

THURSDAY, 30 JULY 1998

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. R. K. Hollis, Redcliffe) read prayers and took the chair at 10 a.m.

COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATH

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, I have to report that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to issue a Commission under the public seal of the State authorising me to administer the oath or affirmation of allegiance to such members as might hereafter present themselves to be sworn. I now ask the Clerk to read the Commission to the House.

The Clerk read the Commission.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that His Excellency the Governor, on Wednesday, 29 July 1998, delivered a speech to Parliament, of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy. I presume honourable members will take the Speech as read?

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE**Tsunami Disaster, Papua New Guinea**

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (10.02 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That on behalf of all Queenslanders this House places on record its deep sadness at the tragic and appalling loss of life suffered by the people of West Sepik Province in Papua New Guinea as a result of the recent tsunami disaster.

That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the Speaker of the Papua New Guinea House of Assembly and to the Governor of West Sepik Province the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy of the members of the Parliament and the people of Queensland, for the loss sustained by the survivors and families of those lost in the disaster."

During the night of Friday, 17 July, a natural disaster devastated the coast of Papua New Guinea's West Sepik Province. A sequence of three devastating tidal waves struck the coast with such ferocity that whole

villages and entire populations were washed away by 10 metre walls of water of a strength and destructiveness that we can barely imagine. It is unlikely that there will ever be an accurate record of the number of lives lost as a result of that devastation.

When we first heard of the disaster, its scale was almost incomprehensible. Our hearts and our prayers went out to all those who had suffered, particularly those who had survived and were left to deal with their injuries and the loss of families and entire communities. It is a measure of our own sympathy for their plight that thousands of Queenslanders—individuals, organisations and businesses alike—opened up their hearts and gave generously to the various appeals.

On behalf of all Queenslanders, I offer to the people of the villages affected by the disaster our profound sympathy for their loss, and our hope that the outpouring of support from all over the world will help them in some small way to return to a semblance of normality. To the Government and the people of Papua New Guinea, I extend our condolences, and I assure our close neighbours, with whom we have strong historical links, that in their hour of need the people of Queensland extend the hand of friendship and assistance.

Next Tuesday I will be meeting with the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Mr Bill Skate, and I intend to pass on the condolences of not only this Parliament but also the people of Queensland personally to him. As I indicated, Papua New Guinea is our closest neighbour, and we have strong historical links. In fact, many people who live in Queensland today have spent considerable time living and working in Papua New Guinea. Indeed, I have two brothers who spent a long time in Goroka and other places in Papua New Guinea, one in fact for 13 years. As a young boy, I visited Papua New Guinea on a number of occasions. I found the people to be very warm and friendly. They are wonderful people who have a special regard for this country, and in particular they have a special regard for this State.

That is why when this disaster happened the Queensland Government moved quickly and established an appeal. Today I thank all those who have contributed to that appeal. I thank also the Commonwealth Bank and Suncorp-Metway, which assisted in that appeal through their outlets for no fee. The Queensland Government contributed \$100,000. Today I am happy to say to the Parliament that in addition to that

Queenslanders have contributed a total of \$322,414.13, which brings the total contribution to date from Queensland in money terms to \$422,404.13. In addition, there have been donations from Queenslanders in kind—various household goods, such as towels, sheets, blankets and so on—which have also been passed on to the people of Papua New Guinea.

It is important that in a very bipartisan way we express our condolences to the people of Papua New Guinea. I am delighted that the Leader of the Opposition has agreed to second this motion.

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.07 a.m.): In seconding this motion, I join with the Premier in sorrow on this occasion as we in this House reflect upon the terrible human cost of the tidal waves that struck the northern coast of Papua New Guinea two weeks ago. That horrible tragedy has held all Australians transfixed, and none more so than Queenslanders. It has affected us more closely than many other Australians for a variety of reasons: because of the proximity of Queensland to Papua New Guinea, at its closest not much more than a tidal mudflat at the northern extremity of the Torres Strait; because of the long historical links that we in Queensland have had with Australia's nearest neighbour; and because of today's closer than ever links with a country that shares much of our flora and fauna and is home sometimes temporarily—often for longer periods—to many people whose other home, original home, is Queensland.

What happened on the evening of Friday, 24 July, in Sandaun Province—the West Sepik—beggars belief. The total fatality list may never be known. It is shocking to the senses that the sea can rise up and send 10 and 15 metre waves of death and destruction through a string of peaceful, traditional seashore communities. We have responded here as best we can. Whatever we did—whatever we do—will be inadequate; the enormity of the tragedy sees to that. What can we say about a community's generation of children being all but wiped out? How can we effectively respond to the total destruction of a traditional community's living place and livelihood? We cannot. It is that that makes the hurt even harder to bear.

All of us in this House who have friends, loved ones, families or children—and that means all of us in this place—have been dreadfully reminded of the fragility of human

life in the face of nature's cruellest tricks. The Government responded quickly to the tragedy by announcing an appeal and putting into it \$100,000. The House will want to note this speedy and thoughtful response and applaud it. The Opposition most certainly does. Money is never a cure-all, but it can always—with generosity—be much more than a token response to emergency and calamity. It is in this case—and we can all feel proud of the fact—that Queenslanders are generous with their time, efforts and money when their mates are in distress.

The people of Sandaun Province and their compatriots throughout Papua New Guinea face a terrible and difficult time in rebuilding the shattered lives and ruined infrastructure that lie broken in the wake of the tidal waves. Australians will be a significant part of that rebuilding effort—physically, in the instance of Defence Force personnel, civil aid workers, and the many volunteers; and at one remove, through taxation revenues directed towards PNG, charitable contributions, and through the prayers and thoughts many people will direct towards our friends to the north.

The practical things are in hand. The response of the Australian Defence Force has been magnificent and deserves to be noted here, as do the individual contributions of Australian service personnel deployed to Papua New Guinea on this mission of mercy. The medical and surgical needs of those afflicted by the disaster are being taken care of by Australians, by our friends and cousins the New Zealanders, by our friends the Americans and the Japanese and by many other nations. The social and community needs that are only now becoming apparent in the aftermath of the disaster will require an effort over a much longer period.

Adversity brings out the best in people. The courage and the fortitude of Papua New Guineans long ago passed into Australian folklore, written in a blood debt we owe to each other. The ties that were forged during the great emergency of World War II built on those developed during the early colonial period in what was then the Australian Territory of Papua and the mandated, formerly German, Territory of New Guinea. Those ties are ties of blood. In many instances, they are the ties of shared family history. Today's Australians, today's Queenslanders, honour diversity as they have always done and honour the true grit that human beings everywhere demonstrate when the going gets tough.

The State Government no doubt will be monitoring the situation in Papua New Guinea over the forthcoming months and will be standing by to help with whatever extra assistance is required. The Opposition stands in support of whatever additional emergency aid might be required from Queensland's finite resources. To our friends in PNG I say, "We're so sorry about your trouble. We're your friends. If you need help, Queensland, as always, will be there quickly."

Mr FELDMAN (Caboolture—ONP) (Leader of the One Nation Party) (10.13 a.m.): I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in extending my personal condolences and those of One Nation members of this House to the relatives, families and victims of the tragic national disaster which recently claimed so many lives in Papua New Guinea. Members of this House, especially those who go down to the sea in ships, are familiar with the prayers for those lost at sea. Today we pray for those who live on the land, but whom the cruel sea reached out and claimed nevertheless.

