?
- (4) Is he aware that at the opening of the Premier's office in Townsville recently the Chairman of Townsville Enterprise told the Premier that the absence of a base load power station was the greatest single inhibiting factor to further development in North Queensland?
- (5) In view of the lead time required of 3—4 years for gas and 5 years for a coal fired power station, will he commit to an options study immediately?

Mr Gilmore:

- (1) North Queensland has adequate capacity to meet its electricity demands through local generation and transmission from central Queensland.
- (2) I am unaware of any projects which may be in jeopardy as the Member suggests. However, the electricity industry will work with the proponents of any new developments to ensure their electricity requirements are met.
- (3, 4, 5) Competitive bids have been sought for future generating capacity to meet Queensland's needs. These bids may include the provision of a base load or peaking power station using any of the fuel sources specified by the Member in his Question. Whether the outcome of the bidding process results in a new station in the Townsville region will depend in part on the availability to it at that location of a competitively priced fuel.

284. Department of Public Works and Housing; Q-Build and QFleet, Relocation

Mr MACKENROTH asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to his answer to Question (No. 51) regarding the reorganisation of his department—

- (1) Were any costs for the reorganisation paid for from any of the housing trust; if so, how much?
- (2) Whilst he claims the cost of relocating Q-Build and QFleet will be offset, what is the up front cost of this move?
- (3) Given his statement that units will absorb the cost of moves from their operational budgets, which operational programs or activities are being curtailed or scrapped to absorb the costs in each unit?
- (4) What reconfigurations of the databases of the former departments have and will be necessary to complete the creation of the Department of Public Works and Housing, including personnel, financial, asset and property management and program databases?

- (5) In each case, what is the cost and implementation timetables of database changes and mergers?
- (6) Are there any differences in the computer software used by staff from previously separate departments which will require retraining; if so, how much will this retraining cost?

Mr Connor:

(1) No costs for the accommodation relocations were paid for from the Housing Trust Funds. The amalgamation provided the opportunity to integrate and upgrade Housing computer systems which will achieve more efficient and effective management of the Department's resources. The cost for these activities is an estimated \$200,000 which will be levied against the Housing Trust Funds.

(2) There is no upfront cost for this move. The negotiated terms of the lease included: a cash incentive sufficient to relocate and fitout the offices of QFleet and Q-Build; and a rental reduction of approximately \$123,000 p.a., based on the current rental differential, for the two (2) units.

(3) No operational programs or activities will be curtailed to absorb the costs in each unit. Relocation and fitout for the offices of QFleet and Q-Build will be funded through lease incentives and operating costs will be reduced by some \$123,000 p.a.

(4) To date, there has been no decision to reconfigure databases. The Department will endeavour to utilise technologies to access and combine relevant information from existing databases in order to achieve integration of related information. In some cases, computer systems performing identical functions will be rationalised over time resulting in significant savings to the Department. This will be as a result of normal Information Strategic Planning activities of the Department.

(5) Referring to my answer to Question 4, I reiterate that to date there has been no decision to reconfigure databases.

(6) Computer software varies across the Department based on the requirement of each area. There has been no decision at this stage to change this. Since the creation of the Department of Public Works and Housing, gateway technologies have been utilised to provide electronic communications across the Department at a cost of approximately \$46,000 and as such, there has been no need to retrain staff. If a change to computer software is to be implemented, it will be as a result of the normal Information Strategic Planning activities of the Department. There is no general requirement for computer system retraining as a result of the creation of the Department of Public Works and Housing. Where system rationalisation does occur, the cost of training will be more than offset by the savings gained through eliminating duplication.

285. Entry Fee for Arts Council Performances at Schools

Mr WELLS asked the Minister for Education—

- (1) Is he aware that when Arts Council performances are staged at State schools, a

- small entry fee is sometimes charged to each pupil?
- (2) Is he aware that, either through poverty or (sometimes) through parental neglect a small minority of children are sent to school without the small sum necessary?
 - (3) Is he aware that this makes those children feel marginalised and humiliated?
 - (4) Will he take steps to ensure that our education system is in fact free, compulsory and secular, by ensuring that all children, without discrimination as to means, are able to attend these cultural events?

Mr Quinn: (1), (2), (3) & (4) I am fully aware of the School Touring Program coordinated by Queensland Arts Council and I concur with the Honourable member that such cultural experiences should be made available to all students.

The Queensland Arts Council is a non-profit organisation that relies on the sale of tickets to fund its \$2 million School Touring Program. The revenue from larger schools provides the Council with sufficient income to subsidise smaller schools and more geographically isolated schools. This subsidy allows all Queensland schools the opportunity to access high quality arts events for a standard rate of \$3.00 per student.

The Department of Education and the Queensland Arts Council recognises that there are cases where family circumstances can make the cost of these performances prohibitive. The Policy and Guidelines of the Department authorises specifically a school principal to assist in such a situation. This action should avoid any child having to feel marginalised, or humiliated because of financial circumstances.

The Queensland Arts Council also informs schools in their annual School Touring Directory that:

Where cases of genuine hardship exist principals may, at their discretion, allow families of three or more students to attend for a special rate of \$8.00. Principals also have the right to allow any student to view a performance free of charge if in their opinion they cannot afford to pay admission.

I am proud that the Department of Education and the Queensland Arts Council have been able to make arts events available to all children in Queensland, without discrimination as to means, or location.

286. Wilsonton State High School

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to his claim in question time on 1 May that he had given approval for the new Wilsonton State High School in Toowoomba—

- (1) What stage of planning has this project reached?
- (2) What are the predicted enrolments on which the school will open and what are the growth projections for each year up to 2002?
- (3) What facilities will be incorporated in the school?

- (4) What year levels will the school open with?
- (5) What will be the enrolment implications for Toowoomba North, Harristown and Rangeview State High Schools in each year from 1998-2002?
- (6) What staffing will the new school attract and what are the projected staffing implications at each of the other Toowoomba high schools?
- (7) When will the Wilsonton State High School principal be appointed?

Mr Quinn:

(1) Staff from the Darling Downs Regional Office will be consulting with staff from Central Office this week to begin the planning process.

(2) No work has yet been undertaken to ascertain predicted enrolments.

(3) The range of facilities required at this school will be decided in consultation with the local community.

(4) The year levels that the school will open with are a part of the planning process and are yet to be decided.

(5) As mentioned, no work has yet been undertaken to ascertain predicted enrolments, or the implication that these may have upon other Toowoomba state high schools.

(6) & (7) Staffing issues, including the appointment of a principal, have yet to be addressed.

287. Education Department Capital Works, Nudgee Electorate

Mr ROBERTS asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the Nudgee electorate will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

There are no capital works in the Nudgee electorate, that are a part of this project, that will be deferred to 1996-97.

289.Consumer Affairs Office, Bundaberg

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice—

With reference to the fact that Bundaberg is the commercial centre for the Wide Bay region and to the number of consumer complaints and inquiries received—

Will he site a Consumer Affairs office in Bundaberg; if so, would the office be established in 1996 to service the citizens of Bundaberg and districts?

Mr Beanland: Bundaberg is currently served by an Office of the Trade Measurement Branch of the Office of Consumer Affairs; the vacancy arising from the resignation of the officer in December 1995 has now been filled. Additional servicing of the Bundaberg area by the Consumer Affairs Office will be considered in the context of an overall state approach to service delivery by the Office.

291.Chalumbin-Woree Powerline

Mr McGRADY asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to the Chalumbin to Woree powerline—

- (1) Will he guarantee that (a) there will be no toxic discharge into the waterways of that area as a result of the undergrounding of the power line, (b) the extra \$12m required to fund his residential route will not reduce any future funding commitments for the Far North and (c) the existing background magnetic field levels of residents in Sheehy Road, White Rock and Kite Close, Fairview, will not be increased in any way whatsoever as a result of the selection of the residential route?
- (2) Why has he continued to ignore the community request for an urgent meeting, despite the community having received an acknowledgment in writing from the Member for Mulgrave, Mrs Naomi Wilson that his office received the community's request in March and despite two separate additional requests?
- (3) As three years ago SPAG researched an alternative route which did not affect World Heritage land, nor did it pass anywhere near existing residential areas, why had this proposal not been considered as a viable alternative by Powerlink?
- (4) Why isn't the temporary line being run down the middle of the cane strip instead of only 10 metres away from the edge of Sheehy Road where children play and people walk their dogs?
- (5) Why is it only 30 metres from the residential homes when it could be 100 metres away if it went down the middle of the cane fields?
- (6) Can Powerlink guarantee that living 30 metres away from a high voltage powerline will not affect the health of young children?
- (7) Will he explain why the Government insisted that the line be moved from a rural to a residential area when Powerlink have a policy of

avoiding constructing high voltage lines through residential areas?

- (8) If the community of Edmonton have objected to the overhead line on the basis of visual pollution, will he explain the reasons why he has changed it and the view of the line which residents of Fairview, Southern Bayview, Hollywood Boulevard and Golflinks Road are going to get, and when will he admit that the residents of these areas will be a lot closer to the line than Edmonton people?
- (9) Will he explain about the public consultation that went on three years ago?
- (10) Is it true that the line was shifted out of the present area as a result of this process?
- (11) Why has it been put back when the community overwhelmingly rejected this route?
- (12) What is the Government's reason to think that it is more important to protect a few cane farms rather than the residents of the community?
- (13) When will the Coalition Government remove the temporary 132kV line and how can the residents be sure that they won't leave the line there for the next seven years?
- (14) Why waste half a million dollars on a line which will only be in place for a few months?
- (15) What guarantees have the community got that the Kowinka St 132kV line will be removed?
- (16) As it is reported in the media that the Premier and Mrs Wilson said that the line would not run down Sheehy Road, why has the Government gone back on their promise?
- (17) Why is the Government spending about \$10-15m more of taxpayers money, putting the line underground as running the line south of Edmonton would be so much cheaper.
- (18) Is the proposed route fraught with engineering problems, such as slinging a high voltage line on temporary wooden poles so that it can run underneath the existing Kowinka St line?
- (19) Is there is no company in Australia which has the expertise to service underground cables in the event of any faults?
- (20) Will Powerlink acknowledge the draft local laws of Cairns City Council and undertake to run the powerline down the centre of the cane strip south of Sheehy Road?
- (21) Where will the additional money come from to run the underground cables and will Cairns people be charged extra costs in their electricity accounts?
- (22) When will the line through Trinity Anglican School be removed and will he give a cast-iron guarantee that the line will be removed?

Mr Gilmore:

- (1)(a) Powerlink is now planning to use a solid dielectric cable rather than an oil filled cable, thereby eliminating the risk of discharge of low toxicity insulation oil. The cable-laying process will be preceded by soil tests and if necessary, appropriate de-watering during construction to avoid water

discharge from exposed acid sulphate soils. (b) The funding for the entire project will be provided by Powerlink Queensland in the same way it funds its other capital projects. (c) The underground cable has been designed to ensure it causes negligible magnetic field levels at the location of residences in these areas.

(2) As the transmission line lies adjacent to my electorate I have had the opportunity to discuss the approved route with local residents, councils, various committees and associates. These discussions have been managed through both Ms Wilson's and my electoral offices. A meeting was organised by South Side Powerline Action Group and held on 30 April 1996, at the same time as Parliament sat making it impossible for either myself or Ms Wilson to attend.

(3) No possible route exists between the Tablelands and the coast which does not pass through the World Heritage listed Wet Tropics. SPAG alternatives provided during the community consultation period addressed coastal options only. One of these was similar to the overhead route considered by Powerlink Queensland in the preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment. The other two would have affected rural residential areas in the Little Mulgrave or in Maitland Road.

(4) The selected route in the canefield to the south of Sheehy Road has been chosen on the basis of using underground cable for this segment of the line, which Powerlink is aiming to have installed by the summer of 1997/98. However, Powerlink has recognised that due to the long delivery times associated with a custom-designed high voltage cable, the target completion date may slip.

Powerlink has therefore developed some fallback options should this eventuate. One such option involves installing a temporary (less than 12 months) woodpole line in this section. This is only a fallback option, and will only be implemented as a last resort if Powerlink believes there is a serious threat to the security of supply into Cairns in the 1997/98 summer. If built, such a temporary line would be located south of Sheehy Road and would be removed immediately the permanent underground cable was installed.

(5) Underground supply cables at this voltage are normally installed below roadways. In this case, because of some residents' concerns about magnetic fields, Powerlink Queensland have taken the prudent measure of locating the line in the canefields south of Sheehy Road to ensure that magnetic fields from cables near residences are negligible.

(6) The consensus of scientific opinion, as reflected in the nearly 70 reviews over the past 20 years of all of the scientific literature is that a link between the fields from high voltage powerlines and children's health has not been established. Powerlink Queensland supports ongoing research in the area. In the meantime, Powerlink applies a policy of "prudent avoidance" when siting new lines. Powerlink advises that the magnetic fields from the underground cable will be negligible at the locations of these residences.

(7) The line route has been approved on the basis of public and agency response to Powerlink Queensland's preliminary environmental assessment report. In particular, the Wet Tropics Management Authority strongly criticised the overhead route via Edmonton because of its "significantly greater impact" on World Heritage Area values. The finally selected route minimised the adverse impacts on the World Heritage Area, and the underground section of the route ensured minimal visual impact for residents and for the southern gateway to Cairns, an important tourism centre.

(8) Edmonton residents, the Wet Tropics Management Authority and the Trinity Inlet Management Committee all objected strongly to the visual effect of the line crossing the hillslopes of Mt Isley which constitutes a scenic backdrop to this whole area. For Bayview Heights residents the existing 132kV line down the hillside and through the residential area will be removed in 6-8 years leaving only 5 or 6 spans of the new line on the hillside. The new overhead line section into Woree constructed on special compact design towers will not be visible to the majority of Hollywood Boulevard residents. Powerlink Queensland has offered assistance to residents in the form of screening vegetation.

(9) Three years ago Powerlink Queensland went through an extensive community consultation program to select a preferred corridor. The local community overwhelmingly rejected an overhead option through Cannon's Farm and along Sheehy Road. The corridor favoured then was an overhead line looping south of Edmonton through cane farming land and outside the Council's residential development zone. Subsequent community input late last year and early this year to Powerlink Queensland's preliminary environmental assessment report showed strong criticism to that route, particularly from the Wet Tropics Management Authority.

(10) Refer question 9.

(11) The final route announced in March combined the best features of the previous overhead option and a proposal involving an underground section. While the option canvassed 3 years ago contemplated an overhead line south of Sheehy Road, the route approved recently involves an underground cable along this section. This is substantially better in terms of visual impact and results in negligible magnetic fields at the locations of residences.

(12) The line south of Sheehy Road is underground and the magnetic fields will be negligible at the location of residences. In fact, as part of the total project, two existing overhead lines through residential areas will be removed—one which passes through White Rock and the other which passes through Bayview Heights. The overall community impact is a major reduction in high voltage power lines in residential areas.

(13) As indicated in the response to question (4), there may be no need to construct a temporary woodpole line and this is only one of several fallback options. In the event it is constructed, it would be

removed immediately the permanent underground cable is installed.

(14) This investment would only be made if the security of supply to Cairns was in jeopardy and only if other fallback options were not actionable first.

(15) The removal of the existing Kowinka Street 132kV line was announced with the route decision in April, and this was clearly stated in the information leaflet provided to residents at that time.

(16) Ms Wilson made her statement whilst several options were being considered, one of which proved to be a superior solution which took the line under canefields south of Sheehy Road.

(17) The additional cost is considered justified because this is the lowest cost option that meets the environmental concerns of the sensitive Wet Tropics and minimises the usual impact on the southern gateway to Cairns, a major tourist destination.

(18) In the event that a temporary woodpole line is needed, its erection presents no special engineering challenges.

(19) In the event of a fault, cable maintenance will be carried out by the firm installing the cable. This may be an Australian firm or it may be an overseas firm depending upon the outcome of a competitive tendering process.

(20) Powerlink Queensland will construct the new line with due regard to its statutory and legal obligations.

(21) Powerlink Queensland will fund this project in the same way it funds all its transmission projects ie. from retained earnings and borrowings. The Government is committed to a policy of electricity tariff equalisation across the entire State. The people of Cairns pay the same for electricity as other Queenslanders.

(22) The existing line across the Trinity Anglican School grounds will be removed as part of this project as soon as the replacement line into Hartley Street substation is commissioned. This is schedule for late 1997. This undertaking was clearly stated by Powerlink.

292. Bradken Foundry

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to concerns raised by residents in Runcorn regarding emissions from the Bradken Foundry on Beenleigh Road which have been relayed by me to his department—

What actions has his department taken to investigate these concerns and what have been the results of any tests which may have been undertaken?

Mr Littleproud: Officers from the Department of Environment have consulted with ANI-Bradken regarding a complaint made in January 1996 about dust and noise emissions from the factory. My Department has taken a number of dust samples in relation to the complaint. These have been submitted to a private laboratory for analysis, the results of which are due at the end of May.

ANI-Bradken is addressing dust emissions through a staged proposal to seal external roads to the site, and noise emissions by a noise reduction fence barrier constructed in April this year.

ANI-Bradken has applied for a licence under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and has been working cooperatively with my Department in minimising environmental impacts from the site.

Officers from my Department will continue to monitor ANI-Bradken's progress in improving environmental management on the site.

293. Education Department Capital Works, Maryborough Electorate

Mr DOLLIN asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the proposal by the Education Department to defer \$23.3m in capital works from the 1995-96 Budget—

Which capital works in the electorate of Maryborough will be affected by this deferral?

Mr Quinn: The \$23.3 million in capital works outlined in the document tabled in Parliament on 30 April 1996 refers to the Building Better Schools (BBS) project. All projects within the BBS project are progressing but are at various stages of the capital works cycle, ranging from planning through to construction.

The deferral of capital works associated with this project has been brought about by the sometimes lengthy timelines experienced by the Department in:

- identifying projects
- finalising programs of work
- consulting with school communities
- appointing external project coordinators

The Honourable Member would also note that at the change of government, approximately only \$9 million, of the \$50 million 1995/96 Building Better School budget, had been expended by the Department.

The capital works deferred to 1996-97 in the Maryborough electorate, that are a part of this project, include:

- the upgrade of a classroom at Sunbury State School
- the construction of additional covered area at Gundiah State School.

296. Department of Housing, Staffing (Book 6)

Mr MULHERIN asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to the Department of Housing, John Collins Review—

- (1) How many permanent positions are filled by personnel acting in these capacities?
- (2) Where are these positions located?
- (3) Will he provide a comprehensive list of all these positions and how long have these people been acting in these positions?

(4) When will these positions be filled with permanent appointments?

Mr Connor: I am pleased that the Member for Mackay has raised this question as it gives me an opportunity to explain to the House the unfortunate position in which the previous Government left the Housing Program. The previous Government made much of the decentralisation of housing services. However, I have discovered that this decentralisation was largely unresourced. I have seen the report that the Member for Mackay has mentioned. However, this report falls short of resolving how we will pay to rectify the mess left by the previous Government.

(1) Of the 250 staff in Area Offices, 40% are temporary staff, some having been temporary for

over 5 years. Of those staff who are permanent public servants, many are no longer in the position they were appointed to. In fact, thirty staff are relieving in other positions and some have done so for up to 4 years.

(2) Every Housing Area Office is affected.

(3) The attached table gives a breakdown of temporary and permanent positions across all the Area Offices.

(4) Resolving this situation will not be easy. Clearly, the previous Government put the Housing Program on an expansion course that it knew it could not sustain or fund in the longer term.

TABLE 1

CUSTOMER SERVICE DIVISION AREA OFFICE TEMPORARY STAFF PROFILE					
Area Office	ASL	Term Of Longest Temp (mths)	Term of Longest Relief(mths)	Temp Staff > 2 Years	No of Temp Staff
Capalabra	9	24	0	2	3
Central Qld	18	22	7	0	8
Chermside	12	60	17	2	5
Far North Qld	19	23	0	0	6
Fort Valley	11	8	13	0	1
Gold Coast	17	60	13	2	11
Inala	14.5	25	17	1	7
Ipswich	17.5	60	6	2	5
Mackay-Whit	11	39	0	1	5
North Qld	12	37	0	3	6
North West Q	7	22	0	0	5
Redcliffe	13.6	67	36	2	3
Stones Corner	16	40	52	1	5
Sunshine Coast	14	24	0	2	5
Sth West Q	14	50	0	1	2
W/Bay-Burnett	17	48	0	5	9
Woodridge	23	60	17	5	11
TOTAL	245.6			29	97
Avn		36	10		

Notes:

Column 1 refers to the number of funded and approved positions (this number varies as additional positions are approved or positions are deleted. Includes a combination of permanent public service positions, crown employee establishments and approved temporary positions).

Column 2 refers to estimated length of service provided by longest serving temporary employee.

Column 3 refers to estimated length of time an employee has been relieving in a permanent position of which the substantive employee is seconded elsewhere.

Column 4 refers to approximate number of temporary staff who have been engaged > two years (either in the Area Office or previously with the Public Rental Division prior to decentralisation).

Column 5 refers to the approximate number of temporary employees (includes traineeships) engaged in an Area Office today. (These figures vary each pay period depending on staff movements).

298. Moreton Bay Marine Park Authority

Mr WELFORD asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the Government's plans prior to the change of Government to establish a Moreton Bay Marine Park Authority to oversee and coordinate the management of this valuable waterbody vital for its environmental, commercial and recreational values—

(1) Does he intend to establish this authority; if not, what mechanism does he intend to put in place to coordinate decision making in the bay?

- (2) Does he intend to put in place a marine park management plan to complement the zoning and strategic plan; if so, what degree of public consultation does he have planned and what timetable is he working to?
- (3) What funding is presently allocated to this work?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) No, it is not our intention to establish a Moreton Bay Authority. The Moreton Bay Strategic Plan will become a Regional Coastal Management Plan under the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995. The mechanisms proposed under the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995 will provide the necessary method for coordinating decision making in Moreton Bay.

(2) The Moreton Bay Marine Park Draft Zoning Plan is to be presented to Cabinet after it is finalised. This zoning plan, while complementing the Moreton Bay Strategic Plan, will be a more detailed instrument specifically concerned with the day to day management of the Marine Park. There will also be scope for site specific management plans to be developed as necessary. There has been extensive public consultation undertaken during the drafting of the Zoning Plan. In addition, further consultation with key stakeholders such as conservation groups, industry associations and Government bodies has been carried out.

(3) This is being considered in current, ongoing Budget discussions.

299. Comalco Refinery, Gladstone

Mrs BIRD asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

With reference to her comments in Parliament on Tuesday 30 April 1996 that she was working to get a Comalco Refinery at Gladstone—

- (1) Will she indicate what efforts she has made in this respect?
- (2) Has she personally had negotiations with Comalco prior to 30 April 1996?
- (3) Has she offered any incentives to Comalco to win the refinery for Gladstone?

Mrs Sheldon:

(1) An Interdepartmental Committee comprising representatives of a number of Government Departments has been established to review the proposed Comalco alumina refinery project and to identify possible areas where facilitation assistance by Government could be provided, for example in assisting Comalco address any environmental issues. Treasury officers, in conjunction with officers from other relevant Departments, undertook detailed comparative analyses of the strategic and commercial competitiveness of the specific financial attractiveness of alternative locations. Whilst the Government has and will encourage Comalco to establish its refinery project in Queensland, the final decision as to location will of course be made by Comalco based upon its own commercial assessment of the optimal location.

At the same time, efforts have been made to enhance the commercial competitiveness of gas delivered to Gladstone—gas being a critically important input for the refinery—and the decision on the sale of the State Gas Pipeline, which will reduce gas transportation tariffs very significantly, is particularly relevant in this respect.

(2) I have met personally with representatives of Comalco to discuss the proposed alumina refinery and related issues. It would not be appropriate for me to reveal the details of private meetings involving potentially sensitive commercial arrangements.

(3) I have not offered any specific financial incentives to Comalco to site its proposed refinery at Gladstone, which I understand is one of the several Queensland locations under active consideration by Comalco at this time. Comalco has advised that it will select a site based on the return on investment that the proposed refinery would produce at that location which will require an estimation of the capital and operating costs of each possible location. Whilst Gladstone is a strong contender for the project, given its existing port facilities, social and industrial infrastructure, industrial relations environment and synergies with existing industries (including other interests of Comalco's), the ultimate decision as to location rests with Comalco.

301. Redevelopment of Roma Street Rail Yard Site

Mr FOURAS asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the highly acclaimed proposal of the Goss Government to turn the Roma Street railyard site into a world class inner city park—

- (1) Is he committed to the environmental benefits of this proposal?
- (2) Does he support the level of funding allocated to this project by the Goss Government?
- (3) Will he give a commitment to not increase the commercial content of this proposal in the interests of retaining the park as a people's park?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) I am not sufficiently aware of the details of the proposal to answer this question. However, the Roma Street railyard site is not entered in the Queensland Heritage Register. Therefore there is no statutory requirement to consult either the Department of Environment or the Queensland Heritage Council regarding the future development of the railyard. However, it is understood that Q-Rail has recognised the cultural heritage significance of Roma Street station building and has commissioned a conservation plan to guide the future care of that building.

The provisions of the Contaminated Land Act 1990 will continue to apply to the Roma Street railyard site.

(2) The question regarding funding for the Roma Street railyard project should be addressed to my

colleague, the Honourable R T Connor, Minister for Public Works and Housing.

(3) The question regarding the proportion of commercial content in any future development of the Roma Street railyard site should also be addressed to my colleague, the Honourable R T Connor, Minister for Public Works and Housing.

302. Proserpine Rock Wallaby

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to studies and management planning undertaken by his department into the habitat needs of the rare Proserpine Rock Wallaby—

Does he intend to (a) support his department's recommendations particularly, those relating to the purchase and protection of key habitats and corridors linking those habitats, (b) work with the Whitsunday Shire Council to ensure their strategic plan encompasses his Department's recommendations and (c) provide a level of funding that will ensure the needs of this rare wallaby are met?

Mr Littleproud: The Proserpine rock wallaby was brought to scientific attention in 1976 and investigations of the species' distribution, habitat preferences and threats have led the Department of Environment to assess its conservation status as endangered. The Department of Environment is implementing a recovery plan for this species. The plan involves the development of management strategies to identify and protect areas of the species' critical habitat. A recovery team has been set up consisting of elected Councillors of the Whitsunday Shire Council, staff of the Department of Environment and a representative of the Wildlife Preservation Society.

Initial mapping of the species' critical habitat identified approximately 650 ha of Unassigned State Land adjacent to Dryander National Park which was added to the National Park estate in 1995. In addition to this gazettal, two blocks of Unassigned State Land, of 7.7 ha and 40 ha, containing critical habitat have been identified on Mandalay Point. Negotiations with the Department of Natural Resources are being undertaken currently to determine the future use and management of these areas. Also, an area of identified critical habitat on the Clarke Range, which was part of an application to freehold two grazing leases, has been retained by the Government following negotiations. Future use and management of this area is being discussed with the Department of Natural Resources.

Acquisition of additional areas of critical habitat as National Park are not currently being considered, with the emphasis being placed on ensuring the effective protection of the species across all land tenure types. The best way to achieve this is through a locally based recovery planning program.

As I mentioned, the Whitsunday Shire Council is closely involved with the implementation of the Proserpine rock wallaby recovery plan and I see no reason why this relationship should not be

maintained in the future. This Government is committed to community involvement in the protection of the State's threatened species. Recent development proposals demonstrate that negotiation between the Department of Environment, Council and developers can achieve a positive outcome for the conservation of the species.

The Department of Environment directs substantial staff and other resources to the protection of this species. Additional support has also been attracted from the Australian Nature Conservation Agency through its Endangered Species Program.

304. Security Providers

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice—

With reference to his decision to appeal against the sentence imposed upon a security guard found guilty of showing pornographic material to a four year old child, a sentence described by him as "manifestly inadequate"—

- (1) Does he agree that persons licensed as security providers should be of unquestionable character?
- (2) Will he consider amending the Security Providers Act 1993, to provide that the test of appropriateness to hold a licence be that the person has been found guilty of an offence rather than convicted of an offence?

Mr Beanland:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Trial Judge in this case applied the provision of the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 in not recording a conviction. I am currently considering amendments to the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and will consider this issue in that context.

305. Oil Spill, Townsville

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to an oil spill incident in Ross Creek in Townsville recently—

- (1) Has he yet identified the source of the oil and the name of the culprit?
- (2) Is this firm currently licensed under the Environmental Protection Act; if not, why not and when will it be licensed?
- (3) If there has been a breach of the Environmental Protection Act, is prosecution intended; if not, why not?
- (4) As this is only the latest in a series of these spills, what action has he taken to prevent further such leaks?

Mr Littleproud:

- (1) Departmental officers investigating the oil spill believe they have identified the source, based on inspections, interview and forensic sampling. Oil fingerprinting has been used to identify the possible sources of oil, and this information has been very useful. The information strongly suggests that the

source is the Queensland Rail facilities maintenance depot in the centre of Townsville, adjacent to Ross Creek. Queensland Rail has carried out its own investigation, and has reached this same conclusion.

(2) Queensland Rail has held a licence under the repealed Clean Waters Act for the discharge of treated wastewater from its rollingstock maintenance facility in Townsville for many years. The treatment process used to remove oil and other contaminants has generally functioned very well since an upgrade in the mid-eighties. Queensland Rail is currently preparing a submission for an environmental authority (licence) under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 for all of its Townsville operations, as it has been doing for its facilities across the State.

(3) Departmental officers are investigating circumstances concerning the spill. If there has been a breach under the Environmental Protection Act, there are several options available as indicated in the Enforcement Guidelines for the Department. These could include the use of an environmental protection order, an environmental management program, or an environmental investigation (ie. environmental audit), all of which could be used to ensure that the chance of a recurrence of the spill is minimised. The "big stick" approach of prosecution should only be considered as a last resort. We are in the business of preventing pollution on a long-term basis through cooperative means.

(4) Queensland Rail took immediate measures to secure and improve the operation of the treatment plant concerned, and provided assistance to Departmental officers in their investigations of the matter. The Department has been provided with a report by Queensland Rail on matters needing attention. These matters will be followed up by Departmental officers. Closure of this operation in the centre of Townsville is planned, with all operations to eventually go to the new site at Stuart, where new state-of-the-art maintenance facilities are nearing completion. A new treatment plant there is now being commissioned, and treated wastewater generated will be discharged to Townsville City Council sewer under a trade waste agreement. The need for a treatment system adjacent to Ross Creek, and any wastewater discharge to Ross Creek, will thus be eliminated.

As Ross Creek receives urban drainage from a large part of Townsville City, and carries considerable marine traffic, there will always be the potential for spills of some type to occur. The Environmental Protection Act is assisting the Department and Townsville City Council in managing potential sources of pollution in the Ross Creek catchment, through the licensing of premises such as motor vehicle workshops.

306. Bunya Mountains National Park

Mr NUTTALL asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to his recent reported intention to downgrade the State Forest areas to be added to

Bunya Mountains National Park from National Park to Conservation Park—

- (1) Did he receive advice from his department that these areas did not qualify for National Park status; if so, on what criteria did they fail to qualify as National Park?
- (2) If, as reported, an additional fire risk is perceived, why isn't the fire management plan for the park adequate for the task?
- (3) What are the details of the grazing leases that presently exist on this Conservation Park area?
- (4) Have any of these leases been extended since the change of Government or does he have plans to extend them?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) The local community expectation is that grazing will continue within the State Forest areas proposed for conversion. For grazing to be permitted under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 in this case, gazettal as Conservation Park is appropriate. The proposed transfer of the State Forest areas is under review.

(2) Whether the area is dedicated as either National Park, Conservation Park or remains as State Forest, fire would be managed in accordance with a Fire Management Plan through scheduled burning programs.

(3) There are currently six Special Leases for grazing and two Stock Grazing Permits situated within the State Forest areas proposed for conversion, with a range of expiry dates between December 1997 and June 2007.

(4) All negotiations with lessees/permittees to date have been on the basis of reissuing renewable grazing tenures within the conversion areas on similar terms and conditions as they currently enjoy.

307. Use of SEQEB Powerpoles for Telecommunication Cables

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

- (1) What financial agreements does the South East Queensland Electricity Board (SEQEB) have with the Telecommunication carriers to allow telecommunication cables to be attached to SEQEB powerpoles?
- (2) As overhead communication cables are environmentally and aesthetically unacceptable to residents throughout the metropolitan area, will he prohibit overhead cable being attached to SEQEB powerpoles by rescinding agreements?

Mr Gilmore:

(1) The South East Queensland Electricity Corporation (SEQEB) has in place a Facilities Access Agreement with Optus Networks Pty Ltd (Optus) for the use of SEQEB's overhead facilities. The agreement sets out the contractual and technical conditions on which Optus may utilise these

facilities. The financial arrangement between the two parties has been commercially negotiated and is contractually confidential.

SEQEB does not have an agreement with Telstra for the use of SEQEB's overhead facilities for broadband telecommunications services. Telstra, however, is seeking such an agreement and negotiations are currently occurring between Telstra and SEQEB.

A long standing agreement is in place with Telstra and all Australian electricity utilities (originally negotiated on the utilities' behalf by the Electricity Supply Association of Australia) for the joint use of overhead assets. This agreement is confined to telephony networks.

(2) SEQEB has a legally binding contractual agreement with Optus. It is not proposed to seek to terminate the agreement.

It should be clearly understood that a principle factor in SEQEB reaching this negotiated agreement with Optus was legal advice that Optus has the right to utilise these facilities under their "common carrier" privileges of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Act 1991. It is understood that Optus and Telstra, as carriers, have legislative powers to make use of SEQEB assets, irrespective of an agreement being in place.

308. School Guidance Officers, Mount Gravatt

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to his pre-election promise to double the number of school guidance officers in his first term of office—

- (1) Will he outline the Government's timetable for implementing this undertaking?
- (2) When will the schools in the Mt Gravatt electorate be likely to receive additional guidance officer time?
- (3) How much additional guidance officer time can each of the schools in the Mt Gravatt electorate expect to receive during the next 12 months?

Mr Quinn: (1), (2), (3) & (4) The Government is committed to increasing the number of guidance officers and other support staff available in Queensland schools.

Officers in my Department have been engaged in preparing plans for the implementation of this initiative and cabinet is to consider a submission on this subject, today.

The undertaking that has been given is a significant one, which has considerable implications across many areas of responsibility within the Department. At this stage because of the complexity of planning, the implementation timetable has not been finalised. Therefore, unfortunately, the answers to this question are not yet available.

I will be happy to advise the Honourable Member of details requested, when they become available.

311. Anti-uranium Protest, Brisbane; Peaceful Assembly Act

Mr FOLEY asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice—

- (1) Is he aware of Queenslanders' statutory right to peaceful assembly under the Peaceful Assembly Act 1992?
- (2) Is he aware of conflict between police and anti-uranium protesters in the streets of Brisbane on 26 April 1996?
- (3) Will he investigate this incident and report to the Parliament as to whether the provisions of the Peaceful Assembly Act were properly observed by police?
- (4) Is he aware of the misleading statement by a senior police officer on the Channel 7 News of 27 April that demonstrators needed a permit from the District Superintendent of Traffic before marching on a road?
- (5) What action will he take to ensure that the Peaceful Assembly Act is respected by police attending demonstrations?

Mr Beanland:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I am aware of an incident on the 26th April 1996 whereat the police arrested eight protesters who participated in an impromptu street march for which no notification had been given in accordance with the provisions of the Peaceful Assembly Act 1992. The arrests were in relation to charges under the Traffic Act 1949, the Police Service Administration Act 1990 and the Vagrants, Gaming and Other Offences Act 1931.
- (3) No. If the Honourable Member is suggesting any official misconduct by police officers then the Member should bring the matter to the attention of the Criminal Justice Commission.
- (4) I am aware of certain comments by a senior police officer reported on the Channel 7 News of 27th April 1996. These comments were inaccurate. The police officer should have indicated that the march organisers had not notified the Commissioner of Police of the proposed public assembly in accordance with the Peaceful Assembly Act 1992. The actions of the marchers on that day were not in accordance with the provisions of the Peaceful Assembly Act 1992.
- (5) The Queensland Police Service is well aware of the provisions of the Peaceful Assembly Act 1992 and operates in accordance with the provisions of that Act.

312. Port of Brisbane Rail Link

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

When will work recommence, to enable the completion of the standard gauge railway line to the Port of Brisbane which, although 90 per cent constructed, lacks vital connections to enable trains to use the line?

Mr Johnson: Work on construction of the Standard Gauge railway line to the Port of Brisbane has not stopped. The bulk of the work on construction of earthworks, bridging, drainage structures, track and telecommunications is complete. Progress on the signalling works has been significantly slower than expected because of a world-wide shortage of experienced signalling personnel. This shortage has been a major problem for both Queensland Rail and their signalling contractors.

The signalling works between Dutton Park and Cannon Hill were commissioned earlier this year. Minor signalling field works are still continuing while signalling design and checking works are being progressed. It is anticipated that the new track to the port can be commissioned late in 1996.

313. Queensland Ambulance Service, Far North Queensland

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to the Queensland Ambulance Service, Far North Queensland Region—

- (1) What ambulance stations are included in this region?
- (2) What are the staffing levels at each of these ambulance centres?
- (3) How do these compare with those which applied in 1990?
- (4) Is it proposed to increase staffing levels at any of these centres?
- (5) If so, which ones?
- (6) How many stations currently have temporary or acting staff?
- (7) Which stations are these and what are the classifications of these vacancies?
- (8) When will these vacancies be filled?
- (9) How many ambulance vehicles are there in the region and where are they located?
- (10) What is the current overtime situation in the region?
- (11) Which stations are using overtime?
- (12) What is the average weekly overtime being used in each of these stations?
- (13) What steps are being taken to ameliorate this situation?

Mr Veivers:

(1) At present there are 24 QAS stations, including a joint QAS/QFS communications centre in the Far Northern Region. I have included for tabling a list of these stations (Table A).

(2) The staff establishment of the Far Northern Region is 161.

Table A includes a list of the staff establishment of each of these stations.

(3) Table A includes a comparison table of staff establishments between 1990 and 1996.

(4) There is currently no proposal to increase the staffing levels in the Far Northern Region.

(5) None.

(6) There are currently 7 stations which employ temporary or acting staff.

(7) The classifications and stations of these vacancies are:

Cairns Communications Centre—3
Communications Centre staff

Cairns Station—2 positions, Officer-in-Charge and Operations Coordinator

Edmonton Station—1 Qualified Ambulance Officer

Tully Station—1 Qualified Ambulance Officer

Mareeba—1 Qualified Ambulance Officer

Mount Garnet—1 Qualified Ambulance Officer

Atherton—1 Qualified Ambulance Officer.

The reasons for the temporary acting vacancies include coverage for personnel on long term sick and workers' compensation leave, coverage for personnel relieving in higher duties or in the case of Tully, a hard to fill position.

(8) The duration of these vacancies depends mainly on the duration of the personal needs of the officers on sick and workers' compensation leave. All vacancies occurring as a result of personnel leaving are advertised and filled as soon as possible.

(9) There are 64 ambulance vehicles in the Far Northern Region. Table A includes a list of the locations of the vehicles.

(10) Overtime in the Far Northern Region is currently \$188,000 to date.

(11) All stations in the region incur overtime due to a number of operational imperatives including after hours emergency availability, coverage of sick leave, attendance at sporting events and continuation of shifts.

(12) A station breakdown of the average weekly overtime expenditure for the Far Northern Region is included in Table A.

(13) The expenditure of overtime within the Far Northern Region is well within budget. Any front line pre-hospital emergency service will incur overtime as it is a reactive service responding to the needs of the Queensland community.

TABLE A

Station	Staff Establishment 1996	Stations 1990 Staff Establishment	Stations 1996 Staff Establishment	Vehicle Allocation 1996	Average Weekly Overtime Expenditure (\$)	Comments
Regional Office	8	N/A				This includes the Assistant Commissioner, Superintendents, marketing Manager and Regional Training Staff.
Cairns, including						
Comms Centre	53	38	53	10	1,783	
Bamaga	2	1	2	2	38	
Edmonton	4	4	4	2	59	
Gordonvale	6	6	6	2	95	
Mossman	6	7	6	3	92	
Port Douglas	2	1	2	2	43	
Smithfield	5	4	5	2	102	
Thursday Island	5	4	5	3	63	
Yarrabah	2	Nil*	2	2	21	* No QATB Station
Weipa	3	Nil*	3	2	32	* No QATB Station
Babinda	3	3	3	2	52	
Cardwell	2	1	2	2	49	
Innisfail	14	13	14	*4	458	* Includes an Emergency Support Unit
Silkwood	1	1	1	1	NIL	
South Johnstone	2	2	2	2	12	
Tully	9	9	9	4	364	
Atherton	11	12	11	4	272	
Dimbulah	2	1	2	2	16	
Kuranda	2	Nil*	2	1	14	* No QATB Station
Malanda	2	1	2	1	34	
Mareeba	11	13	11	4	375	
Mount Garnet	2	2	2	2	9	
Ravenshoe	2	2	2	3	NIL	
Millaa Millaa	2	2	2	2	11	

314. Proposed Road Corridor, Brisbane-Sunshine Coast

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to media reports of Government plans to link Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast with a second road corridor to the east of the existing Bruce Highway—

- (1) Will he confirm that officers of the Main Roads Department have proposals or plans for such a corridor?
- (2) What other options are being considered for a second transport corridor linking Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast?
- (3) Is he aware of the environmentally sensitive nature of much of the area through which any eastern corridor would pass?
- (4) What is the present estimation of the year in which a second corridor will be required?

Mr Johnson:

- (1) The Department of Main Roads has no proposals or current plans for a second road corridor to link

Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. However, there is a proposal for a Bells Creek Arterial Road linking Golden Beach with the Bruce Highway which has been in the planning phase for many years and is shown on the Caloundra City Council's Strategic Plan. In addition Caboolture Shire Council was advised of the possible future State-controlled road from Deception Bay to Bribie Island in December 1994. It should be emphasised, there are no plans to link these possible future roads.

(2) A second transport corridor linking Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast is not being considered. However, any major urban development beside the Bruce Highway is likely to require supporting arterial roads.

(3) I am aware of the environmental sensitivity of the area east of the Bruce Highway.

(4) There are no plans or timeframes for a second corridor.

315. Departmental Budget Allocations

Mr HAMILL asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

With reference to the answer she provided on 30 April to Question on Notice No. 49—

As her answer reveals that she has varied departmental budgets from the allocations confirmed by the previous Government's budget review at 31 January, what are the new initiatives which have been funded or programs curtailed to produce the following changes to departmental budgets (a) Administrative Services +\$4m, (b) Business Industry and Regional Development -\$3m, (c) Education -\$9m, (d) Family and Community Services -\$3m, (e) Health +\$6m, (f) Lands -\$3m, (g) Minerals and Energy -\$1m, (h) Primary Industries +\$31m, (i) Transport -\$45m and (j) Treasury -\$6m?

Mrs Sheldon: Question on Notice No. 49 asked for estimated consolidated revenue allocation and the proportion of that allocation expended by each department as at 31 December. Consequently, the figures provided on 30 April were the Approved Revised Budget figures as at 31 December, when the current Opposition was in power.

Similarly, Department Budget allocations as at 31 January would have been approved by the previous Government. Explanations of the variations between allocations as at the end of December and January would be contained in relevant Cabinet Budget Review Committee documentation, to which I do not have access (but to which the Opposition should have access).

316. Police Presence at Demonstration, University of Queensland

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to the recent suppression of a peaceful demonstration on the University of Queensland campus by fifty police officers—

- (1) Was he or his office contacted by any member of the student union and asked for police assistance, if so, by whom?
- (2) When was this call received, and was this the only contact with the union?
- (3) Did he or his office contact police regarding this matter; if so, when and what was the nature of this phone conversation?
- (4) Had he or his office had any contact with police on this prior to receiving the phone call from the student union?
- (5) How does he explain the large numbers of police who appeared at the demonstration on campus?

Mr Cooper:

(1) Contact was made with my office by a Matthew Kavanagh, Vice-President of the Student Union. This phone call was received by a junior Administration Officer who passed on Mr Kavanagh's concern to Detective Inspector R D Pickering of the Office of the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Metropolitan North Region.

(2) The Administration Officer took the call immediately prior to passing on the information to

Detective Inspector Pickering. The Police Ministerial Liaison Officer returned Mr Kavanagh's call upon his return to the office. At this point in time the police were in attendance at the Student Union building. Mr Kavanagh did ring my office again later in the day after the police had left the Campus.

(3) Yes. As contained in the answer to Question 1 a junior Administration Officer—acting in good faith—passed the concerns of Mr Kavanagh to the Office of the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Metropolitan North Region. This contact was made immediately in a positive attempt to respond to a genuine call for assistance. As a result of the conversation with Mr Kavanagh the Police Ministerial Liaison Officer contacted the Police Commissioner's Office who advised him to pass on the information to Detective Inspector Pickering, Metropolitan North Region.

(4) No.

(5) The initial response by police was to assess the situation. A Toowong Divisional unit was the first police vehicle to attend the scene. Their immediate assessment of the situation indicated that some 200 plus students were present and advancing on the Administration Building. The Regional Duty Officer, Inspector J.K.V. O'Gorman, monitored a request on the police radio for further assistance and consequently units were deployed from Toowong, Red Hill, City, Fortitude Valley and Traffic divisions. All police who attended the Campus other than the initial unit, did so in response to an assistance call received over the police radio. A further request was relayed for assistance from the Public Safety Response Team (PSRT).

The fact that so many police patrols were able to respond demonstrates the operational policing ability of patrols within the Metropolitan North Region. There was certainly no prior arrangement with respect to this matter.

While 22 members of the PSRT responded, only 7 members actually entered the university campus and they did so to provide protection to officers and equipment while the rest remained on standby.

I am advised that Professor John Hay the Vice Chancellor of the University of Queensland wrote to the Commissioner of Police on the 10 May 1996 and stated in that letter that he had no complaints about how police had carried out their duties when they had visited the university, adding that this had been done "in a professional and efficient manner".

317. Queensland Housing Commission

Mr MACKENROTH asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to the years 1987-88 and 1988-89—

How many Queensland Housing Commission homes were built in (a) Government electorates and (b) non Government electorates?

Mr Connor: During the period 1987/88, 1988/89, the Queensland Housing Commission built 1797 houses in Government electorates and 2509 houses in non Government electorates.

Expressed in percentage terms, this translates into approximately 40% of dwellings built in Government electorates and 60% in non Government electorates.

During this period, the Government held approximately 60% of the seats in the Legislative Assembly.

The process used for allocating capital works resources across the State included reference to the wait list, reference to the existing stock profile, and local intelligence about fluctuations in employment and industry.

318. Health Services, Townsville/Thuringowa

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the effects of de-regionalisation in the Townsville/Thuringowa area—

- (1) How many permanent classified nursing and administrative positions have been, or will be, lost as a result of the Government's organisational changes?
- (2) How many people have been, or before the end of the 1995-96 (a) will have been dismissed, (b) have taken VERs and (c) accepted a position at a lower classification?
- (3) How many temporary people were employed in the nursing and administrative classifications when the Government came into office and how many are employed today?
- (4) How many level 4 nursing positions existed prior to the change of Government and how many will exist after his organisational changes have been implemented?
- (5) How many level 3 nursing positions existed prior to the change of Government and how many will exist after his organisational changes have been implemented?
- (6) What pre-existing in-house services have been, or are proposed for, out-sourcing in all areas of hospital based services in the Townsville/Thuringowa area?

Mr Horan:

- (1) No nursing positions, classified or otherwise, have been or will be lost as a result of the Government's organisational changes. Twelve classified administrative positions have been abolished and a further two have been redesignated to the District Health Services Support Unit.
- (2)(a) No employee has been or will be dismissed. However, one person on contract was paid out under the terms of their contract.
- (b) No employee has been offered a VER. A small number of VERs may be offered prior to the end of the 1995/1996 financial year.
- (c) No employee has been offered or accepted a position at a lower classification.
- (3) I am advised that, within the Townsville/Thuringowa area as at the change of Government, 112 nursing and 42 administrative positions were filled with temporary employees. As

at 15 May 1996, 94 nursing and 28 administrative positions are filled with temporary employees.

(4) The number of Level 4 nursing positions is and will remain at four. This is the same as existed prior to the change of Government.