The sea has always been a formidable and heartless foe, but in this unfortunate case the cruel sea came a'calling as a cruel visitor. It came to people on the land and claimed thousands of victims in our nearest neighbour to the north—the nearest neighbour to Queensland. Except for an accident of geography, this tragic event could very well have overwhelmed the Gold Coast or a number of other coastal settlements in Queensland. Besides passing this motion of condolence, members of this House might well consider long and carefully how we might soften the blow if such a disaster rolls ashore in Queensland.

Frequently we hear the siren on television when a cyclone threatens and everybody is aware that we spend big money maintaining an emergency rescue network, but how many Queenslanders living near the sea really know what to do and how to do it when a tsunami, a seismic event—a wave—like that which swamped PNG, heads for our shoreline, or worse, hits our shores? That is something to think really long and hard about.

Evidently, the victims in PNG had little or no prior warning, so they had no time to escape that 15-metre wave which smashed the shoreline of that paradise for some 120 square kilometres around the community of Aitape. The papers reported that all that the people heard was the roar—the sound of a jet engine. We know what a jet engine sounds like, but they had no escape when they heard

that noise. It was difficult to escape that killer sea wave. We now know the damage: upwards of 1,500 dead, 2,500 missing, some 4,000 survivors requiring help and some 500 survivors still in hospitals such as the Australian and New Zealand field hospital.

The cause was the earthquake which dropped the earth's floor several metres, sending out violent tremors which ended up in giant waves smashing everything when they hit the shore. There are no benefactors from such a disaster, except maybe those who stop to think and learn from the past, such as some of the Japanese communities which set about building barriers against future killer waves, but even these appear insignificant when mankind is faced with a really big sea. Full commendation must be extended to the Australian Defence Forces, missionary societies, and various churches and aid agencies as well as those mentioned by the Premier for the quick response to the needs of the PNG victims and families.

Many brave acts have been recorded, and the ability of humanity to recover from such a terrible tragedy is truly remarkable. I was sad to hear that this disaster has left many orphans, but because of the concept of the extended family in Papua New Guinea these unfortunate people will not remain orphans for long but will be adopted and raised by families who will care for them. That is something from which we in Australia might take some heart. Our prayers go out to those who have survived and who must rebuild their lives while they mourn for their loved ones lost in that cruel sea.

Many of the injuries have been horrific. Medical teams are still there, still working with those victims. Most of the injured have since left hospital and, with continuing care, will be able to return home and rebuild their lives. Again, while our sympathy goes out to the survivors of the PNG tragedy, we must also remember that, on average, Queensland is hit on shore and off shore by a major earthquake measuring 6 or higher on the Richter scale once every 33 years and is hit 25 times every year by an earthquake measuring less than 6.

It is my sincere hope that the Leader of the Opposition, the Independent members of this House and the Premier will also join with One Nation members in our concern to ensure that all necessary defences are ready and available to combat the disaster when a similar wave hits one of our shores. I am pleased to support the motion on behalf of the members of One Nation working for one nation in this House.

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (10.20 a.m.): I rise to support the Premier's motion concerning the tragic events two weeks ago in the West Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea has always had a special relationship with Queensland, and north Queensland in particular. Many people from Papua New Guinea have been educated in Queensland and there are close trade links between Queensland and Papua New Guinea. I personally visited Papua New Guinea as a Minister and count many of the people within the PNG business community, and particularly a number of PNG politicians, as very close friends.

The tragedy that occurred last Friday week reminded us that nature is always the most potent force on earth. Possibly the most chilling aspect of this whole episode is that we will not know exactly how many people died as a result of that event. Individual families in the West Sepik Province would know that they no longer have a brother, sister, mother, father, husband, wife, son or daughter.

I must say that Queenslanders have responded magnificently to the tragedy, especially many of the people who have business links with Papua New Guinea. Many more Queenslanders have made contributions simply because they feel the real human tragedy of what happened on our doorstep. If there is a silver lining on this cloud of tragedy it is the display of true generosity of human spirit. I support the motion.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.22 a.m.): The parliamentary Liberal Party joins with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing our sympathy to the victims of the tragic tidal wave which struck with devastation in Papua New Guinea on 17 July. Perhaps more than any other natural disaster in our recent history, the tidal wave which hit the villages of the West Sepik Province has had a profound impact on the people of Australia, and Queensland in particular.

Papua New Guinea is not only our closest neighbour; it has historic links with Queensland as well as a people-to-people association in areas such as education, sport and business and investment. Over the last decade, successive Governments have recognised the importance of that association and potential benefits it offers both Queensland and Papua New Guinea.

The Government's response to this great tragedy has the full support of the Opposition,

and is a measure not only of the concern we all have for the victims of the tidal wave, but of the genuine friendship and bonds between Queensland and Papua New Guinea. The enormity of this tragedy is difficult to comprehend—2,000 men, women and children confirmed dead, up to 2,000 more unaccounted for and some 10,000 who are being looked after in care centres, all of whom will have to be resettled away from the disaster area. Long after the immediate relief efforts are completed, the 10,000 surviving victims of the tidal wave are going to need assistance. Many of these victims are children who are either orphaned or who have lost one of their parents, as well as sisters or brothers.

I mentioned that we have strong education links with Papua New Guinea. This year, over 1,000 Papua New Guineans are attending Government and non-Government schools in Queensland, many under the Australian Government funded scholarship scheme which has operated since 1989. Unfortunately, this scheme is being phased out and no more scholarships are to be awarded by the Australian Government. I suggest to the Premier and the Government that Queensland could provide tangible, ongoing assistance to the victims of this tragedy by using some of the proceeds of the fund raising campaign sponsored by the Government to provide school scholarships to some of the victims of the tidal wave—scholarships which would enable them to attend high schools here in Queensland. I am sure such a scheme would enjoy the support of the Government of Papua New Guinea and would be genuinely appreciated by young victims who today must be wondering what the future holds for them. In this way, we can help make that future a little brighter and a little more certain.

The Australian contribution to the relief effort in the West Sepik deserves the highest praise. We can all be proud of the compassion and commitment shown by the Defence Force medical team and the efforts of church and community groups and businesses in helping the victims of this tragedy so promptly and generously. Our sympathy goes to the victims, as do our best wishes, as they confront a very difficult future. We can help make that future brighter and secure even in the face of the tragedy they have endured at nature's hands. The Liberal Party joins me in supporting the motion moved by the Premier.

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (10.26 a.m.): I rise briefly to support the condolence motion before the House. I do

so for two reasons. Firstly, my electorate of Cook shares a border with Papua New Guinea and many of my constituents in the Torres Strait are of Papua New Guinea descent. These people are Australian residents. There are traditional links between Torres Strait Islanders and the people of Papua New Guinea. Whilst those links are not connected with the area in which the tsunami occurred, there is no doubt that the people of the Torres Strait—and particularly those who are of Papua New Guinea descent—feel remorse for and express their sympathy to the people affected by this tragedy.

I also rise as the far-north Queensland representative in the Beattie Cabinet because of the strong links that exist between north Queensland—particularly the Cairns region—and New Guinea. As others have mentioned, those links are in areas such as education, business, mining and trade. However, there are very strong personal links. A significant number of residents of Papua New Guinea send their children to school in Cairns. The Cairns region has very strong social and personal ties with Papua New Guinea. On behalf of the people of north Queensland—and particularly those in the Cairns region—I express my condolences to the people of Papua New Guinea who have been affected by this tragedy. We have talked about the number of people who have been affected and we have talked about the relief efforts that have been undertaken. I add my thanks to those who have contributed. Because of the very special relationship that exists between the people of far-north Queensland and the people of Papua New Guinea it is appropriate for me to rise in the Parliament and add my condolences to those expressed by others.

Mr LAMING (Mooloolah—LP) (10.27 a.m.): As a former patrol officer in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s, I would like to take the opportunity of joining the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and other members in this condolence motion for those families who have lost loved ones in the recent tidal wave disaster. Although it is now 20 years since I worked with PNG villagers, I remember clearly their carefree approach to life. This was particularly the case in the coastal villages where they depended, and still do I am sure, on the bounty of the sea. Not only did much of their food source come from the sea but it also provided a valuable transport facility for their outrigger canoes and modern vessels.

This idyllic lifestyle is not, of course, without its interruptions. The highlands are

only now just recovering from a drought which devastated their sweet potato crops. Earthquakes are not uncommon in PNG: the locals call them Guira and they are quite alarming when they occur, but usually they are harmless. Not so the earthquake in the ocean off the northern coast of Sandaun Province on 17 July.

The events that followed have been well covered in the media, but we should pause to reflect on the absolute shock and disbelief that would have overwhelmed those villagers as the usually bountiful sea swept their homes and lives away on that fateful night. The response to the tragedy, both locally and from overseas, was rapid. The doctors and nurses who took the initial brunt of the catastrophe in Vaimo and other centres are to be commended.

I have received a briefing from the Office of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Kathy Sullivan. I understand that the confirmed death toll stands at 1,638 and that a further 700 are in hospital. The emphasis has now swung towards disease prevention and rehabilitation. There has been considerable assistance from Australia by way of medical care and grief counselling services. Generous assistance has also arrived from New Zealand, the United States, Japan, France and other countries. All levels of government in Australia have rallied, as well as business, community organisations and individuals.

I also received a briefing from the Minister for Public Works and Housing and am pleased to see that the department is standing by to provide further assistance if requested by Emergency Management Australia. In supporting this condolence motion I acknowledge the support that all members are giving in their respective communities to those who are coordinating the many assistance programs. Most of us can only imagine the depth of sadness being experienced by those who have lost so much so quickly. I can best express our sympathy in their own language: Mipela i tok sori tumas long planti birua long ol manmeri bilong Aitape.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I add my personal condolences to my many friends in Papua New Guinea, and I ask members to rise and stand in silence as a mark of respect to the memory of those lost in this terrible tragedy.

Motion agreed to, honourable members standing in silence.

PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members, in accordance with the requirements of Standing Order 13, I nominate the following members to form the panel of Temporary Chairmen for this day's sitting—

Dr Lesley Ann Clark, member for Barron River;

Mr Reginald John Mickel, member for Logan;

Ms Lindel Helena Nelson-Carr, member for Mundingburra; and

Mr Philip Gerard Reeves, member for Mansfield.

MOTION OF CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (10.30 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That this House expresses its confidence in the Beattie Labor Government; and, further, the Parliament advises the Governor that no writ should be issued for a general election to be held before 5 May 2001 without express resolution of the Parliament."

In supporting this motion, the Parliament today has a very simple choice. It is a choice between the stability and certainty that my Government offers and the chaos and uncertainty that would result from any attempt by other parties to form a Government. This Parliament and the people of Queensland can have absolute confidence in my Government, because we will continue for the next three years in the same determined, efficient way and with the certainty that we have displayed over the past month. My Government has already delivered certainty when, after the 13 June election, many commentators and the business community feared three years of chaos.

I believe that a long list of achievements from our first month in Government has already demonstrated to the people of Queensland that they can have confidence in my Government. Now I stand here today to explain why Parliament should also have confidence in my Government. I have to do far more than make promises and commitments. Anybody can make promises, but actions speak louder than words. And I say to members today that the actions of my Government have shouted that we are making things happen. Already we are making Queensland the can-do State.

It has been only 35 days since the Independent member for Nicklin announced that, on confidence motions, he would support a Government led by me. He said that he would continue to do so unless there is evidence of gross fraud, misappropriation or similar illegal activities and that he would support my Appropriation Bill and not abstain from voting. I table a copy of that letter from the member as well as a copy of a letter that I wrote to him.

The very next day, on 26 June, my deputy, Jim Elder, and I were sworn in at Government House. On Sunday, 28 June, I released a revamped Cabinet structure with portfolios designed to drive Queensland into the next century. The next day, on 29 June, my Ministers were sworn in. Only four days after the member for Nicklin had told me that he would support my Government, I had revamped the structure of my Cabinet, discussed with my caucus colleagues the composition of the Cabinet that I wanted and told those members selected what I expected of them. They had been sworn in, and they had moved into their ministerial offices to start work. "Start as you mean to carry on" is my motto, and that was demonstrated very clearly.

The Opposition argued that we would be a caretaker Government only until Parliament sat this week. For legal reasons we could not sit earlier. That would have led to four more weeks of Queensland drifting aimlessly with no leadership; four more weeks without a single meaningful decision being made; four more weeks of uncertainty; and four more weeks of damage to our economy. In my view, that was a weak, politically motivated assertion.

I sought legal advice, and the Attorney-General confirmed that the Governor had commissioned me to form a Government. There were no constraints. And only in the sense that I was determined to take care of Queensland right from the start was my Government a caretaker. We were in business from day one to get results and to get Queensland moving again, and that is exactly what we did. We hit the ground running and started to deliver. So instead of Queensland being allowed to drift rudderless, we started the motor, went through the gears and accelerated away.

That first day, after Ministers were sworn in, the Deputy Premier, Jim Elder, and I held a working lunch with the leaders of Queensland's peak industry and business organisations to tell them that they could have certainty about the future. I assured them that

there would be no freeze on capital works and no freeze on decision making; we were determined to get on with it. I also sent another signal: the days of the long lunch are over. We got down to business over sandwiches and orange juice. On 2 July, only a week after the member for Nicklin had told me that he would enable me to form Government, we held our first Cabinet meeting. Other Governments have used such occasions to reverse decisions made by their predecessors. Not us; we would have none of that.

As everyone knows, tourism is Queensland's second-biggest industry, generating \$7.7 billion a year and employing 122,000 people. Because of the Asian economic crisis, there was an urgent need to counteract the effects of the Asian financial meltdown and the impact of foreign media reports about One Nation and its policies. I accept that those reports were wildly inaccurate. Nevertheless, they were destructive of this State's image overseas. Queensland's jobs were at stake. So the first major decision of the Labor Government was to provide an additional \$5m to promote Queensland as a tourist destination both in Australia and overseas. That submission was brought by the Minister for Tourism, Bob Gibbs, and that was the first major decision of my Government. We were getting on to protect our second-biggest industry.

The tourism industry says that this funding will generate 1,400 new jobs and increase direct visitor spending in Queensland by \$56m. It is worth pointing out that every time 17 international visitors come to Queensland, it creates one job for a Queenslander. And every time a jumbo lands, that creates 25 jobs for Queenslanders in the tourism industry. That is why that industry needed support from Government, and it got it.

Let me give examples to the Parliament of some of our other achievements. Between 29 June, when my full Cabinet was sworn in, and yesterday, 29 July, we captured the biggest sporting event of the year 2001, that is, the world Goodwill Games, for Brisbane against strong competition from other countries. This will mean 1,700 jobs for Queensland and a boost of about \$167m to the State economy. Despite negative, harping criticism from the Opposition, the Minister for Tourism went to New York and signed the agreement. We got on with it.