(5) The number of Level 3 nursing positions has increased by one to 63 since the change of Government. It is expected that this number will remain at 63.

(6) There are no pre-existing, in-house, hospital based services which have been outsourced in the Townsville/Thuringowa area. No proposals for outsourcing form part of Coalition policy, nor have any such proposals been presented to me by Queensland Health.

320. Sale, Toorak House

Mr NUNN asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the recent sale of the heritage listed Toorak House to an overseas buyer—

- (1) Has an application, or inquiries, been received by his heritage section to undertake significant work on the house?
- (2) Does this work involve removal of significant trees, alteration of the driveway and removal of the kitchen wing?
- (3) What other alterations have been applied for?
- (4) When will the Heritage Council consider this application?
- (5) Will he oppose these changes in consultation with the Heritage Council?

Mr Littleproud:

- (1) I am advised that an application for Heritage Council approval has been made under Section 34 of the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 for works to Toorak House and grounds.
- (2) Yes
- (3) I am advised that the application also includes the construction of a new boundary fence and retaining wall, installation of a new kitchen and toilet in the main house and work on the verandah.
- (4) The application has been included on the agenda of the Heritage Council meeting of 24 May 1996.
- (5) It is solely the role of the Queensland Heritage Council, an independent body established under the Queensland Heritage Act 1992, to make decisions on development applications, except where a Government unilaterally declares itself exempt from these provisions, as the Labor Government did in respect of the Treasury Casino project.

321. Schoolsafe Subsidy Scheme

Mr ELDER asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the 1995-96 Schoolsafe Subsidy Scheme and the package of works that I approved as Minister for 116 schools at a cost to Queensland Transport of \$2,346,475—

- (1) Why has no work proceeded on any of these projects aimed at saving lives of Queensland school children during his first three months as Minister?
- (2) When will work commence on the projects, as approved by myself as former Transport Minister?
- (3) Will he assure the parents and teachers of Queensland that all the projects approved by myself will be funded by the Government?
- (4) What other projects within his department, initiated by the former Labor Government, are still affected by the freeze or have been scrapped?

Mr Johnson:

- (1) Funding for these projects was subject to review along with all other promises made by the previous government at the July election. The government is committed to addressing safety issues around schools and ensuring that other parts of the journey to school are also safe. The availability and targeting of funds was reviewed in this context.
- (2) Delivery of projects under the Schoolsafe Subsidy Scheme is undertaken by local governments who determine the exact timing of construction subject to their overall work programs. Should construction be delayed until 1996-97, arrangements will be made to allow local governments to carry funding over.
- (3) I have written to local government confirming approval of the 116 projects approved by the previous Minister.
- (4) All new programs of the previous government, except where funds had already been committed, are under review.

322. Tully Millstream Hydroelectric Project

Mr BEATTIE asked the Premier—

With reference to his Plan B for the Tully Millstream project in which he proposed a dam wall further downstream of the current proposal and no flooding of any part of the wet tropics world heritage area—

- (1) At what stage of planning is this alternative proposal?
- (2) When does he intend to publicly release this plan?
- (3) What discussions have occurred with the Federal Government, particularly Senator Hill as Environment Minister, on this new plan?
- (4) What is the Commonwealth's position on this new plan?
- (5) What discussions on the plan have occurred with the environmental movement particularly the Rainforest Conservation Society on the plan?
- (6) If no discussions have occurred does he intend to involve the environmental movement in consultation on the proposal?
- (7) Does he intend to consult with the Board of the Wet Tropics Management Authority on this new plan?

Mr Borbidge:

- (1) The Government has commissioned independent experts Peter Garlick & Associates Pty Ltd to develop a range of alternative configurations for hydroelectric power in the region of the existing Kareeya Power Station. A formal plan has not yet been developed.
- (2) The Government will fully examine the expert's report before considering what further action is appropriate.
- (3) Formal discussions with the Federal Government on this matter have not yet commenced.
- (4) Senator Hill has indicated publicly that the Commonwealth would take environmental impacts into consideration in its assessment of any hydroelectric scheme in the Tully Millstream region.
- (5) Formal discussions with the environmental movement including the Rainforest Conservation Society have not yet commenced.
- (6) This Government will consult stakeholders on any hydroelectric plan formulated for the Tully Millstream region.
- (7) See answer to 6.

323. Conservation of Wetlands

Mr WELFORD asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the three principal objectives of his proposed strategy for the conservation and management of Queensland's wetlands and as these three objectives are to provide a framework for subsequent initiatives and vector control appears prominently in two of the objectives—

- (1) What particular vectors are of concern?
- (2) What measures would he envisage using to control these vectors?
- (3) Does he see such measures being used on Ramsar listed wetlands such as Moreton Bay?
- (4) Does he see such measures being used in wetlands on national parks, conservation parks, nature refuges or areas proposed for reservation under such tenures?
- (5) Does he regard the wetland impacts of the proposed Port Hinchinbrook development at Cardwell being justified by "overriding public interest" as outlined in objective 1?

Mr Littleproud:

- (1) Those species of mosquitoes found in fresh and saltwater recognised by the Department of Health as transmitters of arboviruses.
- (2) At present, the most cost effective control methods rely on the application of chemical larvicides and insecticides with minimal residual toxicity. Other control methods, notably biological controls and physical habitat modification, are being developed. However, in dealing with vectors for significant disease causing organisms, these control methods are not yet adequate.
- (3) The International Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention)

recognises the principle of "wise use". Wise use of wetlands is defined as their sustainable utilisation for the benefit of human kind in a way compatible with the maintenance of the natural properties of the ecosystem. Vector control may be required in parts of Moreton Bay, particularly if a risk exists to human health. This approach is consistent with the principle of 'wise use'.

(4) The conservation of nature is the priority consideration in the management of protected areas. Should a public health risk exist as a consequence of vector breeding in such areas, options for control which minimise other adverse environmental impacts would be considered as a last resort.

(5) The Coalition supports the decision of the former Goss Government that the environmental impacts of the Port Hinchinbrook development are manageable provided that the developer meets the conditions set down in the Deed of Agreement and any environmental requirements as may be determined by the relevant Federal Ministers. The Deed of Agreement includes an insect management plan.

324. Suicide Prevention

Mr WELLS asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to his department's strategy for prevention of suicide, particularly as it relates to youth suicide—

- (1) Is he aware that many adolescents who have suicidal feelings are people who suffer from depression, or who are prone to binge drinking, but otherwise do not manifest any kind of mental illness?
- (2) Is he aware that suicidal young people generally do not regard themselves as mentally ill?
- (3) Is he aware that his department's strategy is delivered primarily through a system of centres with titles like "The (insert name of relevant suburb) child and adolescent mental health centre"?
- (4) Is he aware that these signs present an initial negative experience for young people who present, or might otherwise present, for counselling for their suicidal feelings?
- (5) Will he therefore consider changing the names of these centres in order to maximise their capacity to reach young people at risk of suicide?

Mr Horan:

(1) Research indicates there are a number of risk factors which may indicate a person's susceptibility to suicide. These are not limited to mental illness, but include social and behavioural factors. While these indicators are helpful, there is no conclusive evidence that they help in clearly identifying specific individuals who are at risk. Identification of risk factors therefore forms only one part of providing effective intervention strategies.

(2) Young people generally do not readily identify with having mental health problems or mental illness. One of the issues in reaching out to young people at

risk is about helping them to identify where mental, emotional and physical health problems exist and then assisting them to address these issues.

(3) Child and youth mental health services are specialist services primarily targeted at those with severe and complex disorders. A small proportion of young people at risk of suicide will access these services. These services however are not the primary focus for the departmental response to youth suicide. A range of strategies are in place, involving a number of services and programs. An example of such a strategy (under evaluation) is the Young People At Risk Pilot, being conducted in four sites in Queensland. A number of preventive programs run by non government organisations, such as the Brisbane Youth Service and the Aboriginal and Islander Health Service are also funded by the department and other services in Queensland Health also play an important role.

(4) Queensland Health has conducted an extensive review of specialist mental health services for children and youth. During this process, the issue of service title caused much debate, and feedback about the title was obtained from young people. Some young people may be "put off" by the term "mental health". However, the target group for these specialist clinical services (those with serious mental health problems and mental illness) found the use of the term was important in identifying services appropriate for their needs. The continued and consistent use of the term "mental health" by all States and the Commonwealth is part of an intentional national strategy. The intent of this strategy is to reduce stigma and raise the acceptability of mental health issues in the community.

(5) It is intended to keep "mental health" in the title for the reasons cited in (4). However, it is intended to move away from "adolescent" to "youth" in centre names, as consultation both in Queensland and nationally has indicated negative community and patient feelings towards the term "adolescent".

325. Power Supply, Bulimba

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

- (1) Have expressions of interest been received for power generation within the Bulimba electorate; if so, how many and what capacity?
- (2) What companies have submitted expressions of interest and for what type of power generation, e.g. gas fired coal etc?
- (3) Has his department any plans to generate power within the Bulimba electorate?

Mr Gilmore:

(1) Expressions of interest have been sought for the provision of additional capacity of 400 mW in 1999 and a further 200 mW in the year 2000. The final closing date for such bids is 18 June 1996.

(2) See my answer to Part (1).

(3) The outcome of the bidding process will not be known before the Tender Assessment Panel completes its assessment.

326. Mr R. Speirs

Mr FOURAS asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the recent move in the Department of Environment of Mr Bob Speirs from Regional Director South East Region to a special project role for a five month period—

- (1) Has Mr Speirs been directed to investigate revenue earning measures from national parks?
- (2) Do these measures include charging for entry to parks, private operation of campgrounds and picnic grounds and commercial lodges on parks?
- (3) What other measures will Mr Speirs be investigating?
- (4) Have other staff been allotted to assist Mr Speirs; if so, how many and for how long?
- (5) What funding has been allotted to Mr Speirs for this work?
- (6) Who is Mr Speirs reporting to while on this work?
- (7) What role did he play personally in directing that this work be undertaken?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) Following discussions between senior officers of the Department of Environment Mr Speirs was invited to undertake special duties in the Department's Central Office.

(2) The proposal to charge entrance fees to national parks was initiated by the previous Government.

Mr Speirs is one of a number of officers currently involved in developing initiatives for the 1996 budget. The Honourable Member will learn of the Department's initiatives when that budget is presented in Parliament later this year.

(3) Refer to (2) above.

(4) Two officers have been allocated for a period of five months to assist Mr Speirs.

(5) Funding to cover salaries and associated matters has been allocated.

(6) Like all officers he works under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer of the Department. On a day to day basis Mr Speirs reports to the Executive Director (Conservation).

(7) Refer to (1) and (6) above.

327. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centre, Townsville

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centre, corner Palmerston and Cambridge Streets, Townsville and in particular, to the following disastrous staffing arrangements (a) the service director's position has been vacant for 32 months, (b) the consultant psychiatrist is on sick leave until 1 July 1996 (he usually works three days a week), (c) Dr Mike Stones and Dr Mike Likely are assisting while the consultant psychiatrist is on sick leave; Dr

Stones works 4 hours each Friday morning, and Dr Likely works 4 hours each Monday morning, (d) full-time medical officer's position vacant since December 1995, (e) part-time medical officer's position vacant for over two years, (f) physiotherapist (part-time) vacant and (g) on staff: psychologist (1), social worker (1), speech pathologist (1), child therapist (1), registered nurse (1), psychiatric registrar—but needs to work under supervision; a psychiatrist is flown in from Brisbane once a fortnight to give professional supervision but this visiting doctor has no client contact and also to the fact that waiting time for an appointment is now 6 months and that referrals must now be by a GP—

Given that the issues of juvenile crime and discipline in schools are supposedly matters of high priority yet families who seek help for their children are not able to receive adequate assistance, will he outline any plans which he has initiated or which he plans to initiate to restore critical services at the centre?

Mr Horan: The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Townsville has experienced ongoing difficulties in recruiting appropriately qualified clinical staff.

The Director's position and part-time psychiatrist position have been advertised on several occasions, but no applications have been received. However the service has been successful in recruiting a full-time locum child psychiatrist for six months who will provide coordination and leadership to the clinical team. A starting date of the end of June is being negotiated.

The Director's position is now covered by the Department's Medical Workforce Incentive Package, which should improve future recruitment prospects.

In the interim a number of arrangements have been made to provide appropriate clinical cover. Dr Stones and Dr Likely will commence their sessional activities from 17 May 1996. Professional supervision is being provided from Dr John Warlow, who is flying from Brisbane for the next eight weeks to undertake the necessary clinical supervision for the staff.

The recruitment of psychiatrists and medical officers to work in child and youth mental health services is a problem throughout Australia, with the majority of child psychiatrists preferring to work in the private sector. This issue was identified in the recent Queensland Health review of child and youth mental health services. A number of initiatives have now been established, with the aim of strengthening the recruitment of child psychiatrists in the future and fostering improvements in service targeting and quality. These include:

the establishment of a Chair of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Queensland to provide academic, training, research and service leadership to the field;

three new psychiatric registrar training positions to increase the number of available child psychiatrists;

a Statewide professional development strategy for the existing workforce.

The lack of such initiatives over the last six to seven years characterised Regionalisation, the imposition of which, on a tried and successful health system, was overseen by you as Health Minister. Under the administration of you and your successors, and specifically during the Health Ministries of your now leaders, Messrs Elder and Beattie, funding for mental health services were bled by the regional system. For example, between 1992/93 and 1993/94, \$1.8 million of new funding was provided to Regional Health Authorities by Mental Health Branch, and yet mental health expenditure only increased by \$0.5 million. With Queensland's population growth, this actually resulted in a per capita fall in mental health expenditure by over 2%.

This Government is committed to ensuring mental health services, including those for children, adolescents, and families, are improved. I also guarantee that funds allocated to these services will go to delivering services, and no longer be siphoned into other areas.

328. Central Business District Auction, Heritage Listed

Mr MILLINER asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the upcoming auction of 8 buildings in Brisbane's biggest Central Business District retail amalgamation fronting the City Mall and bounded by Edward and Adelaide Streets and as the zoning is central business, allowing development of a building up to 120,000 square metres floor space, and as a number of the buildings have heritage values—

- (1) Which of the buildings are on the Queensland Heritage Register or are proposed for inclusion?
- (2) Which of the buildings are listed with the Brisbane City Council as having heritage significance?
- (3) Are any of the buildings or the precinct listed with the Australian Heritage Commission?
- (4) Have the present owners been in contact with the heritage section of his department; if so, what was the nature of their query?
- (5) Are there any heritage issues in dispute between the owners or prospective developers of the site and his heritage section?
- (6) Has he or any member of his office been approached by the owner of the complex or the prospective developers?
- (7) What was the nature of their queries and the outcome of the discussions?
- (8) Has he or any member of his staff had discussions with any member of the Heritage Council regarding the heritage significance of the site or its proposed redevelopment?
- (9) Will he ensure that any redevelopment of the site will protect its heritage significance?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) There is one building on this site which is currently provisionally entered in the Queensland Heritage Register. This is the Wallace Bishop Building, 226-232 Queen Street.

I am advised that the Heritage Council has received an application under s.24 of the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 proposing the Entry of the Shingle Inn, 258 Edward Street in the Queensland Heritage Register. I am advised that this application has not yet been assessed and considered by the Heritage Council.

(2) No buildings on this site are listed in Section 22 of the Brisbane Town Plan—Heritage Buildings.

(3) One building on this site is entered in the Register of the National Estate compiled by the Australian Heritage Commission. This is the De Groens Building, 224 Queen Street.

(4) I am advised that agents acting for the present owner of the site have held discussions with officers of the Cultural Heritage Branch of the Department.

The discussions related to the appeal Howard Chai Pty Ltd -v- Queensland Heritage Council before the Planning and Environment Court [P & E Appeal No. 186 of 1993] against the decision of the Queensland Heritage Council on 27 May 1993 to permanently enter the Wallace Bishop Building, 226-232 Queen Street, in the Queensland Heritage Register.

(5) There is an appeal before the Planning and Environment Court against the decision of the Queensland Heritage Council on 27 May 1993 to permanently enter the Wallace Bishop Building, 226-232 Queen Street, in the Queensland Heritage Register.

I am advised that a report prepared on behalf of the owners has been submitted to the Queensland Heritage Council with a request that it reconsider its position in relation to the current appeal before the Planning and Environment Court. I am advised that this matter is still under consideration by the Queensland Heritage Council

(6) & (7) I have not personally been approached by the owner of the complex or the prospective developers and to my knowledge and the knowledge of the staff of my office there have been a small number of telephone inquiries which have been of a general nature and no detailed discussions have taken place in relation to this matter.

(8) No member of my staff has had discussions with any members of the Heritage Council regarding this matter. However, following upon a media inquiry, discussions were held with staff of the Cultural Heritage Branch of my Department to enable the inquiry to be addressed.

I am advised that officers of the Cultural Heritage Branch briefly discussed the cultural heritage significance of the Wallace Bishop Building, 226-232 Queen Street, with members of the Heritage Council at its meeting on 26 April 1996 in relation to the submission made on behalf of the owner of the development site.

(9) It is the role of the Queensland Heritage Council as an independent body established under the Queensland Heritage Act 1992 to consider such matters.

329. Unemployment, Bundaberg

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Minister for Training and Industrial Relations—

With reference to the high unemployment levels in the Bundaberg region especially youth unemployment—

- (1) Will extra funds be provided to the Bundaberg Campus of the Wide Bay Institute for special programs for the unemployed?
- (2) Will he take positive steps to introduce new courses and programs of a State wide basis in Bundaberg to acknowledge the special needs in Bundaberg?
- (3) Will he take immediate steps to have the city centre TAFE site redeveloped for a high rise hotel and possible training in hospitality with the hotel management?
- (4) Will he ensure the Youth Conservation Corps program is retained and increased in the Bundaberg district due to our high youth unemployment?
- (5) Will he ensure that the horticultural building project is commenced in 1995-96?
- (6) Will he give special consideration to BACAS (Bundaberg Area Group Apprenticeship Scheme) and the Bundaberg Skills Centre (Skillshare) for extra training programs in our region?
- (7) What is the number of apprenticeships and traineeships provided by Government departments in 1994-95 and 1995-96 in Bundaberg?
- (8) Will extra apprenticeships and traineeships be provided in Government departments in Bundaberg in the future because of the high youth unemployment levels; if so, how many extra apprenticeships and traineeships will be provided?
- (9) Will he initiate discussions with Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training for special consideration of employment initiatives in Bundaberg?

Mr Santoro:

- (1) Employment programs are currently under review by both the Federal and State Governments. Once results are known, I will be in a better position to prioritise needs.
- (2) The Bundaberg College of the Wide Bay Institute of TAFE plans to introduce a number of new programs in 1996/97, including the areas of hospitality, sports coaching, quality management and workplace assessor training.
- (3) The City Centre Campus of the Bundaberg College of the Wide Bay Institute of TAFE is surplus to requirements. Procedures for the disposal of land surplus to requirements are being applied. The use to which the site is put subsequent to its disposal is a matter for the purchaser.

(4) The Youth Conservation Corps is the responsibility of my colleague the Honourable Brian Littleproud MLA, Minister for Environment, but I am informed that the Youth Conservation Corps is continuing with 2 planned projects in the Bundaberg region.

(5) An allocation of \$2.5 million has been made for the construction of a horticulture centre at the Bundaberg College of the Wide Bay Institute of TAFE. The horticulture centre has a planned completion date of September 1997.

(6) DTIR provides opportunities for public and private training providers and community organisations to submit offers to deliver accredited training programs under the Competitive Funding Program. As training needs are identified in regional areas, tenders are sought from public and private training providers and community organisations to deliver the training programs. Community organisations such as BACAS and the Bundaberg Skills Centre can also apply to provide training through several Departmental programs.

(7) There were twelve (12) traineeships and one (1) new apprenticeship approvals with Government departments in 1994-95. As of 15 May 1996, there have been four (4) traineeship new approvals with Government departments in the 1995/96 financial year and no new apprenticeships contracted in the Bundaberg district. In addition, the Department of Public Works and Housing has recently engaged 3 new apprentices who are located in the Bundaberg district, however their indentures are contracted with the Department of Public Works and Housing in Brisbane.

The Wide Bay Local Service Delivery Area has targeted Bundaberg for extra promotional activities. This has identified at least 4 additional traineeship opportunities with the Department of Environment and Queensland Police.

(8) New traineeship models in Education and the Environment and the conversion of some apprenticeships to Competency Based Training will provide increased opportunities for training and employment. My Department's Wide Bay office will continue to target promotional activities at Departments in the Bundaberg region to encourage them to take advantage of the initiatives to engage extra apprentices and trainees.

(9) The Wide Bay Local Service Area meets monthly with DEETYA to share information on funded training arrangements and to consider special employment initiatives. The Area Consultative Committee also provides a forum to consider employment initiatives. Once the future direction of DEETYA is known, my Department will hold discussions with its Commonwealth counterpart on how best to jointly respond to areas experiencing high youth unemployment.

330. Water Quality, Currumbin and Tallebudgera Creeks

Mrs ROSE asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to water quality monitoring carried out in Currumbin and Tallebudgera Creeks under the previous Government's clean waters plan—

- (1) Will funding continue to be made available for water quality monitoring in Currumbin and Tallebudgera Creeks?
- (2) Will he provide details of any funding for this program?
- (3) How often will monitoring be carried out?

Mr Littleproud: (1), (2), (3) The water quality of Currumbin and Tallebudgera Creeks is currently monitored at weekly intervals as part of the Department of Environment's statewide water quality monitoring program. Ongoing funding for this monitoring is one of the many issues being considered in the context of the forthcoming budget, and will include assessment of previous results and the need for ongoing monitoring.

331. Public Housing, Nudgee Electorate

Mr ROBERTS asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to the housing resource service and the valuable advice and assistance provided to tenants and lessors in my electorate by the outer northern housing service—

- (1) Is the funding for the housing resource service to be maintained or increased above current levels for the 1996-97?
- (2) What amount of funding will be provided to the outer northern housing service for the 1996-97?
- (3) As funding for the housing resource service is obtained from the Residential Tenancies Authority, is he considering changes to the scope or structure of the authorities responsibilities; if so, what changes is he proposing?

Mr Connor:

(1) and (2) There are 26 services throughout Queensland, including the Outer Northern Housing Service funded under the Housing Resource Service (or HRS) program. These services offer advice, referral and assistance to people seeking housing with particular emphasis on tenants in the private rental market.

All services have submitted budget bids to the Department for the 1996/97 financial year and these bids are currently being assessed. A complete budget bid for the HRS program has not as yet been finalised for 1996/97. I am therefore not in a position at this time to give the Member the specific details he has requested.

(3) I have asked the Board of the Residential Tenancies Authority to continue with the review of the Residential Tenancies Act 1994 that was begun under the previous government. The terms of reference for the review cover the role and responsibilities of the Authority. Pending finalisation of the report of that review, it would be premature to speculate on any possible changes that might be recommended by the Board of the Authority.

332. Hotel Trading Hours, Maryborough

Mr DOLLIN asked the Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry—

With reference to late hour trading to 3am by certain hotels in Maryborough which is contributing to an upsurge in crime in our city where at 3am in the morning drunken and drug affected patrons are tipped out on to the streets and into the community resulting in bashings, petty thieving, broken bottles and blood splattered streets—

Will the Government be reviewing this legislation with the view to bringing about earlier closing times?

Mr Davidson: At this stage the Government is not intending to review the Liquor Act with a view to earlier closing times of licensed premises.

In determining whether extensions of trading hours should be granted the Liquor Licensing Division must as provided in the Liquor Act seek the comments of both the Assistant Commissioner of Police for the area concerned and the local authority.

In the Maryborough area there are only four General Licences with the authority to trade until 3am on a permanent basis. An application was recently refused for a particular hotel to trade through to 5am, Wednesdays to Saturdays. This decision has been appealed to the independent Liquor Appeals Tribunal and I am informed that at that recent hearing a delegate of the Assistant Commissioner of Police for the Maryborough area advised the Tribunal that the Police Service had no objections to the hours being sought.

The Member for Maryborough should also note that there are processes in place to investigate complaints about the trading practices of premises, particularly those operating in the early hours of the morning and I can assure him that those premises who are found not worthy because of poor practices can expect to have their hours curtailed on an individual basis.

333. Advertising of Vacancies, Chief Executive Officers

Ms BLIGH asked the Premier—

With reference to the resolution of the Parliament that all vacant Chief Executive Officers positions be advertised and selected on merit as soon as possible—

- (1) Have all such positions now been advertised; if not, which positions are outstanding, why are they outstanding and when will they be advertised?
- (2) Will he provide details of the proposed selection process for each Chief Executive Officer position including (a) the position description for each position, (b) precise composition of each selection panel, including number of members, names and current position of panel members and
- (c) proposed timetable of interviews and appointment for each position?

Mr Borbidge:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The selection processes for the CEO positions have, and will be, in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Standard.
- (a) The position description for each position has been available on request from the Office of the Public Service. I table a copy of each of the position descriptions of the advertised CEO positions.
- (b) The composition of each selection committee will be as prescribed by the above Standard. I comment on the positions which report directly to me, namely, the Directors-General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Office of the Public. I chaired both panels. The other panel members for the positions were:
- Office of the Public Service
- Mrs Betty Byrne-Henderson AM
- Mr Loftus Harris, Director-General, Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Mrs Betty Byrne-Henderson AM
- Mr Kevin Wolff, Director-General, Office of the Public Service
- (c) I understand my Cabinet colleagues are in the process of forming selection committees which will include a representative of the Office of the Public Service/Public Sector Management Commission to ensure due process. I anticipate announcements with respect to successful applicants, will be made, as and when Governor in Council approves appointments.

334.Strip Searches, Mackay Watchhouse

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to the recent allegations that police officers in Mackay are carrying out unnecessary strip searches on women who are arrested for minor offences—

- (1) If these allegations are confirmed would they constitute a violation of the women's civil rights?
- (2) What investigations are being undertaken into these allegations?
- (3) Will he inform the Parliament of the results of the investigations?

Mr Cooper:

(1) An article appeared in the Sunday Mail, 12 May 1996 relating to strip searches of aboriginal women at Mackay Watchhouse.

The Queensland Police Service policy in relation to strip searches of persons in custody is contained in the Operational Procedures Manual at Section 16.10.3. This policy provides guidelines for strip searches and any police investigation would take this policy into account. As no investigation has been

finalised regarding the subject matter in the newspaper article, no comment can be made concerning violation of the women's civil rights aspect.

(2) With respect to the allegations regarding strip searches at Mackay Watchhouse the District Officer, Mackay Police District has sought from the Mackay & District Aboriginal and Torres Strait Legal Service the names of potential complainants and, if possible, some details of the allegations so that an appropriate investigation can be commenced.

The District Officer, Mackay Police District is awaiting further response from the Mackay & District Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service to enable any appropriate investigations to be undertaken.

(3) Any police investigations regarding complaints involving alleged breaches of discipline or misconduct are undertaken in accordance with Chapter 18 of the Human Resource Management Manual with policy in Section 18.2.4 relating to confidentiality of information regarding details of complaints applying. Any requests for results of investigations into any allegations of breach of discipline or misconduct would be referred to the Queensland Police Service, Professional Standards Unit for consideration and advice.

335.Appointment of Judges, Supreme and District Courts

Mr FOLEY asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice—

By what date will he have completed the appointment of the five additional judges to the Supreme and District Courts which he promised prior to the July 1995 election?

Mr Beanland: The Honourable Member will be aware of an answer I gave to a previous question from Mr Purcell on the issue of the appointment of judges to the Supreme and District Courts. This matter is still under consideration.

336.Quality Assurance

Mrs CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

What proposals does the Government have for the continuation and/or modification of the quality assurance process for business and industry in Queensland?

Mr Connor: Discussions have been occurring with numerous groups interested in the application of quality assurance processes for business and industry in Queensland.

Options are being developed for Cabinet consideration concerning the Government's requirements for quality assurance certification in Queensland business and industry. These discussions and the formulation of policy options are continuing and, at this time, there is no outcome of which I am able to advise the House.

These matters are shortly to be considered by Cabinet and I assure the House that I will make a full statement on this subject as soon as I am able.

337. Native Title Claim, Lakefield National Park

Mr PALASZCZUK asked the Minister for Natural Resources—

With reference to the Aboriginal Land Tribunal's recent supportive recommendation for the granting of inalienable freehold title over Lakefield National Park in Cape York—

- (1) When will he respond to this recommendation?
- (2) Will he support it in its entirety?
- (3) Will he support an all aboriginal board of management for the park if this is requested?
- (4) Will he support the tribunal's recommendation that the parks traditional owners be given hunting rights within the park?

Mr Hobbs: The Land Tribunal's report and recommendations are presently being assessed by the Government.

338. Mr G. Draffin, Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation

Mrs BIRD asked the Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry—

With reference to the recent resignation of QTTC chief executive Garry Draffin and media reports that he was asked to resign because he did not necessarily agree with the boards future direction—

- (1) Did he or any member of his staff, have any discussions or exchanges of correspondence on this matter with any member of the new board prior to Mr Draffin's resignation; if so, what?
- (2) Has he, or any member of his staff, had any discussions or exchange of correspondence with any member of the new board regarding Mr Draffin's replacement; if so, what was the nature of the discussions or exchange?
- (3) Has he, or any member of his staff, had any discussions or exchange of correspondence with a Mr Stephen Gregg, the current chief executive of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission regarding his interest in taking the position of chief executive of the QTTC; if so, what was the nature of these discussions or exchanges?

Mr Davidson: In response to the specific questions asked by Mrs Bird, I can advise as follows:

- (1) The decision to accept Mr Draffin's resignation was an issue for the Board of the QTTC to deal with and I was not in attendance at that Board meeting when this issue was dealt with.
- (2) Yes, naturally wide-ranging discussions have taken place, but no correspondence has been entered into.
- (3) No, neither I nor any of my staff have met with or had any discussion with Mr Gregg regarding the position of CEO at the QTTC.

339. Pacific Highway

Mr D'ARCY asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the document Pacific Highway Upgrade released by his department which states "Section A and B will be considered as a part of a separate Cabinet submission in mid 1996"—

- (1) Who is preparing this submission, what consultants are being used and what public or private groups are being consulted in the preparation?
- (2) When will this submission be presented to Cabinet and made public?

Mr Johnson:

(1) Queensland Transport is preparing the submission. McCormick Rankin International is consulting on busways; Veitch Lister Consulting is undertaking transport modelling and analysis.

MLAs, Logan City Council, Brisbane City Council and property owners will be consulted in the preparation of the submission.

(2) Timing of the process at this stage:

Preliminary planning work is expected to be completed in July/August 1996.

Timing of the Cabinet submission and public presentation will be decided by the Minister and Cabinet.

340. Queensland Mines Rescue Brigade

Mr PEARCE asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to the Queensland Mines Rescue Brigade—

Has he directed officers of his department to carry out a full and complete audit of the brigade to (a) determine the standard of vehicles and equipment used by Mines Rescue Brigade members, (b) identify what new technology is available to modernise our Mines Rescue Brigade and (c) determine skill levels and training needs to meet duty of care responsibilities of staff?

Mr Gilmore:

(a) Each Mines Rescue Station superintendent is responsible to ensure that vehicles operated by the Mines Rescue Brigade are maintained in a roadworthy condition and in compliance with Department of Transport standards. The brigade is currently in the process of changing the types of emergency response vehicles that it has traditionally used moving from van type units to four wheel drive vehicles with trailers.

(b) The Queensland Mines Rescue Brigade are heavily involved in the Moura Implementation Committee and Task Groups 3, 4, 4a and 5. Task Groups 4, 4a and 5 are investigating new equipment and activities for use in Mines Rescue. It is possible that the findings of these task groups will have a direct impact on the activities of mines rescue personnel. As for current training and equipment, using the Australian Annual Mines Rescue Competition as a guide, Queensland teams are often found at or near the top of the winners' lists.

(c) Staff training is an ongoing need and this will be expanded as the Moura Recommendations have been implemented eg. use of inertisation equipment.

341. Inquiry, Queensland Fire Service

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to his inquiry into the Queensland Fire Service—

- (1) Who heads this inquiry?
- (2) How was this person selected and what experience does this person have in the Queensland Fire Service?
- (3) How much is this person being paid to conduct this inquiry?
- (4) What other personnel are being employed in this inquiry and what experience do these people have in the Queensland Fire Service?
- (5) What are their classifications and salaries?
- (6) What is the cost of the inquiry to date?
- (7) What is the estimated cost of the inquiry?
- (8) When will the inquiry be completed?
- (9) Will the findings of that inquiry be tabled in the Parliament?
- (10) Will he give an assurance that he will fully implement all recommendations forthcoming from this inquiry?

Mr Veivers:

- (1) Ms Lyn Staib.
- (2) Ms Lyn Staib, as Project Director and Senior Consultant of Lyn Staib Australia, registered as a Consultant with the Department of Emergency Services (formerly Queensland Emergency Services) in January 1996 and submitted a brief outlining a range of services her company had to offer.

Ms Staib has a strong background in engineering management, especially under emergency conditions, and has spent a number of years broadening her skills in the human resource management area.

Because of the genuine urgency and specialist nature of the consultancy service, the Acting Director-General as accountable officer, approved an exception in the calling of competitive offers for the procurement of this review service in accordance with Part A, Section 1, Clause 2.5(d) and (e) of the State Purchasing Policy.

Following approval by the Acting Director-General, Lyn Staib Australia was engaged to undertake the Fire Service Review and an instrument of agreement was established in accordance with the State Purchasing Policy's general conditions for the engagement of consultancy services.

- (3) Under the contract Lyn Staib Australia is paid \$400.00 per day for a period of 13.5 weeks. Any additional expenses will be claimed separately as agreed with the Project Officer.
- (4) The personnel assigned to the Queensland Fire Service Review Team are:

Mr Wayne Hartley—Assistant Commissioner, Far Northern Region, Queensland Fire Service

Ms Fiona McKersie—Director, Operational Planning and Policy Unit, Department of Emergency Services

Mr Robert Simpson—Executive Officer, Planning and Development, Queensland Fire Service

Ms Doris Galea—Administrative Officer

Ms Cheryl D'Silva—Administrative Officer; and Assistance from Temporary Agencies—1 person, full-time for 10 weeks.

All significant participants in the Fire Service Review have an extensive background in either the Queensland Fire Service or the Department of Emergency Services. Key participants also have considerable experience in either consulting or project management.

- (5) Mr Wayne Hartley Classification SES 1—Equivalent Salary F/N \$2481.30
Ms Fiona McKersie Classification SES 1—Salary F/N \$2499.64
Mr Robert Simpson Classification AO7—Salary F/N \$2134.50
Ms Doris Galea Classification AO3—Salary F/N \$1262.00
Ms Cheryl D'Silva Classification AO3—Salary F/N \$1131.50
Temporary Agencies—Normal Hourly Rate \$17.40.

(6) It has been estimated that the Fire Service Review cost approximately \$83,000. This cost includes salaries and all other logistic and administrative costs.

(7) See (6) above.

(8) A Report detailing the Fire Service Review's findings was released on 3 June, 1996.

(9) A copy of the Report recommendations is available to the public. Furthermore, all Queensland permanent firefighters have access to the Report and its recommendations.

(10) Urgent priority will be given to the implementation of those recommendations that specifically address the Queensland Fire Service working environment.

342. Carparking, Cleveland Railway Station

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the need for increased car parking spaces at the Cleveland Railway Station to enable more people to travel by train and thus relieve the traffic chaos on our roads to the city—

- (1) What is the Government doing to provide more parking spaces at Cleveland Railway Station?
- (2) In 1987, when Cleveland station was opened, why wasn't sufficient land acquired for future growth so the present problem of unavailability of land near the station could have been avoided?
- (3) Now that land is not available for the expansion of parking at this station, what other options is he considering with respect to providing

additional car parking at this station and what is the estimated cost of these options?

- (4) When can Cleveland and Redlands constituents expect to have additional parking made available so that more of them can travel by train?

Mr Johnson: The Honourable Member would be aware that the objective of an integrated public transport strategy is to create an environment where the various forms of public transport work in a coordinated manner. In the case of the Cleveland Railway Station in particular, emphasis is placed on integration of road, rail and ferry services, rather than further encouraging the already heavy reliance on motor cars. I have recently received representations from a company interested in improving the transport infrastructure to the offshore islands, and the Cleveland Railway Station will form an important link in plans for an ecologically responsible transport plan for the region.

The existing intermodal services at Cleveland provide for 106 motor cars and facilities for up to eight buses, two of which are constructed as rollover bays. Given that no additional Queensland Rail land is available for development at Cleveland, there are no immediate plans for increasing the car parking capacity of the station.

It is not proposed to make any alterations to the layout of the area occupied by the existing bus interchange until a new contract has been awarded. This will be operated for a reasonable time to gauge the support of the community for a bus service and the interchange space requirements at the station to meet that need.

Preliminary negotiations have been held with Officers of Redland Shire Council to develop a planning layout for commuter car parking assuming a reduced bus interchange area would be viable in the long term.

Ormiston Station, the next station towards the city, has parking for up to 60 vehicles with expansion possible to accommodate an additional 50 vehicles. The car park is currently well patronised.

I believe that the future expansion of the Redlands District will place enormously increased demands on transport infrastructure, and so I want to set in place, strategies that encourage sound long term solutions. This includes integrated intermodal services between current bus, rail, and ferry services. Eventually I want to see this connecting to international and domestic aviation via the proposed rail link to the airport. I do not want short term reactionary strategies that will only lead to more motor car usage in the area.

343.Noise Pollution, Eagle Farm Airport

Mr BURNS asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the fact that Sir William Knox, representing the National-Liberal Government, appeared before a Public Works Committee in support of a new Airport at Eagle Farm, and I appeared for the Opposition opposing the Eagle Farm location and the subsequent Liberal-National

Party decision to support the Fraser Government's decision to override the Commonwealth Public Works Committee's recommendation against the siting and construction of the domestic and international airports at Eagle Farm—

- (1) What steps has the Government taken or will it take to end the growing noise problems experienced by southside residents?
- (2) As the State benefits greatly from the airport, is he prepared to offer a joint funded (Commonwealth and State) compensation package to people living under the flight paths of larger and larger noisy jets?

Mr Littleproud:

- (1) The Commonwealth Government operates airports and has the responsibility for legislation regulating air traffic, including flight paths and noise from commercial airliner operation. Representations have been made to the relevant Commonwealth Departments about the concerns of Brisbane residents affected by aircraft noise, in particular about aircraft reportedly flying outside designated flight paths.
- (2) No. Compensation would be a matter for the Commonwealth as the operator of the airport.

344.Fire Station, Helensvale

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to the proposed Helensvale Fire Station—

- (1) When will this station be constructed?
- (2) What is the estimated cost of construction?
- (3) When will it become operational?
- (4) Will it be 24-hour operational?
- (5) How many professional staff will be employed at the station?
- (6) What will be their classifications?
- (7) Will all crews meet the 1 & 3 standard?
- (8) What standard of fire cover will this station offer?

Mr Veivers:

- (1) Construction of the new proposed fire station is contingent upon the acquisition of a suitable site and the formulation of building specifications that are agreeable to all parties. It should be noted that the region anticipates the construction to be in the financial year 1996/97.
- (2) The construction costs will be dependent upon specifications and to this end the region has a budgetary allocation of \$700,000 in the 1996/97 fiscal year.
- (3) Shortly after construction and following a satisfactory commissioning period, the station will be fully operational. Again this is anticipated being in the latter part of the 1996/97 fiscal year.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) It is anticipated that as a minimum this station will be operated as a one pumper facility having a staff of one officer and three firefighters per shift.

(6) The actual classifications may vary, however the staffing will be one junior officer and firefighters per shift.

(7) This is the anticipated standard that will operate from this station.

(8) This station has been proposed in order to provide primary fire response to areas as far north as Pimpama and south to Nerang, as well as providing mutual aid to Hollywell, Southport, Worongary/Robina Fire Stations and the Beenleigh Station in the north.

It should be further noted that the region proposes to operate Road Accident Rescue from this station in order to minimise response times to the major traffic corridor of the Pacific Highway.

345. Railway Station, Shorncliffe

Mr NUTTALL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to an issue I raised with him in writing dated 18 March, to which I am yet to receive a reply—

- (1) Has approval been given for the restumping and new flooring to be built on the platform of Shorncliffe station?
- (2) When is this work programmed to begin and when is it due to be completed?
- (3) What sort, if any, disruption may be caused to commuters and staff at Shorncliffe station?
- (4) Has Shorncliffe been placed on a program for an upgrade of facilities as outlined under the Labor Government's Operation Facelift Program; if so, (a) when is the upgrade expected to begin, (b) what sort of delays can commuters expect to experience and (c) when is the work scheduled to be completed?

Mr Johnson: A reply to your letter of 18 March was posted from my office on 14th May 1996. The essential elements are that :

The stumps and flooring to the station building at Shorncliffe are sound and replacement is not required.

The platform was rebitumened on 29 April, 1996.

Operation Facelift did not continue after the 1992-93 financial year.

No funds are currently available for station upgrading and no works program is scheduled for Shorncliffe.

346. Scarborough State School

Mr HOLLIS asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to a commitment by the previous Government to provide an electronic alarm system to Scarborough State School, the installation to be completed by April 1996—

Will he be honouring this commitment; if so, when; if not, is this another slashing of assistance to schools, to fund the removal of the North Coast tolls?

Mr Connor: The Government is continuing the previous Government's commitment of enhancing the security of schools. Schools in need of electronic alarm systems are identified and prioritised by the Department of Education.

Scarborough State School was equipped with an extensive alarm system in July 1994. This system is monitored by my Department's State Government Security Service and responses to alarms are provided by Redcliffe Police.

As part of the ongoing School Security Enhancement Program older alarm systems are audited by State Government Security technical officers to ensure that they still conform to Australian Standard 2201 and State Government Security specifications.

Scarborough State School will be audited towards the end of 1996. There is no information held by my Department to indicate that the system is not working satisfactorily.

347. Pedestrian Crossing, Morayfield State School

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the pedestrian crossing on Morayfield Road adjacent the Morayfield Primary School—

Given the dangerous situation school children are currently facing when trying to negotiate the pedestrian crossing on this vicinity, will his department provide crossing supervisors until such time as the intersection is upgraded and the pedestrian crossing relocated?

Mr Johnson: In replying to the inquirer's concerns about the safety of Morayfield State School children negotiating Morayfield Road, it should be clarified that the facility referred to is in fact a signalised crossing, not a pedestrian crossing.

This is significant given that the signals have been installed at the site for quite some considerable time and have been used accordingly by the school children during that time.

It should be further noted that school concerns about the adequacy of the time phasing of those signals were referred to both Queensland Transport and Main Roads staff for attention in April 1995.

The phasing was adjusted to give the children more time to safely cross the road.

More recently, the school community has been kept well informed by Queensland Transport and Main Roads staff about road works currently taking place in Morayfield Road.

In fact, I am advised that a Schoolsafe meeting was convened as recently as 1 May 96 to discuss a range of road safety matters at the school, including Morayfield Road.

As a result of discussions with the school, consideration has been given to modifying the existing traffic signals to provide a separate phase for pedestrian movement across Caboolture River

Road at its intersection with Morayfield Road. The school supports this proposal.

Funding and final approval for this proposal is now being considered by the Main Roads Department.

You can be assured that Queensland Transport will continue to monitor the situation and keep in close contact with the school community regarding all road safety issues pertaining to Morayfield State School.

However, I wish to conclude by advising that the positioning of crossing supervisors in Morayfield Road, while the road works are continuing, is not being considered at this time given the adequacy of the pedestrian signals in place.

348. Korea Zinc

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier—

With reference to the proposed smelter for Townsville by Korea Zinc—

Is the Government prepared to (a) put up the additional \$1m required to provide the enlarged Townsville City Council water supply pipeline to the plant recently requested by Korea Zinc as a result of their re-assessment of the water supply needs of the plant, (b) immediately address recently expressed concerns about a possible threat to adjacent wetlands from the waste products of the refinery by engaging an organisation or persons whose report will be acceptable to the community and (c) consider (i) a new southern rail access to the port as proposed by Townsville Port Authority and (ii) a new road to the port which would bypass residential areas and reduce the impact of heavy traffic from the proposed zinc plant?

Mr Slack:

(a) The Government, as part of the assistance package for Korea Zinc, committed \$2.4 million to fund a 450mm water supply pipeline to the Korea Zinc site boundary. At the time it was also agreed between the Government and Korea Zinc that the costs of any changes in scope of works would be met by Korea Zinc. In the case of the water supply pipeline, due to increased Korea Zinc water demands, a 600mm pipeline is now considered appropriate. This 600mm pipeline could cost more than the original \$2.4 million estimate, however accurate cost estimates are still being finalised.

(b) This is clearly a case where the responsibility for funding any additional costs should lie with Korea Zinc. This cost increment could quite possibly be incorporated into the water charges charged by the water board.

(c)(i) Any possible environmental impacts to surrounding areas will be addressed in the revised Impact Assessment Study, anticipated to be completed by early July. The specific issue of wastewater is currently being addressed by the Townsville City Council and the State Government in consultation with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Government has also commissioned CSIRO Australia to conduct an independent

assessment of the project Impact Assessment Study and to provide an appraisal of any areas of likely risk. This report is due to be completed within the next few weeks.

- (ii) The issue of port access is currently under study by a working group comprising senior officers from the Townsville Port Authority, the Townsville City Council, the Department of Transport and Queensland Rail. It is my understanding that this study has not yet been finalised. With regard to impacts by Korea Zinc related traffic, commercial negotiations are proceeding between the Company and Queensland Rail with the view to the majority of project transportation tasks being undertaken by rail, thus eliminating the project's heavy road transport issue.

349. Water Supply, Queensland Nickel

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Natural Resources—

With reference to the Queensland Nickel Agreement Act which gives to the company a power of veto over the issue of bore licences to the aquifer within the area of influence from which the company draws water for its Yabulu treatment plant and is he aware of the widespread outrage among residents who are unable to access the underground supply because of the veto and also to the initiative of the previous Labor Government by which agreement was reached that Queensland Nickel would relinquish some of its groundwater entitlement on condition that the company would be provided with an assured water supply from the Townsville Thuringowa Water Supply Board at an appropriate cost—

- (1) Are negotiations continuing between the Government and Queensland Nickel in regard to this important matter?
- (2) What are the results to date of those discussions?
- (3) Is the company prepared to relinquish a further 2000 ml from the groundwater resource for domestic use?
- (4) Has the Thuringowa City Council agreed to administer the issue of licences and collection of charges?
- (5) Will this arrangement commence; if so, when?

Mr Hobbs:

- (1) Negotiations with the Queensland Nickel company are continuing.
- (2) Access by private landholders to groundwater entitlements currently held by Queensland Nickel is dependent on a viable alternative supply becoming available.
- (3) See (1)
- (4) Negotiations with Thuringowa City Council are continuing.
- (5) The Government will continue negotiations with Queensland Nickel, the Joint Water Board and Thuringowa City Council in order to help achieve increased access to groundwater.

350. Compulsory Third Party Insurance, Premium Increase

Mr HOLLIS asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

With reference to her refusal to release the actuaries report leading to the increase in Compulsory Third Party Insurance premiums of \$66.50—

Did the Coalition parties receive donations from any of the Compulsory Third Party Insurers for either the July 1995 State Election or the February 1996 Mundingburra by-election; if so, what was the extent of these donations?

Mrs Sheldon: I have no involvement in the receipt of donations to the Liberal or National Parties. Incoming donations are the responsibility of the various party organisations and are dealt with under the relevant rules of disclosure.

351. Statistics, Fishing Industry

Mr BURNS asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry—

With reference to the fact that there are two basic methods that family fishermen and women can enjoy their sport, either land based or by boat—

- (1) What is the estimated number of non-professional fisherpersons in Queensland?
- (2) What is the number of boat owners registered and what is the total amount of fees collected by the State in boat registration, boat driver licences, boat trailer registration, etc.?
- (3) How much money will be expended in 1996-97 by the Government on new boat ramps?
- (4) What is the location of planned new ramps?
- (5) How much money will be spent on upgrades of existing ramps that have no lights, water, garbage collection, fish cleaning facilities, toilets and in many cases are not suitable for all tide use?
- (6) As many thousands of families without boats need to fish from esplanades, rock walls, jetties, etc, will the Government stop developments that eliminate esplanades?
- (7) Will the Government allocate funds for the construction of jetties, piers, etc, to allow our kids access to all tide fishing?