Secondly, we persuaded international company Stellar Communications to locate its Asian call centre operations in Queensland,

beating off competition from Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia and creating up to 400 new jobs. We created a \$5.4m package to boost building and construction jobs, with up to 3,000 apprenticeships being created in the first three years.

With one urban renewal scheme at Riverview slashing calls to police by 60%—so, in effect, reducing crime—we committed an extra \$7.5m to 13 crime-cutting urban renewal projects around the State this financial year. So what is happening here? We are starting to get tough on the causes of crime. We will tackle crime in a way that will be effective, and it will work; it will not be mere empty rhetoric.

We immediately installed a rescue package for the compulsory third-party scheme, which the last Government deliberately left in disarray, and we contributed a \$200,000 windfall from Government vehicle fleet registrations to child victims of road accidents. We organised and held a highly successful major trade and tourism summit to identify exactly what problems we have to overcome in trade and tourism with our Asian neighbours, and we sent out a positive message to Asia and the rest of the world that Queensland was back to business. That summit also identified strategies that can be used in boosting trade and tourism. As I said, we sent a positive message to our trading partners that we are and will continue to be open for business.

With the Health Minister, Wendy Edmond, I announced the construction of the largest cancer research centre in the southern hemisphere at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research at the Royal Brisbane Hospital at a cost of \$68m. We delivered a major law and order commitment to provide \$1m worth of basic equipment for prison officers. We have provided an extra \$8.7m to enable all primary and secondary schools to become leading schools. We have made all schools leading schools. That means that a total of 1,300 schools have benefited. The money has already been given to schools with more than 400 students. The smaller schools will receive their funding from the first semester next year.

In order to look after the victims of crime, the Attorney-General—as has the Government—has shifted the focus of the justice system back to victims, where it belongs. He has released discussion papers on reforms to the stalking laws and on ways to strengthen the rights of crime victims. This Government will look after the interests of the victims of crime.

We have boosted funding for Queensland's disability services by \$30m and established the Disability Services Agency, which will have a compassionate and caring role in relation to people with disabilities. We committed an extra \$5m per year to palliative care in the community sector. Importantly, I have set a three-month timetable to resolve the Wik impasse, with the first stage of the legislation being introduced in this House after this debate in accordance with the strict timetable that I have set. In fact, the Government has been making things happen on a daily basis.

If this argument fails to win support, members must answer this question: what are the alternatives if Labor does not form a Government? Anyone speaking against this motion must do more than just criticise, whinge and make allegations. I emphasise that members opposing this motion must put forward an alternative Government—a Government that can deliver more certainty than this one; a Government that has similar guarantees of a three-year tenure; a Government that offers better leadership than this one; a Government that will provide better services than this one; a Government that can supply more apprenticeships, traineeships and job placements, more full time jobs and better job security measures than this one; a Government that can win the confidence of business and industry. Let us consider what industry is saying. The chief executive of the Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Clive Bubb, has announced that the interests of the State would be best served if Labor were able to form a Government. Mr Bubb said—

"The political reality for the Coalition is that it cannot govern without the consistent support of One Nation members—and that party has made it plain that its members are new to the political process and will not be called upon to act as a cohesive force."

Mr Borbidge: You agree with him now?

Mr BEATTIE: Yes, I do. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, from time to time Mr Bubb has been a critic of me, the Opposition and this Government. Therefore, one could not have a more impartial person to endorse my Government. He is another person who has seen the light.

Mr Bubb emphasised—

"This reality makes it virtually impossible for the Coalition to form a stable Government."

For the benefit of the Leader of the Opposition I say: yes, I do agree with him. On the possibility of a Labor Government, Mr Bubb said—

"This option clearly has greater potential for stability than the alternative."

I repeat: anyone speaking against this motion will have no credibility unless he or she can propose a better arrangement that offers greater certainty. The plain facts are these: Labor has 44 seats and the member for Nicklin has given sufficient guarantees for Labor to form a Government for the next three years. The member for Nicklin has maintained his independence. I acknowledge that on the record today. However, with Parliament comprising four parties and two Independent members, the results of divisions are far from predictable. The member for Nicklin has asserted his independence on votes not affecting confidence motions and the Appropriation Bill. He has said that he intends to vote in the best interests of Nicklin and of Queensland. I assure the member for Nicklin that we believe that the policies that won us more seats than all the other parties put together are the best policies for Queensland. It is up to us to demonstrate that they are also in the best interests of Nicklin. We intend to do that over the next three years.

Having said that, there will undoubtedly be issues on which we will lose votes in this Parliament. Let us face up to that reality right at the beginning. Of course it will be tough for the Government. I have said it in the past and I repeat it: we will not win every vote in this Parliament. But that will not be the end of the world for us. That will not bring down the Government. I intend to ensure that it does not affect the confidence that Queenslanders can have in my Government. I will ensure that it does not affect the certainty that business and industry need to have in Government to invest and grow and produce jobs. I am not here to just form a Government and play it safe. My Government will continue to make decisions and govern as if we have a majority of 10. That is exactly what we have been doing over the past month. My Government is here to make a difference. I am here to lead. My Government is here to improve the lifestyles of Queenslanders, and we will. Not only has this Government been making things happen for the past month but also we will be introducing all those commitments and policies that attracted 53% of the vote on a two-party preferred basis. That figure is of crucial importance.

On 20 February 1996, the member for Surfers Paradise stood in this precise spot. He had proposed a motion of confidence in a Government formed by 44 members of the coalition plus one Independent. He said the fact that the coalition had achieved 53% of the two-party preferred vote gave his Government legitimacy. If the member for Surfers Paradise believed that then, he must surely believe the same of Labor today. Those votes were won by policies that focus on job creation and on increasing job security—by breaking the unemployment cycle suffered by thousands of young Queenslanders who cannot get a start in the workforce and by those who feel they are on the scrap heap because they are over the age of 40; by generating nearly 25,000 apprenticeships, traineeships and job placements in the next three years; by creating a network of State development centres to drive job creation strategies specially tailored for each of the regions; and by accelerating the job-creating infrastructure and Capital Works Program which will light a fire under the economy.

On 6 July, in order to create new jobs, I ordered my Government to award as many capital works contracts as possible before the end of December. Other policies focus on providing a better health service, a better education service and on not only being tough on law and order but on being tough about the causes of crime. A comprehensive policy deals with crime prevention that works. It is far better to prevent crime in the first place than to try to deal with the damage suffered by people after a crime has been committed. We are proud of the policies we developed as a result of two and a half years of listening to the needs of Queenslanders. They told us that unemployment and job insecurity were by far their biggest worries, so this Government has a Minister for Employment who is concentrating on bringing down unemployment and increasing job security. We have created a Department of State Development to drive regional development strategies throughout the State in our quest to create new jobs and increase job security. This is being driven by the Deputy Premier. For the first time, responsibility for Information Technology and Telecommunications, with its massive potential for new, clean jobs, has been amalgamated into a single division. Again, a senior Minister, Terry Mackenroth, is driving that initiative. I have already announced the formation of a special Cabinet task force to investigate the creation of a new backbone fibre-optic communications network to deliver Government services to regional Queensland and create new jobs.

People with disabilities have not received the attention or the resources which they deserve and need, so I have appointed a Minister for Disability Services. I have also demonstrated that we will continue to listen to Queenslanders from all over the State. We received more than 110 formal deputations to our first Community Cabinet meeting in Edmonton in far-north Queensland. We will be holding 15 of those meetings throughout Queensland every year, and the next one will be in Ipswich.