Mr Perrett:

(1) The estimated number of non-professional fishers (fifteen years and over) resident in Queensland is 770 000 based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population figures, as at 30 June 1995, and the ABS "Non commercial Fishing" Report October 1985. The figure does not include interstate and international fishers, the numbers of which are difficult to estimate.

(6) The issue of land tenure, is one for my colleague, the Honourable H W T Hobbs, MLA, Minister for Natural Resources. However, my Department, through the Fisheries Group, is working with the Department of Natural Resources and Local Authorities to ensure that public foreshore access

remains to allow activities such as recreational fisheries to continue. In most situations, the provision of an adequate buffer zone, between any development and tidal wetlands, has maintained public access.

(2)-(5), (7) These questions are within the portfolio of my colleague, the Honourable V G Johnson, MLA, Minister for Transport and Main Roads.

352. Queensland Ambulance Service, Far North Queensland

Mr LIVINGSTONE asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to decisions taken by the previous Government regarding the training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Queensland Ambulance Service—

- (1) What programs are currently under way to train Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to serve in ATSI communities?
- (2) What allocation has been made in the current Budget to provide for such training?
- (3) What Budget allocation will be made in the 1996-97 Budget for this purpose?
- (4) Given past criticism from the Mornington Island community over the lack of ambulance officers in that community, what programs are being considered to address this problem?

Mr Veivers:

(1) In consultation with local ATSI Communities in the Far Northern and Northern Regions of the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), strategies have been developed to accommodate the needs of ATSI communities.

These strategies include recruiting and training ATSI community members in the provision of pre-hospital emergency care, the appointment of a QAS Training Officer specialising in the training of ATSI Ambulance Officers, and the development of a training package designed to meet the physical and cultural needs of ATSI communities. These initiatives have proven successful in the provision of ambulance services to these local ATSI communities. Federal Government funding from the Department of Education, Employment and Training (DEET) has enabled the creation of 12 positions for ATSI officers. ATSI officers are undertaking the Associate Diploma of Applied Science—Ambulance.

In addition to these initiatives, the QAS has introduced First Aid Classes into ATSI communities. This initiative was designed to provide First Aid training to Community Members and Aboriginal Cape York Health Sector Workers. To date over 350 ATSI community members have successfully completed the classes.

(2) The current budget allocation for ATSI communities is \$170,000. The funding was provided from a new initiative recurrent for one year and has been used to fund the ATSI First Aid Training programs.

(3) The QAS will need to apply for additional funding in 1996/97 to continue this program.

The joint DEET /QAS funding is on a dollar for dollar basis of their Award rate of pay over three years. This funding has been used to subsidise the wages of ATSI QAS Officers in the Far Northern and Northern Region to cover the expenditure of their three year Associate Diploma training program. Each year their wages increase according to their progress through the Associate Diploma.

(4) In June 1995 the QAS received and accepted a Rural Health Support Education and Training (RHSET) Program Grant of \$104,616 for the establishment of a pre-hospital care model for isolated ATSI communities on Mornington Island and at Doomadgee. The results of this research grant have not been finalised and are expected to be published in the next six months. After the release of the research project findings the QAS will then be in a better position to evaluate the needs of the Mornington Island Community.

353. Pick-up/Set-down Area, Sandgate and District State High School

Mr NUTTALL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the accelerated capital works program implemented by the previous Labor Government for the provision of pick-up/set-down areas as part of the Schoolsafe Subsidy Scheme—

- (1) Does the funding approved by the previous Labor Government for the construction of a pick-up/set-down at Sandgate and District State High School during 1995-96 remain current, and will he ensure that the funds will not be reallocated elsewhere?
- (2) When will the work commence, particularly as the current financial year is drawing to a close?
- (3) In the event that the work is not started before the end of 1995-96, will he give an assurance that the funding will carry over to 1996-97, and give a direction for the work to be undertaken swiftly?

Mr Johnson: Let me begin my response by stating quite clearly this government's commitment to improving the safety environment in relation to school transport. In opposition we were critical of the level of support for the Schoolsafe program and I intend to ensure that this program will receive a high priority.

What this government has undertaken is a responsible review of likely expenditure to ensure that true road safety benefits will be achieved.

For the specific case in question, the approval of funds for a pick-up and set-down area at Sandgate State High remains current under the Schoolsafe Subsidy Scheme.

The commencement of work is dependent on the available resources of the Brisbane City Council. It is understood that no detailed project planning has been undertaken, and a delay of several months can be expected until works can be completed.

The Department of Main Roads is currently preparing advice to Local Governments that the funds in

question will be made available beyond the end of this financial year. It remains a matter for the Brisbane City Council to schedule such works as part of its overall works program.

354. Machinery of Government Committee, Ministerial Staff Selection Panel, Budget Review Committee, Membership

Mr BEATTIE asked the Premier—

- (1) What is the current membership of the Machinery of Government Committee and what is the role of that committee?
- (2) What is the current membership of the selection panel for Ministerial staff for each Minister's office?
- (3) What is the current membership of the Budget Review Committee?

Mr Borbidge:

(1) The Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Director General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Director General Office of the Public Service and the Under Treasurer are members of the Machinery of Government Committee. The role of the Machinery of Government Committee is to oversee the process of Departmental integration, to advise Cabinet on significant appointments and to manage the administrative arrangements that may have to be instituted from time to time.

(2) The procedures for the employment of Ministerial Staff are overseen by the individual Minister in conjunction with senior officers from the Premier's and Deputy Premier's Offices.

(3) The Premier, Deputy Premier, and the Minister for Economic Development and Trade are the core members of the Cabinet Budget Committee. Other Ministers may be co-opted as members from time to time. The Committee is assisted by senior representatives from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for the Arts, Treasury Department, and the Department of Economic Development and Trade.

355. Queensland Mines Rescue Brigade

Mr PEARCE asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

Will he provide yearly statistics relevant to the management and provision of service by the Queensland Mines Rescue Brigade since 1986 in the following areas (a) number of underground mines, (b) number of trainees, (c) number of rescue stations and locations, (d) number of substations and locations, (e) number of staff available for training and monitoring of the performances of Mines Rescue Teams and (f) number of staff employed for the purpose of administration?

Mr Gilmore:

(a) Number of Underground Mines:- 1985/86—22 mines; 1986/87—22 mines; 1987/88—19 mines; 1988/89—16 mines; 1989/90—14 mines; 1990/91—15 mines; 1991/92—14 mines; 1992/93—15 mines; 1993/94—15 mines; 1994/95—14 mines; and 1995/96—17 mines.

(b) Number of Trainees:- 1986—310 trainees; 1987—284 trainees; 1988—267 trainees; 1989—254 trainees; 1990—263 trainees; 1991—277 trainees; 1992—299 trainees; 1993—264 trainees; 1994—286 trainees; 1995—261 trainees; and 1996—240 trainees.

(c) There are five Rescue Stations located at Dysart, Blackwater, Booval, Collinsville and Moura.

(d) Number of Substations and Locations:-

1986 (6)—Harrow Creek, Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Moura No. 4;

1987 (6)—Harrow Creek, Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Moura No. 4;

1988 (5)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Moura No. 4;

1989 (5)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Moura No. 4;

1990 (5)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Moura No. 4;

1991 (5)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Moura No. 4;

1992 (6)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Gordonstone, Moura No. 4;

1993 (7)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, North Goonyella, South Blackwater, Cook Colliery, Gordonstone, Moura No. 4;

1994 (8)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, North Goonyella, Cook Colliery, Crinum Colliery, Gordonstone, Kenmare, Moura No. 4;

1995 (8)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, North Goonyella, Cook Colliery, Crinum Colliery, Gordonstone, Kenmare, Moura No. 4; and

1996 (8)—Central Colliery, Oaky Creek, North Goonyella, Newlands Coal, Cook Colliery, Crinum Colliery, Gordonstone, Kenmare.

(e) Staff available for Rescue Training:- 1986—8 staff; 1987—8 staff; 1988—7 staff; 1989—7 staff; 1990—8 staff; 1991—8 staff; 1992—7 staff; 1993—7 staff; 1994—6 staff; 1995—6 staff; and 1996—6 staff.

(f) The Mines Rescue Brigade has employed three staff for the period 1986-96 for the purpose of administration. The positions are Manager, secretary and a casual secretary.

356.Upgrade to Ipswich Hospital

Mr HAMILL asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the redevelopment of the Ipswich Hospital—

- (1) When will tenders be called for the proposed carpark facility?
- (2) When will this facility be completed and at what cost?
- (3) What is the proposed date for the commencement of each of the stages of the hospital redevelopment program?

(4) What facilities will be upgraded or redeveloped as part of each stage?

(5) What is the proposed date for completion of each stage of the redevelopment?

(6) What is the estimated cost of each stage of this vital project?

Mr Horan:

(1) Tenders will be called after the seeking of submissions for consultancy services to undertake a detailed schematic design/preferred plan for the carpark, and finalisation by consultants of a site survey to provide the Carpark Feasibility Study Consultants with information to confirm budget estimates.

(2) Design and planning activity will take approximately 12 weeks to complete with a further period of 30 weeks being required for construction of the carpark, to enable completion by mid May 1997. Estimated cost is \$2.8 million.

(3) Phase 1—1 June 1996; Phase 2—November 1996; Phase 3—October 1998; Phase 4—November 1999.

(4) Phase 1—Relocation of dental clinic to new facilities within the Ipswich Community Health Plaza; relocation of integrated community mental health services offsite; design and construction of 32 bed acute mental health unit on hospital site; demolition of buildings in preparation for Phase 2; and refurbishment of buildings in preparation for temporary relocations.

Phase 2—Design and construction of new three level ward block to accommodate Pathology, 30 bed maternity, birthing suites, neo-natal and ante-natal, outpatients, 30 bed Paediatric ward, 30 bed Orthopaedic ward and 120 bed medical/surgical ward (4 wards contiguous); construction of single level structure above existing Outpatients to accommodate Intensive Care Unit/Coronary Care Unit, day surgery, operating room expansion and therapies; refurbishment of Central Sterilising Supply Department; construction of overpass to new building; and expansion of Emergency Department.

Phase 3—Design and construction of new 68 bed rehabilitation and day hospital; and expansion of medical records, medical imaging and information technology services.

Phase 4—Design and construction of new services building to accommodate stores, kitchen, staff dining, education, linen, staff amenities and administration.

(5) Phase 1—July 1997; Phase 2—February 1999; Phase 3—March 2000 and Phase 4—March 2001.

(6) Phase 1—\$10.46 million; Phase 2—\$44 million; Phase 3—\$16.3 million and Phase 4—\$13.3 million.

These are preliminary estimates for each stage of development and as such are exclusive of cost escalation. It should be noted that the total cost of these stages—\$84.06 million—far exceeds the \$30 million approved by the Goss Government, of which you were a member. This shortfall (of \$55 million) thus formed part of the \$1.2 billion overcommitment of the Hospital Rebuilding Program by successive

Labor Ministers, and particularly by your current leaders, Messrs Beattie and Elder. Mr Beattie's hospital bail-out (of \$35 million) from the already overcommitted fund, designed as it was to partly cover up the blow out in hospital operating budgets, threatened both the timing and future of the Ipswich Redevelopment. In fairness to the Electors of Ipswich, I reversed that transfer and ensured the security of this important project.

357. Natural Gas Pipeline to Bundaberg

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to public statements made by the Gas Corporation of Queensland and Allgas regarding the supply of natural gas to Bundaberg and in view of both these companies wishing to immediately supply natural gas through a pipeline to Bundaberg—

Will he immediately approve such a supply of natural gas to Bundaberg so that industry and homes can be provided with natural gas in Bundaberg by 1997?

Mr Gilmore: I am well aware of the investigations being undertaken by energy companies in Queensland regarding the possible supply of natural gas to cities such as Bundaberg. The Queensland Government actively encourages the efforts of these companies in seeking to make available new sources of reliable and competitively priced energy for domestic, business and industrial customers.

I recently received an application from the Gas Corporation of Queensland for a franchise to reticulate natural gas in Bundaberg. In accordance with the requirements of the Gas Act 1965, the Gas Corporation of Queensland will shortly be advertising in local newspapers that it has applied to me for a franchise to reticulate natural gas in the City of Bundaberg. Persons wishing to object to this application have 14 days from the date of the advertisement to make a written application to me for a franchise to reticulate gas in the same area.

If an objection is received, the franchise will be awarded following a competitive selection process. This process will commence immediately after the closing date for objections and take several months to complete.

The granting of a franchise to reticulate gas in Bundaberg would obviously require the construction of a gas transmission pipeline to Bundaberg, from the source of gas supply. Any application for such a licence will be dealt with in a timely and efficient manner, and in accordance with the requirements of the Petroleum Act 1923. The granting of a pipeline licence would require the prior approval of open access principles for the pipeline.

358. School Bus Travel

Mr BRISKEY asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the safety-net assistance available for school bus travel and the present situation where some eligible families are missing out on assistance because of an anomaly in the definition of types of

bus service on which safety-net assistance can be provided and as buses owned and operated by private contractors which a school contracts to provide a bus service for its students to travel to and from school are not bus services which fit the definition of the type of bus service on which safety-net assistance can be provided—

When will he include such services in the definition of types of bus services on which safety-net assistance can be provided so that those otherwise eligible parents can receive assistance?

Mr Johnson: Under Section 54 of the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, services arranged specifically between the school and individual operators are not eligible for assistance under Safety-Net payments. These services are generally private arrangements between particular schools and bus companies for the carriage of their students.

In addition to this legislative position, when Safety-Net was instigated in January 1995 it was specified that it should only be payable on services available to the general public, not those arranged specifically by the school.

Both the legislation and the Safety-Net guidelines were approved by the previous government. The background to this position is based on a longstanding government policy toward overall funding of school services.

As with all government programs, funding provided to operators of bus services must be subject to guidelines to ensure accountability of expenditure. Under the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 the focus of funding guidelines for bus transport is primarily directed to operators who provide broad-based services open to the general public or operators who have service contracts for the carriage of eligible students and fare paying passengers.

In this way, the Government provides an income base for operators so they can offer a comprehensive range of both commuter and school services. It would be unreasonable to direct scarce government funding to operators who provide deregulated school services to a limited number of schools, who at the same time would not be required to offer unprofitable yet essential late night and weekend services meeting the wider needs of the community.

It should be noted that a similar situation existed for many years under the previous State Transport Act 1960.

Although it is not proposed to alter eligibility guidelines for Safety-Net assistance for students using these services at this time, I do consider that there is scope to reexamine certain shortcomings associated with the school transport scheme, and expect this to be completed within the next three months.

359. Police Staffing, Mackay Region

Mr MULHERIN asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to the Police Service in Mackay—

- (1) How many operational police officers are currently employed at the Mackay Police Station, the Mackay Police District Office and the Mackay region?
- (2) How many police officers are employed in clerical and other non-operational jobs at the Mackay Police Station, the Mackay Police District Office and the Mackay region?
- (3) What were the numbers of (1) and (2) above in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995?
- (4) Given his pre-election promise to increase police numbers in Mackay, (a) when will this take place and (b) how many extra operational officers will be provided?
- (5) How many police cars are available for operational duties in Mackay on a 24 hour daily basis?
- (6) Does he consider that the number of vehicles is sufficient to provide adequate cover for the urban area south of the Pioneer River and the urban area north of the Pioneer River in Mackay?
- (7) When will the non-operational police employed at the Mackay Station be put on operational duties and have their previous duties fulfilled by civilians?
- (8) Are there any plans for a police shopfront at either Mt Pleasant Shopping Centre or Caneland Shopping Centre, Mackay?
- (9) If so, (a) where will the shopfront be located, (b) when will it be opened and (c) what will be its staffing and hours of operations?
- (10) Given the National Party's 1995 election commitments to build a new police station in its first term of Government in North Mackay to service the fast growing suburbs of Andergrove and Northern Beaches, (a) has the department acquired land, (b) where is this land located, (c) when will construction commence, (d) when will this station become operational and (e) how many operational police will be deployed from this station; if not, why not?

Mr Cooper:

(1 & 2) The current authorised strength of sworn officers at Mackay Station and District, both operational and non-operational is as follows:

Year	Mackay Stn Operational	Mackay Stn Non-Operational	District Office Operational	D/Office Non-Operational	Mackay District Operational	Mackay Dist Non-Operational
1996	55	0	3	1	155	7

(3) The authorised strength of sworn officers for the years 1989 to 1995 is as follows:

Year	Mackay Stn Operational	Mackay Stn Non-Operational	District Office Operational	D/Office Non-Operational	Mackay District Operational	Mackay Dist Non-Operational
1989	50	3	2	1	140	7
1990	50	3	2	1	143	8
1991	52	1	3	1	152	5
1992	50	1	3	1	150	6
1993	50	0	3	1	155	7
1994	50	0	3	1	155	7
1995	50	0	3	1	155	7

(4) The Government has already approved for the Police Service to increase recruit intakes. The successful recruits to graduate from these increased intakes will be allocated throughout the State. The actual number to be allocated to each District, including Mackay District, will be determined by the Service's Staffing Allocation Model.

(5) The Assistant Commissioner has received advice from the District Officer, Mackay that there are 15 motor vehicles, one motor cycle and two trail bikes available for use by the various operational sections at Mackay.

(6) The District Officer, Mackay advises the present allocation of vehicles is adequate to meet current operational needs at Mackay.

(7) Civilianisation priorities are presently being determined and will be implemented in accordance with budget allocations for 1996/97. Initial priority will be given to the civilianisation of communications rooms throughout the State. Civilianisation of the Mackay Communications Room will receive

consideration in any expansion in the civilianisation program.

(8) Consideration has been given to establishing a police shopfront at Mackay including possible locations at Canelands Shopping Centre and Mt Pleasant, however, there has been no authorisation within the State Shopfront/Police Beat Program to establish any such facility at Mackay.

(9) Any locations of new shopfronts are subject to assessment by the State Coordinator Shopfront/Beat Policing Program. In the event of any future expansion of the shopfront program to include Mackay, the location, staffing and hours of operation would be subject of appropriate assessment.

(10)

(a) No land has been acquired for the construction of a police station in North Mackay.

(b) See above.

- (c) The future construction of a police station will be dependent upon the availability of funding and State-wide priorities. Due to current financial challenges, it is not envisaged that a station will be constructed in the short term.
- (d) See above.
- (e) It is not known at this stage how many operational police will be deployed from any new station constructed as staff numbers will be dependent upon demographic and crime statistics at the time of construction and those forecast in the longer term.

360. Proposed Chermside Fire Station

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to the new Chermside Fire Station—

- (1) When will it be constructed?
- (2) What will it cost to build?
- (3) How many officers will be employed there?
- (4) What will their classification be?
- (5) Will he guarantee that the station will be staffed on a 24-hour basis with all crews working on a 1 & 3 ratio?

Mr Veivers:

(1) The Chermside Fire Station will be constructed during the course of financial year 1997/98.

(2) The estimated cost of the land and building for the Chermside Fire Station is \$1.8 million. It is anticipated that approximately \$600,000 will be recovered from the sale of the present site. The net outlay for the Queensland Fire Service will be approximately \$1.2 million.

(3) 32 officers will be employed to staff the Chermside Fire Station. Work Place Reform provisions gazette Chermside as the Brisbane North Area office. A senior officer will be located within the new Station.

(4) The classification of Chermside staff positions will be:

1 Senior Officer (Fire Protection Officer Level 3)

4 Station Officers (Fire Protection Officer Level 2)

20 Firefighters (Fire Protection Officer Level 1)

Seven additional staff will be employed at Chermside to cover for firefighters on leave etc.

(5) Chermside Fire Station will be staffed with career firefighters and provide a 24 hour service. The Station is provided with a pumper which will be crewed with one officer and three firefighters continuously. An Emergency Tender will be crewed with the standard two members.

361. Development of Caboolture Hospital

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to his public statement that the Caboolture Hospital's next stage of development would proceed on the timetable established by the former Government and to local concerns that the next stage will not include either intensive care or coronary care units—

Will he assure the House and the community of Caboolture that these vital services will be included in the project?

Mr Horan: I can assure the electors of Caboolture that tenders will be called for stage 2 of the Caboolture hospital Redevelopment in April or May next year, and that work should be completed by 1999.

The extent of services to be delivered at the Hospital had to be decided bearing in mind the mess which resulted from Labor's \$1.2 billion overcommitment of the Hospital Rebuilding. Caboolture Hospital is one of Queensland's most important, serving an area of rapid growth and many young families. The Government was also confronted with an attempt by former Minister Beattie to withdraw \$35 million from the Hospital Rebuilding Program to bail-out hospital overruns. Because this action had the potential to seriously delay a number of projects including Caboolture, one of my first acts as Minister was to cancel the transfer. Now that this Government has taken prudent and deliberate steps to resolve the mess, I can inform the House and the people of Caboolture of the nature of these services. The number of beds will be increased from 130 to 260. This doubling of bed numbers will support:

increased surgical services,

an operational intensive care unit/coronary care unit,

day surgery,

rehabilitation,

improvement to outpatients and emergency services,

the provision of care for mental health patients,

improved antenatal care, and

educational services to support medical and allied health training.

In view of Caboolture's importance as a centre for growth, and bearing in mind the needs of both the young and ageing in the District, I have directed my Department to work flat out to ensure stage 2's delivery on time.

362. Education Funding, Currumbin

Mrs ROSE asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to capital works and other funding for schools in the Currumbin electorate—

Will he provide details of projects proposed for the 1996 school year?

Mr Quinn: The following is a list of the projects that have been approved for funding in 1995-96 in the Currumbin electorate:

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

Currumbin State School

Music block by conversion

PS78A covered play area

Elanora State School

Administration block extension

Multipurpose covered area and amenities

Tallebudgera State School

Student covered area with canteen

PS88 General learning block (4 GLAs)

SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Elanora State School

Covered seating area

Palm Beach Currumbin State High School

Multipurpose courts

BUILDING BETTER SCHOOLS

Currumbin Valley State School

Upgrade of classroom

Ingleside State School

70m² of additional covered area**363. Infant Mortality Statistics****Mr WELLS** asked the Minister for Health—

- (1) What is the current rate of infant mortality in Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities?
- (2) What is the current rate of infant mortality for Queensland generally?
- (3) What plans does he propose to address the unacceptably high rate of infant mortality among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities?

Mr Horan:

(1) Prior to January 1996, no Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander identifier was included on death certificates in Queensland. The infant mortality rates presented are therefore estimates, based on the rates observed in areas where the proportion of Aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders is high. Due to the relatively small number of deaths in the communities each year the rates presented are based on four years data (1990-1993).

The infant mortality rate in Aboriginal communities was estimated to be 22 per 1000 live births.

The infant mortality rate in Torres Strait Islander communities was estimated to be 32 per 1000 live births.

The peri-natal mortality rate (i.e. still births plus deaths within the first 28 days of life) in Aboriginal communities was estimated to be 52 per 1,000 births.

The peri-natal mortality rate in Torres Strait Islander communities was estimated to be 36 per 1000 live births.

(2) The all Queensland infant mortality rate for 1990-1993 was 7.4 per 1000 live births.

The all Queensland peri-natal mortality rate for 1990-1993 was 11.5 per 1000 births.

(3) I agree that the rate of infant mortality amongst these communities is unacceptably high. The Government is committed to improving the health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and the Coalition has a formal commitment to the principles embodied in the National Aboriginal Health Strategy. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is a major priority for Coalition, as will be clear from the Queensland Health Corporate Plan 1996-2001. However, there is no quick fix to the health problems faced by indigenous people. The solution lies in a planned and systematic approach to health problems faced, and in encouraging and supporting family and individual responsibility.

There are a number of strategies being pursued by Queensland Health including education programs aimed at emphasising the importance of antenatal and postnatal care for mothers and infants and further strategies are being developed as part of the Coalition's comprehensive approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

364. Tourism Promotion, China

Mrs BIRD asked the Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry—

With reference to Australia's imminent recognition by China as an approved tourist destination for its residents and as only five other Asian countries currently enjoy such a sanction—

- (1) What role is he playing in promoting this recognition?
- (2) What increase does he expect in visitors to Queensland from China as a result of this recognition?
- (3) What special programs is he putting in place to ensure Queensland gets its fair share of an increase in Chinese tourists to Australia?
- (4) What level of funding is he directing to this program?

Mr Davidson: In response to the specific questions asked by Mrs Bird, I can advise as follows:

(1) The Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation (QTTC) will continue to service the Chinese market through its regional office in Hong Kong. The QTTC is the only State tourist office active in China. In the week beginning 13 May 1996, Mr David Leung, Manager (Hong Kong, China, Philippines), visited Guangzhou Province to meet immigration officials. Located in southern China, Guangzhou Province is home to 50 million people and is designated one of the new industrial zones. The next week Mr Leung travelled to Beijing to meet immigration officials and consulate, Qantas and China Airlines representatives.

(2) The number of Chinese tourists coming to Queensland is relatively small but there is great potential for growth in the next few years. In February of this year, China was Queensland's fastest growth market (74.3%), albeit from a small base. According to Bureau of Tourism Research figures, 42,600 Chinese people visited Australia in

1995, 16,000 of whom visited Queensland. Ours was the main State of stay for 5,900 of the 16,000. The QTTC will continue to monitor the number of Chinese visitors to Australia and Queensland's share of this market.

(3) While the recognition of Queensland as an official tourist destination is an excellent development, this alone will not be enough to develop the market. The QTTC is in the process of appointing a public relations representative to be based in Guangzhou. The preferred candidate for this position is a Chinese national with 30 years experience in tourism. He has excellent diplomatic contacts and is extremely well-regarded by the tourism industry in the region. One of the keys to developing the Chinese market is securing additional air services from China into Queensland. The QTTC and the aviation analyst within my Department's Tourism Policy Bureau are working on this issue.

(4) Currently the QTTC spends approximately \$20,000 a year on developing the Chinese market in conjunction with the Australian Tourist Commission through media familiarisations and other measures and spends a further \$20,000 on seminar activities throughout China. China provides great potential for growth in the medium to long term. The QTTC's current activities and the proposed appointment of a public relations representative in China are appropriate measures at this stage of the market's development. The QTTC (through its head office and Hong Kong office) will continue to monitor the Chinese market to determine whether extra resources are required.

365. Budgetary Impact of Departmental Name Change, Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry—

With reference to the decision to change the name of the Department of Primary Industry to the Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry and the fact that the principle responsibilities of this department have not changed—

What will be the total cost in labour and materials to the department to replace stationery, letterhead, business cards for departmental staff, departmental publications and all other printed materials and signage on Government buildings and in offices throughout Queensland to accommodate this change of name?

Mr Perrett: I am pleased to advise that I have arranged that an administrative order be made to retain the name of the Department of Primary Industries therefore avoiding the costs associated with a departmental name change.

The regard and recognition afforded to the Department of Primary Industries by clients, industry and the community within Queensland, nationally and internationally, furthered my resolve to retain the departmental title of Primary Industries.

The formal aspects of the associated administrative order will be completed shortly. No costs have been

incurred on new stationery and signage and the Department will continue providing excellent service to its clients without interruption.

366.60s and Better Program

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to a statement made by the Mayor of Barcaldine to a meeting of the 60s and Better program in Barcaldine where he stated that the program would be terminated by the Government—

Is this program to be terminated; if so, when and what is the reason for its termination?

Mr Horan: The Government has no plans to terminate the 60s and Better Program, nor has it had any plans to do so since the election of the Coalition. I have directed the Director-General of Queensland Health to advise all funded 60s and Better Programs that the Program has ongoing Government and Queensland Health support.

367.60s and Better Program

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Health—

Will he reassure the community that the significantly successful 60s and Better program, begun by the Labor Government in the Archerfield electorate, and which has done excellent work to improve the health and morale of elderly citizens around Queensland and interstate, will continue to receive support from the Government and specifically his department?

Mr Horan: I have directed the Director-General of Queensland Health to advise all funded 60s and Better Programs that the Program has ongoing Government and Queensland Health support.

Together with strong community support, particularly from older people, the Coalition itself is strongly supportive of the 60s and Better Program. An evaluation of the program has found that older people who participate in 60s and Better report increased physical activity, improved health knowledge and enhanced quality of life as a result of that participation.

Ensuring the continuation of worthwhile programs such as this is made extremely difficult by the financial legacy of Labor in Health, including the (at least) \$70 million blow-out in hospital running costs inherited by the Coalition. However, as a result of new management processes and the commitment of this Government, the community can be assured of the continuation of 60s and better.

368. Road Traffic Accidents, Captain Cook Bridge-Gateway Bridge-Nerang, Pacific Highway

Mr D'ARCY asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

Will he detail the number of accidents, people injured and fatalities on the Pacific Highway between the Gateway and Captain Cook Bridges and Nerang each year from 1990 to 1995?

Mr Johnson: The Queensland Government through Queensland Transport collects and analyses

road traffic accident data in all areas of Queensland and this analysis is used by the Queensland Transport, Main Roads Department and Queensland Police Service to develop road safety programs to reduce the road toll. The details of the information requested for the Pacific Highway are shown in the attached tables.

The tables show road crash and casualty data for the Pacific Highway for the years 1990 to 1995 subdivided by local authority area.

The data shows that after an increase during the early part of the 90s, both crash and casualty numbers declined on the Pacific Highway in 1995 and fatalities, in particular, have decreased over the last two years. This decrease is most marked in the Brisbane City and Logan City sections of the Highway.

The Brisbane City section of the Highway, from the Captain Cook Bridge to just beyond the junction

with the Gateway Arterial, averaged two fatalities, 98 injuries and 159 crashes per year over the 1990-95 period.

The Logan City section, from near the Gateway Arterial junction to the Logan River, averaged 3.5 fatalities, 72 injuries and 108 crashes per year over the 1990-95 period.

The Gold Coast section, from the Logan River to Tugun, averaged 15 fatalities, 198 injuries and 263 crashes per year over the 1990-95 period.

While the figures for 1995 were an improvement, we cannot afford to accept this result. This is why in planning for the new Pacific Highway, we are talking about a world class road with the best possible safety features. In fact, I understand that Design Engineers, Road Safety experts and Police are already working together to ensure that we achieve this outcome.

Road crashes on the Pacific Highway from 1990 to 1995

Local govt area	Year	Fatal crashes	Hospitalised crashes	Medical treatment	Minor injury	Property damage	Total crashes
Brisbane City Council	1990	3	16	28	14	74	135
	1991	1	20	23	16	95	155
	1992	2	12	27	15	93	149
	1993	1	14	45	17	88	165
	1994	2	17	36	27	96	178
	1995	1	19	45	24	83	172
Total		10	98	204	113	529	954
Gold Coast City Council (incl. Albert Shire)	1990	4	46	56	17	93	216
	1991	12	44	33	17	96	202
	1992	12	51	54	31	124	272
	1993	17	61	60	33	155	326
	1994	12	64	62	39	111	288
	1995	8	53	57	34	120	272
Total		65	319	322	171	699	1576
Logan City Council	1990	5	15	13	8	45	86
	1991	3	23	12	10	63	111
	1992	3	19	24	12	74	132
	1993	3	18	24	8	60	113
	1994	3	22	18	19	53	115
	1995	1	12	23	8	44	88
Total		18	109	114	65	339	645
Total Pacific Highway crashes	1990	12	77	97	39	212	437
	1991	16	87	68	43	254	468
	1992	17	82	105	58	291	553
	1993	21	93	129	58	303	604
	1994	17	103	116	85	260	581
	1995	10	84	125	66	247	532
Total		93	526	640	349	1567	3175

NB: Information held in the Road Crash Database on events occurring within the last 12 months are considered preliminary as investigations into crashes can take up to 1 year to finalise.

Road casualties on the Pacific Highway from 1990 to 1995

Local govt area	Year	No. Fatalities	Hospitalised	Received medical treatment	Minor injury	Total casualties
Brisbane City Council	1990	3	22	43	26	94
	1991	1	24	39	22	86
	1992	2	15	38	19	74
	1993	1	15	61	26	103
	1994	4	21	56	42	123
	1995	1	21	63	34	119
Total		12	118	300	169	599
Gold Coast City Council (incl. Albert Shire)	1990	5	57	77	27	166
	1991	18	63	59	22	162
	1992	15	64	81	52	212
	1993	23	89	99	50	261
	1994	17	82	107	55	261
	1995	13	72	91	43	219
Total		91	427	514	249	1281
Logan City Council	1990	5	18	22	11	56
	1991	4	27	22	11	64
	1992	3	34	39	20	96
	1993	5	24	57	11	97
	1994	3	31	28	23	85
	1995	1	15	31	11	58
Total		21	149	199	87	456
Total Pacific Highway casualties	1990	13	97	142	64	316
	1991	23	114	120	55	312
	1992	20	113	158	91	382
	1993	29	128	217	87	461
	1994	24	134	191	120	469
	1995	15	108	185	88	396
Total		124	694	1013	505	2336

NB: Information held in the Road Crash Database on events occurring within the last 12 months are considered preliminary as investigations into crashes can take up to 1 year to finalise.

370. Gateway Bridge Toll

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

- (1) Does he intend removing the toll on the Gateway Bridge; if not, will he reduce the toll on the Gateway Bridge or will he introduce a special rate for workers and families who use the bridge daily?
- (2) What is the average number of vehicles per day that use the Gateway Bridge on a one way trip?
- (3) What is the average number of vehicles per day that use the Gateway Bridge on a return trip?
- (4) What is the average number per day in each class of vehicle using the bridge?

Mr Johnson:

1. It is NOT intended to remove the toll on the Gateway Bridge. Future variations in the toll schedules will be considered by the Government from time to time.

2. & 3. The information required to answer Questions 2 and 3 is not available as traffic data is not collected in this form.

4. The Gateway Bridge carries an average of over 52,000 vehicles per day. This traffic comprises:

CLASS—DESCRIPTION—AVERAGE	DAILY
TRAFFIC	

A1—2 wheel vehicles (Motor Cycle)—520
A2—2 axles, no dual tyres (Car)—46200
A3—3 axles, no dual tyres (Car and 1 axle trailer)—720
A4—4 or more axles, no dual tyres (Car and 2 axle trailer)—170
B2—2 axles, dual tyres (2 axle truck)—2060
B3—3 axles, dual tyres (3 axle truck)—730
B4—4 axles, dual tyres (4 axle truck)—310
B5/6—5/6 axles, dual tyres (5 or 6 axle truck)—1570
BD—7/8 axles, dual tyres (B-Double truck)—140
Total Average Daily Traffic (two-way)—52420

371. Tabling of Roads Implementation Program

Mr ELDER asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

- (1) Does he intend to meet his existing legislative obligations under the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 and table a full Roads Implementation Program in this Parliament for the Roads Program under his stewardship?

- (2) Will he provide details of when he intends to table his 1996-97 to 2000-2001 program?
- (3) Does he intend to table an addendum to the existing 1995-96 Roads Implementation Program to take account of any changes to the Labor Roads Program?
- (4) Will he undertake to continue the practice of tabling addendums to the Roads Implementation Program as significant changes to the program occur?

Mr Johnson:

(1) The former Minister for Transport would know that Section 11(5) of the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 requires that Roads Implementation Programs be made publicly available in a manner decided by the Minister. Therefore, consistent with my obligations under the Transport Infrastructure Act, I will make the appropriate arrangements to ensure this document is made available to the public.

(2) The 1996-97 to 2000-2001 Roads Implementation Program will be published following the 1996/97 State Budget in September.

(3) With the exception of the recently announced Pacific Highway Upgrading, where this Government has recently approved a substantially increased program of works than that which would have been provided under a Labor Government, my Government has publicly undertaken to honour the road funding commitments which were detailed in the Roads Implementation Program and Addendum.

To date, the only other variations effected to the Roads Implementation Program and Addendum are those which were approved by Mr Elder prior to the change of Government. Consistent with current guidelines, these, and any subsequent variations approved by me will be incorporated in the 1996/97 Roads Implementation Program, and will be reported in the Annual Report to Parliament for 1995/96.

(4) Consistent with our legislative requirements under the Transport Infrastructure Act, this Government will make the appropriate arrangements to ensure any significant changes to Roads Implementation Programs are made publicly available.

372. Public Housing, Tannum Sands

Mrs CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

What is the timeframe for completion of units at Tannum Sands and what relief is to be given to subcontractors affected by the poor management of those overseeing the project?

Mr Connor: The project for 8 seniors units at 4 Hampton Drive, Tannum Sands, is expected to be completed on 30 June 1996.

The contractor for the project was S J Roulston Builders Pty. Ltd. The works were taken out of the contractor's hands on 21 February 1996, following non-payment to subcontractors by the contractor.

To complete the works, the Department undertook to give first refusal on the remaining works to

existing subcontractors. Negotiations with these companies and individuals began in early March and are ongoing. Coordination of these initiatives has been hampered by the lack of records on the part of some subcontractors in respect of their initial contractual arrangements with the contractor. Further delays were caused when materials on the site were stolen and by the discovery of some defective work. Subcontractors are involved in the rectification work as well as completion of the original subcontract work. The Department will continue its efforts to obtain a satisfactory outcome for subcontractors regarding this project.

As at 16 January 1996, the Department had four subcontractors listed with monies outstanding from the contractor. Of these contractors, one has taken up the offer to complete his subcontract. One other subcontractor not on the list, has agreed to complete the work. The other subcontractors on the list have completed their subcontracts and the contractor was paid for that work.

Since taking the works out of the contractor's hands on 21 February 1996, two additional subcontractors who are owed money by the contractor have come to light. One of these has been contracted to complete his work and negotiations are continuing with the other.

I would add that there is a long wait time for seniors units in Tannum Sands, ie in excess of 48 months. Priority is currently being given to providing additional housing in areas of the State with wait times of this magnitude. Some additional housing in Tannum Sands has been programmed for 1996/97.

373. National Institute of Indigenous Performing Arts

Mr FOLEY asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

With reference to the proposal to establish the National Institute of Indigenous Performing Arts in Brisbane strongly supported by Labor Governments at Federal, State and Local levels and to the decision by the Commonwealth Coalition Government to transfer this national arts institute to Sydney—

- (1) Is she prepared to stand up for Queensland and publicly condemn the Commonwealth Coalition Government's action to deprive Queensland of this national arts institute?
- (2) Will she now take action to ensure the NIIPA is established in Queensland?

Mrs Sheldon:

(1) As I have previously advised the Honourable Member, I wrote to Senator Alston on 29 March 1996 arguing that the New Farm Powerhouse site represented the best location for the new institute.

I subsequently met with Senator Alston on 15 April to further outline the advantages of Brisbane over any other proposed sites for NIIPA. At that time, I expressed to Senator Alston Queensland's concerns at the proposed Federal decision not to proceed with NIIPA in Queensland. I shall be writing to Senator Alston in the near future to reiterate these concerns.

Queensland has the largest indigenous community in the country, and I maintain the view that the suitability of basing NIIPA in Queensland is unarguable. Although I shall do everything within my power to attract NIIPA to Brisbane, as the Honourable Member is aware, the final decision rests with the Federal Government.

(2) As I have outlined above, I am pursuing the establishment of NIIPA in Brisbane. Furthermore, I am continuing to be involved in discussions to consider ways in which Queensland can obtain its fair share of Commonwealth arts initiatives.

374. Queensland Tourist and Travel Commission; TAB; Wet Tropics Authority

Mr FOURAS asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to recent wholesale restructuring by the Government of the QTTC and TAB boards and confidential Treasury documents that indicate future wet tropics funding from the State Government is in doubt—

- (1) Does he intend to allow the present board of the Wet Tropics Authority to run its full term; if not, what changes does he intend to make and when?
- (2) In any changes, does he intend to maintain the present State and Federal Government balance of representation on the board?
- (3) Does he intend to support continued aboriginal representation on the board?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) Directors are appointed to the Board under Part 2 of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993. Two directors, including the current Chair, have recently offered to tender their resignations. The term of appointment of the remaining directors expires 21 September 1997.

(2) Yes, the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 (s.14) requires that the Board consist of one person (the Chair) appointed on the nomination of the Ministerial Council (two State and two Federal Ministers); two persons appointed on the nomination of the Commonwealth; two persons appointed on the nomination of the State; and the Executive Director.

(3) Yes. Section 6 of the Commonwealth's Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Conservation Act 1994 requires that the Commonwealth nominees include "one or more Aboriginal representatives who have appropriate knowledge of, and experience in, the protection of cultural and natural heritage".

375. Aboriginal Land Tribunal; Lakefield National Park

Mr WELFORD asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the recent report from the Aboriginal Land Tribunal supporting the freehold title claim over Lakefield National Park—

- (1) Will he support this recommendation?

- (2) When will a board of management be appointed for the park?
- (3) What will be the composition of that board?
- (4) Will he support an all aboriginal board of management if it is requested; if not, why not?
- (5) When will a park management plan be in place for Lakefield?
- (6) What funding will be allocated to the preparation of that plan?
- (7) Will he accept the tribunal's recommendation that traditional owners have hunting rights and the rights to carry out other traditional activities in the park?
- (8) Will he support the rights of the traditional owners to live either permanently or temporarily in the park?
- (9) Will aboriginal rangers be employed in Lakefield; if so, in what numbers?
- (10) What funding will be allocated to the employment of aboriginal rangers in Lakefield?

Mr Littleproud:

- (1) The Government is currently assessing the report.
- (2) A board of management will be appointed for the park once a decision has been made in relation to the recommendation of the Land Tribunal and following discussions with the claimant group and other interested parties.
- (3) It is premature at this stage, to speculate on the composition of a board of management.
- (4) Refer to (3) above.
- (5) In the preparation of a management plan the Minister is required to advertise seeking public submissions on the plan and then release the draft plan for public comment before it is approved. The Aboriginal Land Act also requires that there be full consultation with the Aboriginal people in the preparation of a management plan. Due to the processes established under the Nature Conservation Act and the Aboriginal Land Act it is likely that the process of preparing a management plan will take at least 18 months.
- (6) There is a legislative requirement to prepare a management plan before the grant of the land can actually occur.
- (7) The Government supports the conduct of traditional activities such as ceremonies and the continuance of spiritual links with the land.

Currently under the Nature Conservation Regulation traditional use of flora and fauna by Aboriginal people can be permitted on a national park with certain restrictions. Such restrictions include a prohibition on the use of firearms and the taking of rare, vulnerable or endangered animals.

- (8) Important considerations in the preparation of such a management plan will be the protection of the national park environment, the needs of the traditional owners, access, provision of services and potential alternatives for living outside of the national park.

(9) The Government will seek to employ as many Aboriginal rangers as practicable in the management of the Lakefield National Park. The number of rangers to be employed is a matter for future negotiation between the Department and the traditional owners in the preparation of the lease and management plan.

(10) Allocation of funds is subject to budget considerations.

376. Rape and Sexual Assault Protocols, Queensland Police Service

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

What action is he taking to ensure that the Queensland Police are implementing sexual assault protocols in order that women are treated fairly and with sensitivity when reporting rape?

Mr Cooper: The Queensland Police Service has prepared Rape and Sexual Assault Protocols in consultation with the Queensland Women's Health Prevention of Violence Against Women Program. These Protocols were written specifically to provide guidance for police when working with women who have been raped and/or sexually assaulted. The Police Service's Operational Procedures Manual includes a section outlining procedures dealing with sexual offences. The Protocols are reproduced in that Manual for the information of officers.

It is Police Service policy that officers refer to these Protocols for guidance in responding to victims of rape and sexual assault.

This information has been available to police since February 1996.

In addition, a brochure outlining the substance of the protocols is currently being developed for the information of all police.

377. Office of the Public Service, Wright Consultancy

Ms BLIGH asked the Premier—

With reference to the Wright consultancy undertaken by the Office of the Public Service—

- (1) What is the total cost of this consultancy?
- (2) What is the breakdown of the total costs?
- (3) By what process was the consultancy firm selected?
- (4) What, if any, tender process was utilised in the selection of the consultancy firm?

Mr Borbidge: The cost of the Consultancy is \$30000.

\$10000 for Report 1 on consultations with all government departments and public sector agencies undertaken during March 1996; \$10000 for Report 2 on a further round of consultations with all departments for feedback on Report 1 and on aspects of the proposed Public Service Bill and with analysis of implications for the new Office of the Public Service regarding its responsibilities, functions, organisation and resources and \$10 000 maximum for additional work towards resolving potential overlap of roles between the Office of the

Public Service and central agencies such as Treasury and the Department of Training and Industrial Relations.

The Consultancy was selected in accordance with the Queensland Government State Purchasing Policy Part C Section 7 Clause 3.3.1.

A single tenderer with appropriate skills and expertise was approached in accordance with the previous Government's State Purchasing Policy Part C Section 7 Clause 3.3.1 in that a genuine urgency existed. Urgent attention was required to transition from the Public Sector Management Commission to the Office of the Public Service through taking into account the views of Departments. It was a matter of urgency for the new Government to move swiftly in communicating with those affected by the Government's policy of abolishing the PSMC. The Wright Consultancy was considered to have the required skill and resources to complete the assignment in the required urgent timeframe and was used as sole tenderer. The Consultancy commenced on 28 February 1996, six days after establishment of the Office of the Public Service. Report 1 was finalised by 28 March 1996.

378. Mosquito Infestation, Undurba State School

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the year round mosquito infestation at Undurba State School—

Has funding been approved for insect screening of the school; if so, when will the work be undertaken?

Mr Quinn: The school listed insect screening as a priority request for inclusion in the 1995-96 regional Minor Works Program, with an estimated cost in excess of \$10,000. The request of the school was considered in line with criteria established by the Sunshine Coast Region Capital Works Reference Group. This Reference Group is made up of some eleven principals that are representative of primary, secondary and special schools.

Unfortunately, the provision of insect screening exceeds and goes beyond current Department of Education standards, except in areas such as tuckshops where food is prepared. As a result, the minor works application of the school was not successful.

If the school community chooses to install screens and attend to their ongoing maintenance outside departmental resources this would be acceptable to the Department.

379. HOME Scheme

Mr MACKENROTH asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to the document he tabled in the Parliament on 15 May outlining losses in HOME purchase assistance—

In relation to the interest subsidy scheme will he outline (a) all losses under the interest subsidy scheme and (b) the total amount of interest subsidy paid under this scheme?

Mr Connor: To answer (a) and (b), I provide a tabulated breakdown of all losses, both planned and unplanned, and estimates of future losses in the Department's three major home ownership assistance schemes. I draw particular attention to the average

loss and subsidy under the interest subsidy scheme of \$5042 which has covered the cost of limiting interest charges to 25% of income and preventing any escalation of the sum owed.

SUBSIDY AND COST ESTIMATES

	INTEREST SUBSIDY	HOME/RPP
	\$	\$
Estimated losses so far	941,547	6,824,299
Losses in pipeline	46,408	4,014,422
Total Losses so far	987,955	10,838,721
Provision (PWU as at 31/3/96)	1,504,723	15,810,401
Planned est past subsidy	136,331,000	50,000,000
Planned est future subsidy	13,000,000	85,000,000
Unplanned est subsidy	-	35,000,000
Total Losses and Subsidies	151,823,678	196,649,122
Total Number of Loans	30,109	19,536
Average Loss & Subsidy per loan	5,042	10,066

380. Community Facility Funding, Nudgee

Mr ROBERTS asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to the Community Recreation Facilities Program established by the previous Labor Government and given (a) the demonstrated need for a community facility to be built in the Zillmere district in my electorate and (b) the recognition of this need within the Minister's department—

Will he ensure that funding for construction of a community facility in this district (such as a general purpose hall) will be given a high priority in 1996-97?

Mr Veivers: No proposals were received under the Community Recreation Centres Program from the Zillmere area. Therefore the Advisory Council, established by the previous Government and chaired by Mr Clem Jones, made no recommendations on funding for the Zillmere area.

A Research Paper identifying the areas of need for Community Recreation Centres in Queensland was done for the Program and Zillmere did identify in the top ten areas of need.

The number of commitments made by the previous Government have allowed me little capacity to consider any new proposals under this Program.

I am currently reviewing the Sport and Recreation Facility Funding Programs in my Department to determine how it may be best targeted to provide the greatest benefits to Queenslanders.