I have demonstrated comprehensively that, having been sworn in only a month ago yesterday, my Government can already stand on its record. That record, rather than a long list of promises, is proof that my Government merits the confidence of Parliament. The choice is simple: on the one hand a jumble of One Nation, National and Liberal Party members creating chaos and uncertainty as they jostle for supremacy—and the National Party forecasting that such an arrangement would be doomed to failure—and on the other a can-do Government that is able to provide certainty, a massive job creation package, imaginative policies and better services for Queenslanders; a Government that will not only lift the standard of debate in this Parliament so it is respected by the whole community but also a Government that is going to get Queensland moving again.

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP)
(Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade)
(10.50 a.m.): It is with a great sense of honour that I second the motion moved by the Premier. In the time immediately following the election on 13 June, we saw a very bitter and divisive period in Queensland's history. It was a time when instability reigned, not just with members of this House and not just with members of the broader community; all members of the community were worried about the election outcome. It was a time when people looked backwards rather than forward. It was a time when many people throughout the State questioned just how much security and certainty they had in their lives and how much security and how much certainty there was in this State. In short, the level of confidence felt by Queenslanders in their State, the way it was then and the way it could be in the future, was at an all-time low.

The catalyst for the return of stability to the State was the indication by the Independent member for Nicklin of his future voting patterns. At this point, I might say that even people who did not vote for the Government and who even campaigned

actively for our electoral opponents welcomed the stability offered by the member for Nicklin once he made his decision to support the Labor Government. Even people such as the former Liberal member for Barron River said that the Labor Government, backed by an Independent, was the best choice for the State.

Since then, the actions of the Government, in which I am privileged to be the Deputy Premier, have led to a return not just to stability but also to confidence in this State. It is a confidence not just in the political institutions of this State but also throughout the wider community. In particular, the business community has responded positively. For example, as the Premier outlined earlier this week, Stellar Communications announced that it would be establishing a call centre with 400 employees in south-east Queensland to service the Asia-Pacific region. This is a joint venture involving Telstra and Excell Systems, a US company with international connections that sees Queensland as its base for expansion in the Asia-Pacific region. Stellar Communications is just one company that has shown that it has confidence in Queensland.

This Government has also taken steps to restore confidence in the image of Queensland overseas, which in recent months has taken a battering and has the potential to affect dramatically our export income from trade. What is particularly at risk is our image as a tolerant, friendly society where diversity is encouraged and people from overseas and, for that matter interstate, are welcome either as migrants or as tourists. In particular, I took steps to make public the fact that in Queensland there was now a stable Government—one which did welcome interaction with the rest of the world.

Queensland's Trade Commissioner in Hong Kong, Simon Lee, who is known to many people on both sides of this House, reported back to me that in June some Hong Kong students had shown a reluctance to consider Queensland as a place in which to study because they did not feel safe in coming here. We have taken action to ensure that overseas students and tourists in particular feel safe in Queensland. So Queensland is now back on the map as a destination for overseas tourists. The Minister for Tourism has also taken action in that regard. We have also taken steps to make sure that overseas students—

Mr Gibbs interjected.

Mr ELDER: As the Minister says, following on from similar action that I took within the

business and broader community, 200 letters were sent internationally to reinforce the point that Queensland is now a stable and safe destination. We looked at the difficulties facing that industry sector and we will offer support for it. As I said, the same goes for overseas students who are looking to study in Queensland. That will lift confidence in Queensland. That will generate export income that otherwise would have been lost. In turn, that will lift our standard of living. Again, confidence in Queensland has been lifted.

Within Queensland itself there are several projects that were—I might loosely use the phrase—left over from the previous Government. Some work had been done but the projects were not finalised. I am very keen to see those projects through to completion. One such project is the gas pipeline from Papua New Guinea to Gladstone. Members opposite who were members of the previous Government would or should realise the value of that project to Queensland. However, I have to say that they took their eyes right off the ball and this project was left in limbo. When I came to office I took action to get all of the proponents of those projects together so that we could advance them further.

I was disappointed to see the gas pipeline project being opposed, in particular by the Federal member for Wide Bay, the Minister for Customs and Excise, Warren Truss. When the previous Government was in office he was silent, but now when there is a Labor Government not just in office but actively and openly progressing this particular project, he finds problems with it. In reality, nothing has changed in the concept of that project, just its likelihood. Opposing this project because of a desire to score cheap points is old politics. It is the kind of politics that the broader community finds difficult to understand. Actions like that will not engender confidence in the community.

As well as progressing several projects already in place, in the past few weeks this Government has also been approached by proponents of several other potentially major projects for this State. Not all of those people are local business people; some of them are from interstate and overseas. They, too, have confidence in Queensland and they all see Queensland as once again a good place in which to invest, to do business, and to create jobs. As Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Trade, my focus is unashamedly on creating jobs in this State. As a Labor Government, we see the creation of jobs as a priority because that is the best way in which people can improve their own quality

of life. The major reason behind Queensland's growth over the past 15 years has been that people have come here, generally from southern States but sometimes from overseas, in search of a better life. Some of those people are at retirement age and want to wind down their lives in sunshine, but the vast majority want to come here to work and create a better life for themselves and for their families. Most of them come with a dream for a better life and they are quite prepared to work and work hard. At the weekend, they like to work on their gardens, they like to watch football, they like to go fishing; they like Queensland's beautiful weather. It is what a lot of people see as a good life and, I might say, so do I. That is what we are about as a Labor Government. It is about allowing people to achieve a better life. In terms of achieving those goals, what people want more than anything else is a job.

This Government sees room for improvement, I might say after being in Government only a short time, in all three industry sectors—primary, secondary and tertiary—to help create those jobs. Traditionally, Queensland has been a primary industry State depending, I guess in the first half of this century particularly, on agriculture and in the second half of this century on mining. Those industries will always be important pillars of the Queensland economy. I am confident that my colleagues the Minister for Primary Industries and the Minister for Mines and Energy will continue to improve those sectors. As Minister for State Development, I intend to work closely with them to do just that. I also intend to work closely with my colleague the member for Chatsworth, whose ministerial responsibilities include communication and information. He will be concentrating on developing tertiary industries, in particular the all-important information industry, which has been responsible for the creation of so many of the well-paid jobs that we now see in the United States and is one of the reasons why that country's unemployment rate is at 4.5%. Just as importantly, I see the development of tertiary industries as having the potential to make our primary and secondary industries more efficient and competitive on the world stage and thus more likely to supply real, long-term, skilled and well-paid jobs. Building on information infrastructure is a priority of this Government.

One area in which I will be particularly concerned as Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade is the development of our secondary industries. The previous Labor

Government made great strides in helping Queensland industry value add—add value to our raw materials so that we got maximum value out of them. I intend to drive the same broad agenda, only more so, this time around.

Unlike other States, Queensland has never had a strong manufacturing base. In the past we had to be content to grow raw food, such as wheat, and sell it as raw material. We have simply dug up our minerals and sold them overseas in an unprocessed state. We have never got best value out of what we have, that is, plentiful raw materials. Manufacturing has a bad name in some circles, where it is associated with polluting smokestacks, but modern manufacturing practices are far more environmentally friendly and far more conducive to employment. This Government will encourage manufacturing industries of this kind.