381. Townsville-Magnetic Island Ferry, Pensioner Subsidy; Railway Maintenance Facility

Mr SMITH asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to Part 2 of his answer to my Question number 262—

- (1) In order to accurately ascertain the future of railway maintenance workers' jobs in Townsville, will he provide details of the

number of employees and their respective classifications to be employed at the two Stuart facilities when they are fully staffed?

- (2) When does he anticipate the two depots will reach their full operational capacity?
- (3) When the Stuart depots are fully staffed, what number of employees together with their classification will remain at (a) the north yard and (b) the south yard?
- (4) Does Queensland Rail intend to retain a full maintenance facility at the north yard; if so, for how long?
- (5) If there is a long term commitment for maintenance facilities at the north yard, will facilities and machinery be modernised and upgraded to a comparable standard as Rockhampton; if so, when?
- (6) Will he provide an unqualified assurance that maintenance of the new Goninans diesel locomotives will be undertaken by Queensland Rail maintenance personnel and no contract for "power by the hour" will be entered into with the manufacturer and any other contractor?

Mr Johnson: Unlike the previous Labor government which seemed so intent on reducing staff and QR services to North and Western Queensland, this government sees a future for QR workers.

The Stuart Locomotive Depot is anticipated to have 45 employees and these shall be all Engineering Trades person (maintenance). The Stuart Wagon Depot is anticipated to have 38 employees, all of whom will be Engineering Trades person (Mechanical) (Mechanical Fitters).

It is anticipated that the Stuart Locomotive Depot will reach full operational capacity by the end of 1997 when the training of remaining depot employees is complete. Take up of additional trainees will be in a step function until then. It is anticipated that the Stuart Wagon Depot will reach full operational capacity by August 1996.

The future employee numbers and their classification within both the Townsville Workshops and the Stuart depots are dependent on many factors, in particular the current and future workloads and the introduction of job redesign.

The current levels of employment in both the new one Spot Wagon Depot and the Locomotive Depot at Stuart are 80-100 with potential to grow in both their new depots. Previous classifications have been abolished and new classifications have been introduced under job redesign, providing for a very efficient working environment.

The Workshops in both the North and South Yard are currently under review and future investment will establish an appropriate heavy overhaul facility coupled with a continuation of the overhaul requirement for the Queensland Rail Kuranda fleet. The number of employees will be determined consistent with the workload demands and introduction of job redesign and I would expect similar levels of employees as we have today.

Queensland Rail has invested a large sum of money and effort to construct a depot at Stuart and to select and train depot employees. Queensland Rail intend to maintain the new 2800 class locomotives and this has been a publicly stated position since prior to the ordering of the locomotives.

382. Funding, River Heads Barge, Hervey Bay City Council

Mr NUNN asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the desire of the Hervey Bay City Council to revamp the River Heads barge loading facility and associated carpark within the Great Sandy Region—

- (1) Is he aware of the Premier's commitment to contribute \$500,000 to this work?
- (2) When will this funding be forthcoming and will all or part of it come from the Department of Environment Budget?
- (3) If the funding is coming from other than the Department of Environment Budget is he intending to contribute any additional funding from the Department of Environment Budget to this work?
- (4) Will departmental officers be involved in the design of the new facility?
- (5) Will the remnant rainforest area adjacent to the present car park be left untouched by this new work?

Mr Littleproud:

- (1) Provision of barge loading facilities does not fall within the Ministerial responsibilities of the Minister for Environment.
- (2) The Honourable the Member should direct his question to the appropriate Minister.
- (3) Refer to (1) and (2).
- (4) Refer to (1) and (2).
- (5) Refer to (1) and (2).

383. Department of Families, Youth and Community Care, Maryborough

Mr DOLLIN asked the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care—

- (1) Is he aware of speculation that a position of aboriginal counsellor, in the office of Families, Youth and Community Care in Maryborough which provides a much needed service to the indigenous citizens in our region, will be terminated later this month?
- (2) Will he give an assurance that this speculation is without foundation and that this position will be maintained in Maryborough?

Mr Lingard: (1) & (2) A temporary position of Family and Community Worker has existed at the Maryborough Area Office of my Department since 2 February 1996. The purpose of this position, as with other similar positions throughout the State, is to provide direct services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, particularly in the child protection area.

The temporary position to which the question refers is currently being considered in terms of departmental priorities and available funds. The matter will be considered in the light of available funds for 1996/97.

384. Voluntary Early Retirements, Queensland Rail

Mr PEARCE asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the Labor Government which implemented the Voluntary Early Retirement packages for Queensland Rail employees whose positions were made redundant due to the restructuring process—

Is the Coalition Government committed to the retention of VERS; if so, how many positions within Queensland Rail are likely to be made redundant in the first and second terms of the Government?

Mr Johnson: It should be stressed that this government will be working hard with QR to grow its business, thereby reducing the likelihood of employees seeking VERS in the first place. Furthermore, retraining of employees will receive a much higher focus than previously, because the experience and dedication of QR staff is valued by this government.

The current Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS) had previous cabinet approval to operate until 1998. Such schemes based on these types of principles would always have a role to play in assisting an organisation to facilitate the optimum employment profile to deliver business imperatives. As a now corporatised organisation, QR faces a range of commercial objectives which will require a continuous review of employment arrangements to ensure these objectives are being realised. A range of appropriate human resource practices along with early retirement programs are standard practice across organisations both private and public, and will continue to be used in QR to assist to develop the

appropriate employment profile to meet the business imperatives.

The types of employment opportunities and career paths available to current and future employees of QR will continue to change along with these changing business imperatives. As a result, from time to time certain positions may be made redundant to accommodate the development of these new roles and business focus. Employees in such positions will continue to be managed fairly and with access to all necessary support mechanisms during these periods.

385. Property Services (Housing)

Mr MULHERIN asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

With reference to commercialisation of Property Services (Housing)—

- (1) Will he guarantee employees who are employed at regional offices in the Customer Service Division who report to Property Development Division, the Re-development Unit and Business Development Unit that their employment within the Department of Housing will not be (a) made redundant, (b) terminated or (c) transferred to the Department of Public Works Q-Build Division?
- (2) If employees are transferred to Q-Build, will he guarantee that employees will not be (a) made redundant or (b) terminated?

Mr Connor: The employees within the Customer Services Division of Housing Services, who work in area offices, are not part of the current exercise of integrating the Property Services area of Housing with Q-Build and Project Services.

386. Traffic Offenders; Police Staffing, Redcliffe Electorate

Mr HOLLIS asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to a continuing problem in the Redcliffe Electorate of drag racing and anti-social behaviour on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights and whilst police have been addressing this issue with some success over the past three years they complain they do not have sufficient staff to fully address the problem—

- (1) Will he call for a report from the Redcliffe police regarding this issue; if so, will he make this report public?
- (2) When will he increase police numbers in Redcliffe?

Mr Cooper:

(1) The Assistant Commissioner, North Coast Police Region has indicated the problem of youths congregating near the Central Business District on Friday and Saturday nights, as well as Sunday afternoons causing the usual problems of noise mainly associated with the manner of driving their vehicles has been targeted using police resources from the Redcliffe District, Sunshine Coast Traffic Branch, Traffic personnel from Sandgate and Petrie stations, Public Safety Response Team, Department

of Transport Inspectors and Liquor Licensing Inspectors.

In addition Redcliffe and Caboolture Traffic Branch personnel have targeted the 'hot' spots and in turn arrange regular support and operations with Department of Transport Inspectors. These operations have led to a reduction in the incidence of unlawful activity.

On the evening of Friday 26 April 1995, the Honourable Member accompanied Inspector Griggs, Redcliffe Police District, on a tour of the trouble spots for a first hand assessment of the situation and during this tour, observed police action being taken to address this problem.

The Assistant Commissioner, North Coast Police Region, is satisfied that at present this situation is under control, however, he will continue to monitor it and take all further necessary action as required.

(2) The Assistant Commissioner, North Coast Police Region has advised that the current allocation of staff to the Redcliffe Police Division is in accordance with the Queensland Police Service's Staffing Model, which is determinate in the equitable distribution of police resources throughout Queensland.

387. Logging Approvals

Mr PALASZCZUK asked the Minister for Natural Resources—

With reference to the greater certainty planning process which protects areas of high conservation value through the interim management arrangements and given that the aim of these arrangements is to exclude logging from major large areas of old growth forest and areas of high conservation value until the comprehensive regional assessment is completed—

- (1) Has he given approval for logging to recommence in any of the areas formerly protected under the interim arrangements?
- (2) If approval has been given, in which areas will logging be permitted?
- (3) What size are the logging allocations?
- (4) To whom have the allocations been provided?
- (5) What criteria was used in deciding which areas would be subject to logging?
- (6) What criteria was used in deciding the size of the logging allocations granted in each area?
- (7) With whom did he consult before making this decision?
- (8) What assurance will he give that areas of high conservation value will be protected during the comprehensive regional assessment process?
- (9) When does he expect the comprehensive regional assessment process to be completed?

Mr Hobbs:

(1) I am pleased to say that the first meeting of the reestablished Forest Working Group will take place in the next few weeks. Agenda items for the meeting include matters raised by the Member, namely comprehensive regional assessment issues such as reserve criteria and the joint Commonwealth and

State planning and assessment process, and interim management arrangements for the protection of areas of high conservation value.

(2) Refer to one above.

(3) Refer to one above.

(4) Refer to one above.

(5) Refer to one above.

(6) Refer to one above.

(7) Refer to one above.

(8) Refer to one above.

(9) The initial 'working' target date for the completion of comprehensive regional assessment is the end of 1998.

388. Removal of Bus Concessions, Wujal Wujal-Cooktown

Mr BREDHAUER asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to concerns among pensioners in the area from Wujal Wujal to Cooktown about the removal of concessions on the regular bus service to Cooktown and as this service provides the only access for many people to Cooktown for medical, commercial and recreational purposes—

Will a concession be restored on this service; if not, why not?

Mr Johnson: Under the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 the State Government requires bus operators under service contracts to offer fare concessions to eligible pensioners and seniors' card holders at a rate of 50 percent of the operators' adult fare. These concessions are reimbursed by the Government.

The service contracts to which these conditions apply are generally awarded to bus operators in urban areas of Queensland and in rural areas for school services.

Bus services with an average journey length of over 40 kilometres are regarded as deregulated long distance passenger services, which under the Act will not at this stage receive service contracts. Consequently there is no legislative requirement for Coral Coaches to offer concessions to eligible pensioners, seniors' card holders and disabled persons on long distance services.

Notwithstanding this position, Coral Coaches may still offer travel discounts to passengers at their own commercial discretion. Such a decision, however, will have to be made in the knowledge that no government funding will be provided to the operator for the provision of travel discounts. Similar discounted travel arrangements are presently offered to pensioners by McCafferty's and Greyhound-Pioneer Australia.

I acknowledge that the extension of current pensioner concessions and travel options would be welcomed by pensioners and other groups. However, current legislative and budgetary restrictions do not allow me to extend existing subsidies or concessions at this time. As you would appreciate, there are a significant number of long

distance services in Queensland, and it would not be equitable to provide special financial assistance to one service which would be unavailable to long distance bus operators generally.

389. Family Services Office, Caboolture

Mr J. H. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care—

Will the Coalition Government carry out the former Government's plan to locate a Family Service's office in Caboolture; if so, when will the office open?

Mr Lingard: The establishment of a departmental office at Caboolture has been foreshadowed in the Department's Office Accommodation Three Year Plan. It includes a new office at Caboolture in the 1996/97 financial year.

Implementation of the plan is subject to the availability of funds, and this will be determined during the 1996/97 budget process in the light of competing departmental priorities.

390. Queensland Economy

Mr HAMILL asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

If Farm GSP and dwelling construction are excluded from the State Accounts, what was the rate of growth for the remainder of the Queensland Economy for each year since 1989-90s?

Mrs Sheldon: Real Farm GSP is not calculated and dwelling construction is published in *Queensland State Accounts*.

391. Implementation of Recommendations, South East Queensland Regional Framework for Growth Management, 1995

Mr WELLS asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

- (1) Is he aware that one of the recommendations in the Report "South East Queensland Regional Framework for Growth Management, 1995" was "Investigate the following new urban transport infrastructure: Construction of the Petrie to Kippa Ring rail extension." (p61, s13.3)?
- (2) Is he aware that the former Labor Government had referred this recommendation to the South East Queensland Transit Authority for consideration and advice?
- (3) Given that the National/Liberal Government has now abolished SEQTA, will he advise whether (a) the South East Queensland Regional Framework for Growth Management recommendation is now under consideration by some other agency of Government or alternatively (b) is not now under consideration?

Mr Johnson:

1. Last week I sent out to local government a "discussion draft" version of the Integrated Regional Transport Plan for South East Queensland, which is a 25 year plan for better transport in one of Australia's fastest growing regions.

The IRTP was a key recommendation of the "South East Queensland Regional Framework for Growth Management 1995 (RFGM)". One of the matters recommended to be investigated was the construction of the Petrie-Kippa ring rail extension.

All of the RFGM recommendations, including this one for a new railway, are addressed in the IRTP.

2. The draft IRTP contains actions to improve public transport, as well as restraining the growth of motor traffic, and providing advice to local government on how urban development can build on and support public transport investments. It will be implemented by Queensland Transport which has taken over the functions of South East Queensland Transit Authority.

3. As indicated in my response to Questions 1 and 2, the Petrie to Kippa-Ring Rail Extension has been included as a project to be investigated in the draft Integrated Regional Transport Plan and this investigation will be considered by Queensland Transport for inclusion in the final plan after extensive community consultation and consideration by Government.

392. Courthouse, Cleveland

Mr BRISKEY asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice—

With reference to his answer to my question regarding the urgent need for a replacement Courthouse in Cleveland where he stated that no site has yet been selected—

- (1) Will he give a commitment that the site chosen will be acceptable to the Redland Shire Council and its Town Plan; if so, why hasn't the Redland Shire Council's preferred site been chosen and work begun as there is \$750,000 in the 1996-97 Budget to begin the new Courthouse; if not, why not?
- (2) Will he give a commitment that the \$750,000 allocated in the 1995-96 Budget will be spent in 1995-96?
- (3) Will he give a further commitment that the funding for the construction of the Courthouse will be provided for in the 1996-97 Budget?
- (4) As the 1995-96 Capital Works Budget states that the total estimated cost of the new Courthouse is \$4m, why was I advised in his answer to my Question-on-Notice that the estimated planning budget is \$3.25m?
- (5) Does this planning budget include the \$750,000 already allocated for the purchase of a site or has the project been allocated \$750,000 less?

Mr Beanland:

(1) As advised in my answer of 30 April 1996 I have met with the Mayor of the Redland Shire Council to discuss the site for a new courthouse. I cannot give a commitment that the single site which the Council has nominated will be suitable for courthouse purposes. Any site chosen must meet the needs of the courts service, must not involve the Department of Justice in unreasonable expenditure, and will only be acquired after due consultation with the Redland Shire Council.

(2) It is now unlikely that the funds for the purchase of the land will be expended before the end of the financial year.

(3) The allocation of funds for the construction of the courthouse will be considered in context of the total outlays for the 1996-97 budget.

(4) The budget for the purchase of land is \$750,000. The budget for the construction of the courthouse facility is \$3.25m. Therefore the total budget is \$4.0m.

(5) The project budget remains unchanged at \$4.0m.

393. Lotus Glen Correctional Centre

Mr BARTON asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to his announcement of increased prisons expenditure on Monday 25 March 1996 and the decision to expand Lotus Glen Prison to provide for an extra 200 prisoners which could be dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners and specially managed as such—

- (1) What form will the necessary consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, and other relevant interest groups take?
- (2) Is this dedicated prison intended to house all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners in Queensland?
- (3) What provisions will be made for family, friends and Aboriginal support groups, for prisoners from other areas of Queensland to visit prisoners, and provide the necessary support?
- (4) What evidence exists to support his assertion that the concept of an Aboriginal prison has been described as having merit, by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties?

Mr Cooper:

(1) The Board of the Queensland Corrective Services Commission includes an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, Ms Cynthia Rowan. Both Ms Rowan's personal views and feedback which she has received from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community have been sought to date. The Queensland Corrective Services Commission will also consult with the Overview Committee for implementation of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. I have already publicly floated this proposal and have received feedback from both representatives of the Aboriginal Community and the Council for Civil Liberties. Further public consultation will occur as proposals are developed.

(2) No. Such a prison would house offenders from the north Queensland catchment area and would be a non-compulsory option for inmates who self-identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

(3) These details will be worked out after the size, nature and location of a proposed dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander correctional facility have been finalised. I draw your attention to the existence of a family support program which is

operated by the Queensland Corrective Services Commission utilising funds from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. This program facilitates family contact for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders throughout the State and would continue to apply in association with a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander facility.

(4) Support has been received from Mr Sam Watson, formerly of the Aboriginal Legal Service, who welcomed the proposal stating that such a prison would provide an environment in which Aboriginal people would have some sense of empowerment and would be able to relate in a real way to the management and administration. (The *Sunday Mail*, 3/3/96) Mr Ian Dearden, Queensland Council of Civil Liberties, supports the concept, providing that such a prison was properly resourced. (The *Sunday Mail*, 3/3/96).

394. Queensland Rail Workshops, Banyo

Mr ROBERTS asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the site currently occupied by Queensland Rail's Banyo workshops—

- (1) What are the medium and long-term plans for future use of this site?
- (2) What decisions have been made about future uses of this site?
- (3) What community consultation will take place about the future uses for this site?
- (4) If the site is to be re-developed for alternative uses, will he ensure that an adequate parcel of this land is reserved for an appropriate community recreational facility?

Mr Johnson:

1. The site is an operational facility in use by several different Divisions of Queensland Rail, and it is intended that these uses will continue for the foreseeable future.

2. No decisions have been taken about future uses, other than decisions about where Queensland Rail activities might be located within the site.

It is proposed to review the site's future use in 1998, in terms of Queensland Rail's operational needs, as part of the Corporation's regular asset management process.

3. If and when the site is identified as surplus to requirements, which is not the case now, all appropriate community and regulatory authority consultation will take place.

4. Because the site remains in operational use there has been no investigation into likely future alternative use potential. If such an investigation were commissioned all potential uses would be considered, together with Council requirements and community expectations.

395. Tilt-train Services

Mr CAMPBELL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the proposed introduction of tilt-train services between Brisbane and Rockhampton—

- (1) When will the tilt-train services commence?
- (2) What will be the running time between (a) Brisbane and Bundaberg and (b) Bundaberg and Rockhampton?
- (3) What will be the number of seats, first and economy class, on each tilt-train service?
- (4) What services will be available to first class passengers?
- (5) Will there be a limit on the number of seats available to pensioners on the tilt-train?
- (6) Will there be a limit on the number of seats available to people travelling to Bundaberg?
- (7) Will the platform at the Bundaberg Station be raised in time for the commencement of the tilt-train services?
- (8) Will the Bundaberg Station redevelopment be completed before the commencement of the tilt-train services?
- (9) What will be the expected arrival and departure times for the tilt-train in Bundaberg travelling both north and south?
- (10) What is the expected staffing arrangements for the tilt-train?
- (11) What is the expected costs for tickets to and from Bundaberg to Brisbane and Rockhampton?

Mr Johnson:

1. Mid to late 1997 depending upon date of hand over of train from Walker's Ltd, Maryborough.

Brisbane to Bundaberg	4 hours
Bundaberg to Rockhampton	3 hours
Total	7 hours

3. Seating	First Class	30*
	Economy Class	280
	Total	310

*Seating varies depending on final decision on Disabled Access (assumes 3 first class seats removable for wheelchairs).

4. First Class

Luxurious Dual and Single Seating
Service Call Button
Videos
Radio and CD music
Headphones
Hearing Aid Loops and Visual Display for On Board Train Information

Economy Class

2 x 2 seating
Catering from mobile trolley
Video and Radio
Taped Music
Hearing Aid Loops
Fax
Phone
Catering to seat
Fax
Phone

5. No—existing booking arrangements for pensioners will remain.
6. No—normal booking arrangements will apply.
7. Scope of works currently being prepared to upgrade Bundaberg station. Construction will depend on funding availability.
8. Yes, provided funding is available.
9. Timetable still being developed.
10. At this stage, staffing levels are expected to be the same as the Spirit of Capricorn service.
11. Other than any normal price increase through changes to CPI, economy ticket prices are expected to remain unchanged. The first class seats are a new service and are yet to be priced.

396. Queensland Ambulance Service, Mount Gravatt

Ms SPENCE asked the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport—

With reference to the Mt Gravatt QAS request for traffic signals on the corner of Wishart and Logan Roads and his statement in the local paper "If the Brisbane City Council confirmed it would pay a share of the cost the Queensland Ambulance Service would do likewise." and to the Brisbane City Council which has publicly indicated that they would pay half the cost and make installation of the lights a priority—

When will he announce his commitment to the funding?

Mr Veivers: I have been advised that the Queensland Ambulance Service, Greater Brisbane Region, has been working with the Brisbane City Council on this matter.

Agreement has been reached as to the installation of these traffic signals with the QAS undertaking to assist in funding the project. Provision has been made within the Region's Capital Works budget for 1996/97 to fund these works with construction expected to commence early in the new financial year.

397. Sunlover Holidays, Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation

Mrs BIRD asked the Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry—

With reference to the fact that more than 55 per cent of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation's Sunlover Holidays program are not represented by any other major wholesaler—

Will he give an assurance to those 386 tourism operators that the international operations of Sunlover will not be gutted under this Government?

Mr Davidson: Firstly, in response to the Honourable Member's question, I will reiterate what I have already stated publicly a number of times recently and that is that the privatisation of Sunlover Holidays is not on this Government's agenda. Yes, the operations of Sunlover are currently being

reviewed as are many of the other areas of the management and operations of the QTTC. This accords with normal practice following the appointment of a new Board. However the current review should not be interpreted in any way as being an indication that this Government is considering the privatisation of Sunlover.

The Government has confirmed this State's commitment to the National Competition Policy competitive neutrality reforms which has seen the process of corporatisation/commercialisation on the agenda for QTTC since late last year. This means that any review of Sunlover must not only look at its internal management and operations, but also examine the broader issue of how its operations impact on private sector tourism wholesalers. However, the privatisation of Sunlover's operations will not be an option that will be canvassed by this Government.

The current review of Sunlover will ensure that it is positioned to meet the ongoing needs of its clients and the tourism industry generally in the most effective and efficient manner possible. In doing so, this Government will ensure that Sunlover continues to provide a marketing, promotion and distribution mechanism for the many small tourism operators throughout the State whose products may otherwise be ignored by the private sector.

398. Upgrading, QE II Hospital

Mr ROBERTSON asked the Minister for Health—

With reference to the answer to a Question on Notice from the Member for Archerfield regarding the upgrading of the QE II Hospital which refers only to the staged implementation of initiatives already announced by the Labor Government in 1995—

- (1) What is the status of a major upgrading for the QE II Hospital ordered by the former Labor Government to improve health services to Brisbane's southside and announced by the former Minister for Health, Hon Peter Beattie on 16 October 1995?
- (2) To better clarify the matter, will he provide a more detailed response regarding the Government's intended service profile for this hospital to allay community fears that the work started by Labor will be reviewed and probably dropped off the agenda?
- (3) In doing so will he provide specific details regarding (a) function plan guiding the Government's capital works projects for the hospital, (b) new management arrangements in place to provide the hospital with increased autonomy and enhanced identity in the transition to a community hospital facility, (c) full costings associated with the upgrade and a list of all services to be provided, (d) details of the hospital's elective surgery capacity at the hospital as a result of the upgrade and (e) an action plan documenting the progress of the staged implementation process and current starting and completion dates for the upgrade of the QE II?

Mr Horan:

(1) The Government is committed to upgrading services at the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee (QE II) Hospital and will proceed with the implementation of services first announced by the Coalition on 4 July 1995. A number of planning and budget issues need to be finalised before the upgrade of services can be completed. Not the least of these is the mess which resulted from Labor's \$1.2 billion overcommitment of the Hospital Rebuilding Program. The Government was also confronted with an attempt by former Minister Beattie to withdraw \$35 million from the Hospital Rebuilding Program, to bail-out hospital overruns. Because this action had the potential to seriously delay a number of projects, including QE II, one of my first acts as Minister was to cancel the transfer. This is one of the prudent and deliberate steps which this Government has taken to resolve the mess.

(2) The policy of this Government differs from that of the Beattie administration in that the QE II Hospital will be re-established as a full community hospital. For example, Labor had not proposed to establish intensive care or accident and emergency services at QE II—yet these are absolute commitments of the Borbidge Government. Thus, the Coalition, through QE II hospital, will provide accident and emergency, intensive care/high dependency, surgical, medical and rehabilitation services. In particular, the provision of a 30 medical ward and accident and emergency services at the Hospital are high priorities.

(3)(a) A Functional Plan and Economic Evaluation for Upgrading QE II Hospital has been completed and is being considered by Queensland Health. Presently, work is being undertaken to resolve some outstanding planning issues in south Brisbane prior to final consideration of the QE II Functional Plan.

(b) New management arrangements are in place for the QE II Hospital with the appointment of an Acting Manager for The QE II Hospital and District Health Service. In contrast to the centralised Beattie model, which lacked genuine community input, the establishment of the District will ensure that the QE II Hospital is autonomous. Moreover, in Labor's published proposal, the QE II Hospital had no autonomy from the Princess Alexandra Hospital—under the Coalition's model, QE II is fully autonomous. In this way the Borbidge Government will strengthen the Hospital's identity within the local community.

(c) Services to be provided at the QE II Hospital include accident and emergency, medical, surgical and rehabilitation services. In addition upgrading of some outpatient and clinical support services will be required to support the expanded role of the Hospital. Preliminary costings for the upgrade of services at the QE II Hospital suggest that the total recurrent cost will be in the order of approximately \$11.23 million. Costings are being finalised as part of the 1996/97 budget process.

(d) The upgrade of services at the QE II Hospital will enable the facility to enhance its surgical

capacity. It is anticipated when fully operational that the QE II Hospital will increase surgical throughput from 4,071 surgical procedures in 1994/95 to approximately 6,700 procedures by the end of 1997/98. This includes both elective and non planned surgery.

(e) The staged implementation of specific services at the QE II Hospital is being considered by Queensland Health and this Government. The final implementation plan for the upgrade of services is subject to the 1996/97 budget process.

399. Proposed Port Road, South East Freeway-Hemmant-Port of Brisbane

Mr PURCELL asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to the proposed Port Road from the South East Freeway through the heart of Hemmant to the Port of Brisbane—

- (1) Will he release the 5 proposed routes to the Port of Brisbane?
- (2) Will he release the cost of the 5 proposed routes?
- (3) Was cost the only consideration for the current proposed route; if so, will residents be compensated with the savings, for savage disruption to their lives?
- (4) Has his department any documentation that the price of houses that are currently being acquired for the road corridor are over the current value?
- (5) How many houses have been acquired?
- (6) How much land has been acquired and where is that land?

Mr Johnson:

(1) Four route options for the proposed Port Road, which commences at the Gateway Motorway and not the South East Freeway, were studied and reported to the then Government in a final report in March 1992. I understand that a copy of this final report was supplied to Mr Pat Purcell for his information last year.

An Impact Assessment Study on the recommended option was commissioned, and a draft report of this study was released for public comment.

The Report on the Impact Assessment Study of the preferred Port of Brisbane Road Corridor is now being finalised, taking into account comments received, and will document the route options examined.

(2) The cost estimates of the feasible route options were included in the March 1992 final Report and the estimated cost of the preferred route will also be documented in the final Impact Assessment Study Report.

(3) The present Impact Assessment Study which was commissioned in August 1994 will finalise its findings in the near future. Following close examination of the final Study Report including the community consultation section of the Report, liaison with

Brisbane City Council, Department of the Environment and Department of Natural Resources will occur before the Government makes a decision on the Port Road later this year. Cost was not the only consideration in the proposed route. The Report details other considerations and the impact of the proposed road.

(4) The Government has continued an undertaking by the former Government to purchase in fee simple, resident's properties within the proposed road corridor on a personal hardship basis. The settlement prices accepted by owners were determined by independent valuers.

(5) Eight houses have been acquired in Hemmant at an average price of \$110,000 with the highest being paid \$136,000. Also a home business with a boat repair facility on Bulimba Creek was purchased for \$340,000.

(6) Apart from the eight houses that have been settled and three other houses being valued in Hemmant, the Government has continued in good faith to honour negotiations commenced during the period of the previous Government with K R Darling Downs Bacon Factory, Inghams Chickens, Alexanders Landscape Supplies and Winrose Skins. One Land Court hearing involving Nadco Pty Ltd is proceeding. A large parcel of land on the corner of Lindum Road and Lytton Road was acquired by agreement by the previous Government.

400. Government Employee Housing

Mr ARDILL asked the Minister for Public Works and Housing—

Is he aware of proposals within his department for that department to assume the ownership and management of housing, now owned by other departments and GOEs around the State, and is he aware of concerns held by departmental employees who believe that access to housing now held as a right, or as a condition of employment, will not be guaranteed under these proposals?

Mr Connor: Last December, the Labor Government decided that ownership of Government Employee Housing would be transferred to the then Administrative Services Department. This decision is currently being reviewed prior to being considered by Cabinet and I assure the House that I will make a full statement on this subject as soon as I am able.

401. Police Staffing, Gladstone

Mrs CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

With reference to the police district of Gladstone—

- (1) What specific action is planned by the Department of Police to address the lack of operational police in the district?
- (2) What is the time frame proposed for appointment of staff to a juvenile aide bureau?

Mr Cooper:

1. The Assistant Commissioner, Central Region advises that the authorised sworn strength of the

Gladstone District is 87 officers. On the basis of the relative workloads of each District in the Region (Gladstone, Longreach, Mackay and Rockhampton) the Assistant Commissioner does not propose to increase the strength of the Gladstone District at the expense of the others.

However, it is highly likely that the Gladstone District will, along with most others in Queensland, benefit by the decisions of this Government to increase the sworn strength of the Queensland Police Service by 2780 officers over the next 10 years and to return several hundred serving officers to operational duty by the civilianisation of their positions.

As soon as the Queensland Police Service Budget for 1996/97 is determined, the Government will be in a position to announce the timetable for the increase in police strength in Gladstone and all the other Districts.

In the interim, however, the more pressing need of the Gladstone District is the filling of existing vacancies within its current strength. The Assistant Commissioner, Central Region, is identifying Constables in the Rockhampton area, where the number of officers is well in excess of its authorised strength, who can be transferred to other Districts in the Region, including Gladstone, as soon as possible. If necessary, police from Rockhampton will be directed to relocate to other centres if sufficient volunteers are not available.

This process of filling current vacancies will be assisted by the allocation to Gladstone of two former interstate police officers, with a combined total of over 30 years police service, when they complete their Academy training later this month. A rejoinder from Queensland was resworn on 3 June 1996 and is proceeding on transfer to Gladstone.

2. The Assistant Commissioner, Central Region advises that he has previously received applications from the District Officer, Gladstone for the establishment of a two person Juvenile Aid Bureau at Gladstone.

Having regard to overall District priorities and needs, it is not deemed appropriate by the Queensland Police Service to establish the Juvenile Aid Bureau at this stage at the expense of the sworn strength of the Gladstone District C.I. Branch. However, the Assistant Commissioner advises he is supportive of a Juvenile Aid Bureau being established at Gladstone and when the authorised strength of the Region is increased in the future he will give favourable consideration to authorising its establishment within overall regional policing priorities.

402. Power Supply, National Grid

Mr McGRADY asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

With reference to his answer to this Parliament during the week ending 18 May where he confirmed that a transmission line to New South Wales is still on the agenda—

- (1) Does the agreement which he has signed mean buying and selling electricity across the border?

- (2) Will this Eastlink mark II go underground, under the sea, or overhead and how much would each option cost?
- (3) Will it run through Warwick, Stanthorpe, Texas, Goondiwindi, Beaudesert or the Gold Coast?
- (4) When does he envisage that this connection to the National Grid will be operational?

Mr Gilmore:

(1) On 9 May 1996, Queensland became a founding member of the national electricity market institutions, the National Electricity Market Management Company and the National Electricity Code Administrator. By doing so Queensland has agreed that electricity generated will be sold into a common electricity pool which in turn implies that Queensland will be interconnected with the Southern States. I have said consistently that there will be interconnection but at a time of our choosing and it is my intention to see that Queensland has adequate power for our own needs from our own resources, in a competitive fashion. There have been preliminary discussions between the Queensland and New South Wales Government's regarding the issue of Queensland connecting to the National Grid. These discussions have only been preliminary in nature and not involved the development of a Power Purchase Agreement. A joint feasibility study has been proposed and will report to both State Governments mid to late 1996. The precise answers to questions on costs, route and timing of the interconnection with New South Wales will not be known until the completion of this study, which will include consultation with relevant groups.

(2) Interconnection between Queensland and the New South Wales border is expected to be an overland transmission line, but not along the Eastlink route as proposed by the previous Labor Government.

(3) A full study will be required to identify alternative routes which will provide the maximum economic benefit to Queensland with the least environmental impacts. As a route has not been identified it would be difficult to determine which areas could be affected at this time.

(4) The timing for the interconnection is subject to investigation but will be latter than the Eastlink timing enabling Queensland to reap the full benefits from it. This will allow Queensland to play its role in meeting the combined power needs of Eastern Australia by developing our vast, low cost energy resources.

403. Set-down Area, Morayfield West Primary School

Mr HAYWARD asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to funding for the set down area at the new Morayfield West Primary School—

- (1) Will the Department of Transport be making a contribution towards the cost of these works?
- (2) Will it be in the order of 50 per cent of the total cost as was the case with the new primary school which opened in 1996 at Narangba?

Mr Johnson: Queensland Transport has made no arrangements for financial contributions towards the provision of pick-up and set-down areas at schools opening in 1997. This year's contribution was a one-off arrangement made as the result of a Labor Party election commitment and subsequent Cabinet decision.

However, Queensland Transport is currently investigating a long term solution to provide safety facilities at new schools, by seeking to integrate the design and funding of such facilities into the planning processes for new schools.

404. Coorparoo Police Station

Mr FOLEY asked the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing—

- (1) What are the Government's plans in relation to the Coorparoo Police Station?
- (2) Will the Coorparoo Police Station remain open in the long-term?
- (3) Will he give a clear assurance that the Coorparoo Police Station will not be downgraded?

Mr Cooper:

(1) Coorparoo Police Station has recently been upgraded from a Sergeant's station to a Senior Sergeant's station. With the upgrading to Senior Sergeant there will be some additional police allocated to that station. It is not known at this time how many additional staff will be allocated.

(2) The Queensland Police Service has no other plans other than for Coorparoo Police Station to remain open.

(3) I refer to the answer to question (1) in that Coorparoo Police Station is presently being upgraded which clearly shows there is no intention to downgrade that station.

405. Staffing, Queensland Rail, Rockhampton and Central Queensland

Mr SCHWARTEN asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

With reference to Queensland Rail facilities in Rockhampton and Central Queensland generally—

- (1) How many VER applications have been received from rail employees in the Rockhampton workshops?
- (2) How many of these will be approved?
- (3) How many employees at the Rockhampton diesel shed will be surplus to requirements after the restructuring and retraining is completed in that area?
- (4) What does Queensland Rail propose to offer these surplus employees?
- (5) Will he ensure that employees who sat the SHL test get to review those examination papers?
- (6) What is the budget for the redevelopment of the Rockhampton railway workshops?

- (7) What projects remain to be completed in this redevelopment?
- (8) When will the redevelopment be complete?
- (9) Will he honour the promise by his predecessor to keep the motor shop located at the workshops?
- (10) How many derailments have there been in the Central Queensland area since he took office?
- (11) What was the cost to Queensland Rail to these derailments?
- (12) What is he doing to prevent the recurrence?

Mr Johnson:

1. Since June 1995, 30 VERS applications have been approved. There are a further 22 outstanding applications, the respective nominated dates requested are beyond July 1996.

2. It is not considered that the 22 outstanding applications can be approved as with the current workload, there are no staff that can be considered surplus to requirements. This position will be reviewed as the new Wheel and Bogie Shop and other new shops come on line. It should be noted that an increase in workload, in respect of wagon repairs has been foreshadowed for coming years. The investment and operational procedures in the new facilities may generate efficiencies that will allow VERS to be favourably considered in some specific skill areas.

3. There are 25 Rockhampton Diesel Shed employees who are not involved in the retraining program and who will become redeployees when retraining of diesel shed staff is complete.

4. A Redeployee Support Program has already commenced in the Rockhampton Diesel Shed and all Diesel Shed employees not involved in the retraining program have been invited and encouraged to participate in the program. The program provides support, guidance and training to enable redeployment either within Queensland Rail or externally if the employee prefers.

5. The SHL numeracy and literacy tests are multiple choice and accordingly, the test papers only show the choice of A, B, C or D that the employee marked. On this basis, the examination papers are of no value to the employee who undertook the test and this has been explained to employees at the Diesel Shed. It is also a part of the licensing agreement that the actual test sheets not be released by the licensee who undertake the tests on behalf of Queensland Rail. All those who undertake the test are provided with personal feedback by the Consultant on their results, its interpretation and advice on their needs with respect to numeracy and literacy by the Consultant.

6. The budget for the redevelopment of Rockhampton Workshops is \$21.2 million.

7. Areas to be completed include the new locomotive repair shop (\$4.4 million), the new Paint Shop (\$1.1 million) and the upgrade of the existing Fabrication Shop, Site Services and the provision of new staff amenities, site security, pollution control systems, car parks and site landscaping.

8. The development will be complete by mid-1997.

9. The Motor Shop will be retained at the Workshops in its present location in the refurbished building adjacent to the old air-conditioned train shed.

10. As background information, QR operates 14,500 items of rollingstock covering more than 30 million kilometres per year.

There have been five main line derailments in Central Queensland in the four months since taking office in February. The 1996 Central Queensland derailment rate is to date equivalent to 18.4 derailments per year. There were 28 derailments in Central Queensland in 1995 so there is an encouraging downwards trend, although it is not possible to be certain over a relatively short time period.

11. The cost of derailments can take several months to assess, as repairs to rollingstock may not be carried out immediately. Three of the four derailments have had costs assessed to date totalling \$282,000. (The costs of the major derailment of 17 wagons on the Moura Line on 1 May 1996 are not yet available.)

12. The Minister commissioned an independent audit of safety and security matters in Queensland Rail on 27 March 1996. This includes an audit of track maintenance standards. The audit is in progress.

In addition, the Government in conjunction with Queensland Rail, is considering options for track upgrading in various regions of the State, for example; a proposal is being considered which allows for the re-alignment and reconstruction of the railway over the Drummond Range between Emerald and Alpha.

The attached list of derailments shows the corrective recommendations arising from each individual investigation to be implemented.

QR is also implementing a comprehensive five year plan for reducing derailments which addresses infrastructure, rollingstock, operations, and investigation.

QR strategies for reducing derailment risks include improvements to driver training using computerised simulators, the ongoing upgrading of track on the North Coast Line, and the recently completed Gladstone to Blackwater track upgrading at a cost of \$114M.

406. Busway Corridor, Nundah Electorate

Mr T. B. SULLIVAN asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—

- (1) Is his department planning to construct busways in the two transport corridors (located near the Woolloowin railway line and Junction Road, and Leckie Road Kedron); if so, what impact will these busways have on nearby residents in Kedron, Woolloowin, Eagle Junction and Kalinga?
- (2) Will homes have to be resumed and will businesses along Junction Road be affected?

Mr Johnson:

1. There is no current proposal to construct a busway in these corridors.

The primary focus in this area regarding improving public transport will be the development of the airport rail link by the private sector.

The corridors may be considered for public transport and bikeways in the longer term.

2. As there is no current proposal to construct busways in these corridors, there are no resulting resumptions or impacts on businesses.

407. Paid Maternity Leave

Ms BLIGH asked the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts—

With reference to the recent decision to grant six weeks paid maternity leave to Queensland Public Servants—

- (1) What is the estimated cost of this initiative?
- (2) On what basis has the initiative been costed?
- (3) What was the uptake in 1994-95 of the existing unpaid maternity leave provision in each department?
- (4) At what level were officers who utilised unpaid maternity leave in 1994-95 employed in each of these departments?
- (5) What was the return rate of staff who utilised unpaid maternity leave in 1994-95?
- (6) When will paid maternity leave be extended to twelve weeks?

Mrs Sheldon:

(1) The estimated cost of providing six weeks paid maternity leave to employees in Queensland Government Departments is \$15m-\$17m for 1996-97.

(2) The initiative was costed using information supplied by the Office of the Public Service on current numbers of employees eligible for the provision, their averaged salaries with associated on-costs and the current rates of their use of the unpaid maternity leave provision.

(3), (4) & (5) These figures are not centrally collected and would need to be obtained from each department.

(6) Six weeks of paid maternity leave is the current business and industry standard in Australia. Within the past two years this level of provision has extended through the banking and insurance industries and in the manufacturing sector. There is no government intention to extend the provision at this time.

408. Beach Erosion, Gold Coast

Mrs ROSE asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the recent heavy losses of sand from many Gold Coast beaches during recent storms—

- (1) Will the Queensland Government, and the Department of Environment, in particular, assist with rehabilitation of these beaches?
- (2) What form of rehabilitation will this assistance take?

- (3) What funding will be allocated to this work?
- (4) Is he prepared to allow natural processes to replenish these beaches; if so, over what time frame would he expect this replenishment to occur?
- (5) Is he prepared to fast track work on the Tweed by-pass to speed up this natural replenishment?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) The Queensland Government provides a 25% subsidy for approved beach nourishment works which form part of Coastal Management Plans approved pursuant to the Beach Protection Act, or capital works which are recommended by the Beach Protection Authority. A Coastal Management Plan is current for the Gold Coast City beaches, however implementation and funding of the plan is council's responsibility, subject to subsidy provisions.

In addition, the Department of Environment through the Beach Protection Authority will provide technical assistance to the council when requested to assist in rehabilitation of the beaches.

Assistance is also available to council under the Natural Disaster Relief arrangements. These well established arrangements provide a cost sharing formula as well as a range of pre-agreed relief and assistance measures which may be activated by the Queensland Government immediately that a need has been established. Funding is provided to Government agencies and Local Government to facilitate the restoration of public assets. While beach clean up costs will be eligible under the scheme, beaches are not considered constructed assets eligible for funds under this scheme. Assistance to Local Governments is administered through the Department of Local Government and Planning.

(2) Refer to Answer (1).

(3) Refer to Answer (1)

(4) The recent erosion at the Gold Coast is part of the normal and expected variations of nature. The Coastal Management Plan for the Gold Coast provides for a buffer zone of dunes so these normal beach fluctuations of erosion and subsequent recovery can occur without threat to property or beach amenity.

Gold Coast beaches have substantially recovered from previous and similar erosion in one to two years. Initial recovery can be rapid if weather conditions are storm free, although full dune rebuilding will take longer than the initial beach recovery.

Should council wish to accelerate the recovery by artificial beach nourishment or other methods, my Department will provide assistance to expedite the works in accordance with current funding and approval processes.

The Queensland Government, with assistance from Gold Coast City Council is also funding the Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing Project which has supplied sand to southern Gold Coast beaches. I note that despite the erosion, the southern Gold Coast beaches were less affected than elsewhere at the Gold Coast.

(5) The arrangements between Queensland and New South Wales already allow for sand to be placed on southern Gold Coast beaches when required prior to the start of the permanent bypassing.

The Government has been working cooperatively with New South Wales to ensure that this project is completed as soon as possible. There are necessary lead times in the design and construction of major works like the sand by-passing system.

409. Court Action by Mount Isa Mines

Mr McELLIGOTT asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to recent court action taken by Mt Isa Mines (MIM) against the State Government over licensing conditions for a gold mining operation at Ravenswood (Carpentaria Gold) in Far North Queensland—

- (1) Why was the company obliged to take such action under the provisions of the EPA as stated by a company spokesman?
- (2) Which provisions of the EPA were being referred to?
- (3) What flammable and combustible liquids are stored on the lease in question?
- (4) What permit was required from the local council for the storage of these liquids?
- (5) Is it true that under the EPA the local council is not authorised to issue such a permit?
- (6) Does he intend to amend the Environment Protection Act or its regulations in response to this court challenge; if so, in which way?

Mr Littleproud: This question relates to the administration of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 with respect to premises which are covered by a mining lease. The Department of Mines and Energy is the delegated administering authority under the Act for such premises. The matters referred to relate to specific dealings between that department and the company.

410. Narangba Industrial Estate

Mr WELFORD asked the Minister for Environment—

With reference to the final draft of the development control plan for the Narangba Industrial Estate which I understand has recently been received by the Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry and as this estate has been the source of repeated noise and odour complaints from neighbouring residents—

- (1) Has the Department of Environment had input into the draft development control plan?
- (2) Have the issues of noise and odour pollution from the estate been adequately addressed in the draft plan; if not, will he ensure that these concerns are addressed in the whole of Government response to the draft document?
- (3) Will the local community consultative group have input into the final plan?
- (4) When will the plan go on public display and when will it be finalised?

(5) In light of the environmental problems that have come from the estate and the closeness of residential development, will he oppose any future expansion of the estate?

Mr Littleproud:

(1) Officers of the Department of Environment have been involved throughout the planning process for Narangba Industrial Estate. The Department of Local Government and Planning has referred the draft Development Control Plan (DCP) to the Department of Environment for comment.

(2) Noise and odour issues were addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement for the estate. In reviewing the draft DCP, officers will be providing advice on the adequacy of planning provisions to deal with environmental issues, including noise and odour.

(3) The Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry will be holding workshops during this period on the draft DCP to enable informed public input into the plan.

(4) The Department of Tourism, Small Business and Industry has advised that they anticipate the DCP to go on public display at the end of June 1996. The date for finalisation of the DCP is dependent upon the complexity and number of objections received during the public display period.

(5) That would be subject to Departmental advice.

411. Sandgate Special School

Mr NUTTALL asked the Minister for Education—

With reference to the Sandgate Special School which at the beginning of the 1996 school year closed its doors and became a Special Education Unit attached to the Sandgate and District State High School, with the primary school aged children transferring to the newly created Special Education Unit at the Bracken Ridge State School—

- (1) Why is the playground equipment, which was installed at the Sandgate Special School in late 1994 by the previous Labor Government, still standing idle at that site and has not been transferred to the Special Education Unit at Bracken Ridge?
- (2) Will he explain to the children and their parents attached to the Special Education Unit at Bracken Ridge State School, and to the general school community, why, after nearly four months, there is still no indication of whether the playground equipment will be relocated from its former site at Sandgate to Bracken Ridge?
- (3) Will he give an indication of when the playground equipment will be relocated?
- (4) Will he direct his department to cover the cost of the relocation of the playground equipment; if not, why not?

Mr Quinn: (1), (2), (3) & (4) The Sandgate Special School closed in December 1995. At this time it was intended for the class at Bracken Ridge State School to be an integration class that would access, among other things, one of the two existing play structures at the school.

During negotiations for the provision of physical resources to enable the establishment of an integration class, no mention was made of the need for the relocation of playground equipment. If mention had been made, funding would have been provided from the Sandgate Special School Grant account before dispersal to the schools which accepted the children.

As this proposal has been raised following the negotiations on necessary equipment and materials, the funding available for relocation is from the Regional minor works budget. All money available for minor works in the 1995/96 financial year, is at this stage, expended, or committed.

In light of this fact, a request has been made for Q-Build to relocate the equipment and invoice the Region, in the 1996/97 financial year. Information provided to me today has indicated that Q-Build has called tenders for this project and that relocation work is scheduled to commence in early July.

412.Premier

Mr BEATTIE asked the Premier—

With reference to the fact that I had to stand in for him when he wimped out of a recent informal dinner with up to 100 Aboriginal leaders in Brisbane with less than 24 hours' notice citing a fear of demonstrators and also to the fact that again at the last minute I had to stand in for him when he also wimped out of an interview with Channel Seven's *Witness*, shown on 15 May, on the Cape York Land Use Agreement, of which he was so much on favour in February—

Why did he wimp out of these long-standing commitments and what sort of message does he believe this sort of behaviour sends to Queenslanders about his leadership abilities?

Mr Borbidge: Issues relating to my daily itinerary and appointments are not the business of the Opposition.