The record of the previous Labor Government in this area is a solid one which bears comparison with the stewardship of those opposite. I cite figures from the Federal Department of Trade and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. When Labor gained Government at the start of this decade, 150,000 people were employed in the manufacturing sector in this State. When Labor left office, 182,000 people were employed in that sector. That represents an increase of over 20%. Under the tenure of the coalition Government, the number of people—

Mr Slack: What was the unemployment rate?

Mr ELDER: I will come to the record of the Minister who had responsibility in this area. Under the tenure of the coalition Government, the number of people working in jobs in the manufacturing sector—that is, in the value add sector, in the sector that provides long-term, skilled employment—slipped to 172,000 in 1996-97 and was 175,000 in 1997-98. Given the platform left to the coalition, that was a poor effort indeed.

This Labor Government comes into office with fewer people employed in manufacturing than when Labor was last in office. That situation came about at a time when Queensland's population was growing. This record of employment in value adding industries is a sorry one which this Government is committed to reversing.

Possibly one of the worst spin-offs of this state of affairs was that not only were fewer people employed in manufacturing jobs but also Queensland gained less export income. When Labor came to Government at the start of the decade, the value of manufactured

exports was \$5 billion. When it left office, manufactured exports were at \$6.7 billion, a rise of 34% over six years—all job generators. In 1996-97 the value of manufactured exports in Queensland dropped to \$6.2 billion—a drop of \$500m in less than one year after six years of healthy growth.

I want to be quite clear about the intention of this Government. Generally, incoming Governments aim to do better than their predecessor. In this case it is hardly a difficult act to follow. We aim for nothing less than the revitalisation of Queensland's industry and the extension of that industry so that more people are in jobs in Queensland. That means that we will be employing every effort as a Government to get more people employed.

One of our major initiatives is the establishment of State development centres. Right throughout the State, from the far north right through to the coast, we will implement regional development plans that we have devised for each particular region. These plans will not result in the sort of centralised bureaucratic rigidity characterised by public administration in the State over the past couple of years, where the industry portfolio was essentially there to drive job opportunities and drive those employment opportunities for Queenslanders. A report from KPMG on the portfolio's own activity found it to be moribund and lacking leadership. This reinforces the point I made about the direction of industry policy in this State over the past two years.

Public administration over the past two years was centralised, bureaucratic and rigid in the way it dealt with Queensland's regions. We will do it differently. We will do it in conjunction with local communities so that they have ownership of the plans we outline and ownership of the development of their regions.

Each region in Queensland has different strengths. For example, the strength of the Cairns region in north Queensland is in tourism and in other service industries, while the strength of Townsville lies in its industrial development and, notably, the large mineral deposits in the north west that it can drive off. While each of these regions has other assets, these strengths can be maximised so that more jobs are created. The creation of those State development centres is a central component of our plans to increase employment opportunities through the regions.

The involvement of local communities in the development of these plans is another action which encourages confidence in local

communities, because they have ownership of that development and of driving those opportunities in their own regions. We have seen in the past few weeks the return of confidence in all sectors in this State and a willingness on the part of those sectors to get on with the job.

The journey ahead will not be easy. All members in this House would be familiar with the situation that many of our trading partners find themselves in. We would be naive if we expected that none of that would rub off on us in terms of an impact on our economies. In short, the world in which we now live is a lot different and more competitive than it was a few years ago and we cannot pretend that we are isolated from the rest of the world. It is important to recognise that, while there will always be differences amongst us, what unites us is far greater than what divides us.

As a Parliament and as a community we need to face the future with confidence. That is why I am delighted today to be able to second the motion of confidence in this Labor Government which was moved by the Premier.

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.07 a.m.): The Opposition opposes the motion, but I will move an amendment which I would reasonably expect that the Government and the member for Nicklin will accept. I move that the following words be added—

" , and recognises the commitments given by the Premier to the member for Nicklin and requires the resignation of the Premier and his Government if these commitments are not honoured in full."

Nothing could be more fair. The member for Brisbane Central professes—

Government members interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: Those opposite do not like it? The Premier does not like making his agreement with the member for Nicklin the property of the Parliament? He does not like it.

Mr Beattie: I said nothing.

Mr BORBIDGE: It is interesting; his colleagues do not like it. The member for Brisbane Central professes the highest standards of behaviour, integrity and accountability as demanded by the member for Nicklin. The standards of the member for Nicklin are implicit in his demands.

Compliance by the member for Brisbane Central in relation to the issues raised by the member for Nicklin will, it seems, deliver him Government. Non-compliance should therefore cost him Government. If the

straitjacket fits, then the honourable member for Brisbane Central should be happy, willing and able to wear it. It merely makes the commitments given by the member for Brisbane Central the property of the Parliament of Queensland.

Before commending the amendment to the House I will address the central question before the Parliament today, and I ask it in similar terms to the way in which it was asked last time in a similar debate but on that occasion by the honourable member for Brisbane Central when he said—

"Why should we have any confidence in an illegitimate minority Government which has not won a general election and which therefore does not have the necessary mandate to govern?"

These were the words of the member for Brisbane Central. As I said, it is not a novel question. The coalition confronted a very similar question in 1996, when a facsimile of this motion was moved in relation to my Government. But there are key differences—very crucial differences—this time around.

I take issue with some of the arithmetic used by the member for Brisbane Central. At the 1995 general election the coalition that I led received almost 54% of the vote—a very clear majority of votes that ought by any reasonable standard have delivered a strong majority in the House, as a similar vote did for the Labor Government in 1992. Subsequently, at the by-election in the seat of Mundingburra the voters in that electorate, in the full knowledge of the potential that their vote could ultimately change the Government in line with the clear majority intention at the general election, increased the substantial swing to the coalition that had occurred at the general election. That was obviously a deliberate act. With the support of the Independent member for Gladstone, I was then able to form a minority Government which genuinely reflected the wishes of the people as expressed some eight months before and endorsed again by voters in north Queensland. Those were the circumstances in 1996.

What are the circumstances this time around? At the general election on 13 June, what was the vote recorded by the party whose leader today calls for a vote of confidence in his minority Government? Was it really 54%, as he claimed today? Was it a clear show of support for his party by a simple majority of the voters of Queensland? Was the Labor vote really 54%, as it was for the coalition under the same circumstances in

1995? It was nowhere near that level. Was it 50% plus one—a bare majority? No, it was not. It was not even 40%. It was the third lowest vote recorded by the Labor Party in the political history of Queensland and only marginally better than its 1974 result, when it was reduced to 11 members in this Parliament.

The party whose leader now seeks the confidence of this House for his would-be minority Government in fact achieved one of the lowest votes ever recorded on behalf of the Australian Labor Party in the history of this State—less than 40% or, depending on to whom one listens, somewhere between 38% and 39%. Six out of 10 Queenslanders voted for other candidates. Six out of 10 candidates voted for the composition of the Parliament that is reflected on the non-Government benches in this Parliament today. More than six out of 10! Over 60% of Queenslanders voted for parties other than the party led by the member for Brisbane Central, who now seeks the confidence of this House to form a Government.

Government members interjected.

Mr BORBIDGE: We are seeing the Premier's new standards of parliamentary debate in action! We heard him in confidence. You said it is a matter of leadership. Show us some leadership in regard to your troops, Mr Premier.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will address his remarks through the Chair.

Mr BORBIDGE: So what we have at the end of the process of the 1998 general election are the following groupings and the members elected to this Parliament by the people of Queensland and who comprise the House today: 44 Labor members, with 43 on the floor given your election, Mr Speaker; 32 coalition members; 11 One Nation members; and two Independents. The 45 members who comprise the non-Labor majority of the House share between us the support of in excess of 60% of Queenslanders. That is the key difference—the crucial difference—between the circumstances that we confront today and the circumstances of yesterday.

There is no clear-cut guide via a majority of votes for the established parties to guide the Independents in their actions and to take some of the stress out of the issue for them. There is no clear-cut will of the people. In fact, on this occasion the decision as to which side of the House to support is made particularly difficult by the composition of this place. That deserves some comment, because clearly the

composition of this House represents a watershed in the history of this place and of our democracy in this great State.

I wish to say this about the current state of play: the composition of this House represents the will of the people. Those people who sought to disrupt the proceedings of the House and demonstrate outside on Tuesday should take note of that. The composition of this Parliament represents the will of the people. This Parliament has been duly elected. Candidates presented themselves to the electorate in one of the most robust and genuine democratic societies on this planet. There were no riots and fires in the streets during the election campaign. There were no overturned buses, no gunfire and no knocks on doors in the middle of the night. This is the Parliament that a peaceful democracy has delivered. Leader writers can gnash their teeth about that. The politically correct can throw up their hands in horror. Commentators can swoon, faint and generally fall about all over the place. But if they want to, they can take their bats and balls and go home in disgust, and so be it. However, we do not have that option. It is not open to us. We are the servants of the people who have elected us. It is from this democratically elected Parliament that we must form a Government. That is our job.

The member for Nicklin has signalled that the Government that will emerge from this Parliament will be a minority Labor Government. I am sure that all honourable members look forward to the contribution of the member for Nicklin. I say to the member for Nicklin today, as the member for Brisbane Central said to the member for Gladstone in similar circumstances in 1996, that there will be no vindictiveness from this side of the House towards him. The difference is that I mean it, whereas the member for Brisbane Central—the new champion of parliamentary standards—showed time and time again that he did not mean it. If the honourable member for Nicklin doubts my comments, I suggest that he consult the member for Gladstone.

However, I must say that I do have one expression of disappointment in relation to part of the decision-making process that the honourable member for Nicklin attended to. It concerns the costings of election promises provided to the member by both the Labor Party and the coalition. This issue goes to the heart of why the Labor Party does not deserve the confidence of this House. I refer, of course, to that party's \$1.5 billion in unfunded election promises, and the grave dangers inherent in that burden on the taxpayer.

I provided to the member for Nicklin Treasury's costings of the coalition's promises and the independent review of those costings by Ernst and Young. The same was done for the Labor costings. The results of that exercise, engaging hundreds of pages of material, were simply not matched by the two-page review of Labor's costings by that party's long-time company of choice in such matters. There were variations—incredible variations. My offer to the member for Nicklin, which I am sure he will recall, was that I should and would make available to him officers of the Treasury so that he could ask whatever questions necessary in order to reach a comfortable position on the topic.

There is clear bipartisan support for the great expertise of the Queensland Treasury. It is obviously the finest Treasury in the country. The results show that. The member for Nicklin needed only to have asked the member for Brisbane Central whether talking to the Treasury would have been worth while—generating results that he could trust—because the member for Brisbane Central has, on a number of occasions, been very warm in his praise of the Treasury. Indeed, in the flip side of this debate in 1996 the honourable member said—

"Does anyone actually believe that the Treasury would indulge in trickery? Of course not! The Treasury is a proud institution in this State."

So it is to the extent that, when the member for Brisbane Central, again in this same debate in 1996, sought the ultimate tick for Labor's election costings for the 1995 campaign, he turned to Treasury. He said—

"... there was every reason to have confidence in the election commitments given by the Labor Party. Every one of them was costed by Treasury."

So I was genuinely and, I must say, I think justifiably disappointed when the member for Nicklin passed up that opportunity. It remains my deep conviction that one of the key reasons why Labor cannot be entrusted with the sound public financial resources of this State is that it eats away at them at every opportunity it gets. I know that there were many apologists for the Labor Party last time around. Labor was said in particular quarters to have managed the economy reasonably well. That is nonsense on a wide variety of fronts.

Let us take unemployment. The member for Brisbane Central claims that one of the main reasons why his Government will be good for Queensland is that it will concentrate

on jobs, jobs, jobs. The very same words were used by the former member for Logan from 1989 to 1996 when the member for Brisbane Central was initially on the outer and then well and truly an insider. What was the result? Unemployment under Labor went from 6.9% when it took office to over 11% before settling in the 9s and 10s right up to when it left office. The coalition brought it down to the 8% range for six solid months this year. That is the record: under Labor, unemployment went up; under the coalition, unemployment went down. Now the party that took 6 and gave us 11 is going to give us 5! On the performance last time, it is more likely to be 10, 11, 12 or 13. It is a number that will haunt the member for Brisbane Central.

In relation to public funds, what was the record? A \$400m black hole in the workers compensation scheme! Now the Labor Party is repeating the mistakes. It is getting ready to undo the reforms that have returned that fund to balance and to credit. That was more than matched over time by raids on every hollow log in the State, from the Auctioneers and Agents Fidelity Guarantee Fund in one early instance to almost every accessible trust fund on the books to the extent that hundreds of millions of dollars went out of the State's coffers in those raids.

I well remember in 1996 the incoming coalition Government inherited from Labor the worst surgery waiting times in Australia. Forty-six per cent of Category 1 patients were waiting for their surgery after 30 days; when we left office, it was down to 2%. We turned the longest waiting times in Australia into the shortest. When the coalition took office, education spending in Queensland, under Labor, was wallowing amongst the also-rans nationwide. Today, for the first time in our history, education spending in this State is above the national average.

At the conclusion of Labor's last term in office, Queensland rated just ahead of Tasmania in terms of economic growth. Today it leads the country and is well positioned to stay in front. Police numbers grew under us after actually declining in the final stages of the Goss Government. Labor dithered over a new Criminal Code for six years; we delivered a new Criminal Code in 18 months. These are just some of the stark contrasts between Queensland under Labor and Queensland under the coalition.

Is it any wonder that members on this side of the House find it difficult to contemplate confidence in a party which sentenced this great State of ours to

mediocrity? Now, it seems, we are to have a Premier—the first in this State for many years—who will throw out all arms of the so-called trilogy. Labor established clearly last time around that the full funding of all public liability schemes was just a smokescreen. The member for Brisbane Central has indicated his preparedness now to borrow and to borrow beyond the previous constraint that borrowing would only be undertaken for projects that could fund the debt, and his Treasurer recently would not rule out increases in taxes and charges in the coming remake of the Budget despite his dishonest attempt to allege black holes in our Budget and his failure to read the Budget papers.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The Premier has accused me of dishonesty. I find that personally offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr BORBIDGE: I will withdraw that comment and say clearly that the new Treasurer is unable to read the Budget documents of the previous Government. There is no black hole; if he says anything to the contrary, he is telling an untruth.

That brings me to the moving of the coalition's amendment to this motion. It aims to ensure honesty and accountability from both the member for Brisbane Central, in particular, and the member for Nicklin. I refer, of course, to the very significant undertakings given in writing to the member for Nicklin by the member for Brisbane Central, which the Premier tabled today.

I commend the amendment to the House. In the short time left to me, I reject the mechanism that the Labor Government is seeking to create to generate increased revenue for itself by way of increased State taxes and charges in the forthcoming Budget. In relation to the allegation by the Treasurer, for example, of a \$120m black hole in the Budget papers in respect of the Pacific Motorway, I say that the funds are in there. They are in the Budget papers prepared by Treasury. I just make the point—

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The former Premier seems to be trying to continue his allegation against me. The Leader of the Opposition is deliberately misleading the House. The Forward Estimates do not contain the \$120m for the Pacific Motorway, as the former Premier knows. I ask for that comment to be withdrawn.

Mr BORBIDGE: I cannot withdraw something that was in our Budget. It was clearly there. Is it not typical that they will not stand debate? The first time that we have a

debate in this place, they are trying to sit us down.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will address his remarks through the Chair.

Mr BORBIDGE: Certainly.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the clock, Mr Speaker.

Mr BORBIDGE: Mr Speaker, can I just express regret that the Government has not extended the Leader of the Opposition the same courtesy that we extended to the member for Brisbane Central.

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition is persistent in his tactics to try to mislead the House. Now he has talked until he is out of time, so he will not withdraw. I took a point of order. I asked the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw remarks that he had made.

Opposition members: What remarks?

Mr HAMILL: His remarks added further to his earlier remarks when he accused me of dishonesty. I find those remarks offensive. I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member finds the Opposition Leader's remarks offensive.

Mr BORBIDGE: Mr Speaker, out of respect for the Chair, I will withdraw. Can I just say that our Budget documents and our independent costings speak for themselves. The member has been caught out.

Dr WATSON (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (11.28 a.m.): I rise to speak against the motion and to support the amendment to the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. It is simply not possible to have any confidence in this so-called new Labor Government, because across the Chamber are the same faces and the same failures with, of course, the same favours owed to their union mates. The other day I was asked by a constituent of mine, "What keeps you going in politics?" I answered, "The same thing that has always kept me going: a desire to leave the place better than I found it." I think that sentiment or something close to it is what motivates most of us involved in political life.

The trouble with Labor Governments is that, although each individual Labor member may be doing his or her best to leave the place better than they found it, Labor as a whole has a sorry history of leaving States and countries a lot worse off than when they found them. Labor left Victoria an economic basket case; Labor left South Australia bankrupt;

Labor left Western Australia a billion dollars worse off; and Labor left Australia a \$10 billion deficit in its last Federal Budget. True to form, Labor was well on the way to leaving Queensland deep, deep in debt.

This Labor Government—the one that those opposite would like to have confirmed today—is very lucky because it has found Queensland in a lot better condition than it was when Labor left office two and a quarter years ago. When we came to Government in early 1996 we called for an independent assessment of the State's finances. The Queensland Audit Commission report said that, if unchecked, the operating deficit in this State would blow out to \$2.7 billion by the year 2006. Let me quote from that report. It said this—

"There is an inbuilt trend on existing policies, practices and planning assumptions to further progressive deterioration in the operating position year to year. Without corrective action the State's operating result would deteriorate by around \$200m a year to reach \$2.7 billion by 2005-06."

The coalition was the corrective action for which Queensland was crying out. I believe that when the dust has settled on the crash—and by that I refer to the One Nation express train which hit the Queensland coalition Government on its way to Canberra—historians will record that the National/Liberal coalition Government from February 1996 to June 1998 was a very good Government for Queensland. It was a Government which put the brakes on Queensland becoming another Labor basket case. It was a Government which laid down the policies to make Queensland prosper in the 21st century. It was a Government which left this State better than it found it. In 28 months we doubled economic growth, we created 91,000 jobs and we increased capital works spending by 50%. In short, we left this State a lot better than we found it.

In speaking against this confidence motion I intend to cover three important areas: firstly, how Labor failed in its last term in government; secondly, how the coalition succeeded in its last term; and, thirdly, why Labor is doomed to failure in its new term in Government. Let us open Labor's scrapbook from 1989 to 1996. Perhaps it is as well to start with the Public Service Management Commission. The PSMC spread fear and loathing throughout the Public Service and totally politicised the whole process. No senior public servant could be promoted without

Kevin Rudd's say-so. If one had never called someone else "comrade" one had little chance of climbing the Public Service ladder.

Let us turn some more pages of Labor's scrapbook. We come to education. In some years under Labor, while thousands of southerners were pouring into Queensland and our population was booming, teacher numbers actually went backwards. In talking of things going backwards under Labor, we must note that police numbers did not keep pace with community requirements. Under Labor, the last thing a person wanted to do in Queensland was to become ill. The honourable member for Capalaba was in charge of our health system and people had to wait a long time to get better. It was a long wait.

If I may digress for a moment while on the subject of the honourable member for Capalaba: it is interesting to note that two and a half years ago in this very same debate the honourable member told this House that the coalition "came into Government through the bathroom window protected by a silver spoon." Labor has come into Government in a pair of Wellington boots! One cannot run very fast in a pair of Wellington boots. While Mr Beattie was Health Minister and spent 100 days consulting, the consulting rooms of the surgeons just became more crowded. When the coalition came to Government it found that 49 out of every 100 patients waited longer than the recommended time for Category 1 elective surgery. Today, after a little more than two years under the National/Liberal coalition less than two patients in a hundred wait longer than the recommended time.

As I look across the Chamber, I am reminded of some other scrapbook moments from Labor's last time in Government. I remember the infamous HOME scheme initiated by Tom Burns and later presided over by the honourable member for Chatsworth. HOME was supposed to mean home ownership made easy. It turned out to be misery for thousands of Queenslanders. While the honourable member for Chatsworth was Minister for Housing the Queensland Audit Office identified no fewer than 6,900 serious accounting problems with the department's housing section. Compare this with our record. Under the good management of the coalition, that same department received a clean bill of health. It received an unqualified audit report.

I notice the honourable member for Yeronga and the honourable member for Murrumba on Labor's front bench. Both honourable members have held the portfolio

of Attorney-General at some stage. However, when it comes to crime fighting, the two honourable members were not Batman and Robin, the dynamic duo. In fact, they were the dud duo! Their contribution to Labor's scrapbook was to make jail the last resort for violent criminals and to so soften the Criminal Code as to make criminals the victims.

We come to the honourable member for Ipswich. Labor would need a separate scrapbook for his koala tunnel fiasco. When Mr Hamill was at the helm, the Department of Transport was going to spend \$73m of taxpayers' money to save an endangered species. That endangered species, of course, was the four Labor members affected by the proposed eastern tollway. As if planning to put the road through a State forest was not bad enough, Labor then compounded the problem by deciding to build the road under the forest to save the koalas. The extra cost amounted to \$73m. The plan was to reforest the area above the tunnel. The only problem was that Mr Hamill's brilliant plan allowed for only 900 centimetres of topsoil to support the mature gum trees. I hope his plans for Treasury have more depth. With a scrapbook like that, it is impossible—and, I might add, immoral—to support a vote of confidence in this Government.

I come to my second point. My colleagues will discuss the achievements of the coalition in various portfolios in more detail as this debate unfolds. However, for the benefit of the many new members in this House I want to recap some of the achievements of the coalition in its short term in Government. Queensland provided more than one in every two jobs created in Australia in the 12 months leading up to the election. Just before the election, unemployment hit its lowest level in seven years. We promised to create 50,000 jobs in 12 months. We did it in just nine months. We kept Queensland as the low tax capital of Australia. Our last Budget—for which I commend the member for Caloundra, Mrs Sheldon—contained no new taxes. In fact the Budget cut existing taxes. I notice that the new Treasurer is already scrapping that Budget.

The coalition boosted spending in key areas of need. As the Leader of the Opposition indicated, all these programs were fully costed. We provided almost 2,000 more teachers, 412 more police and 374 civilians for the Police Service and an extra 1,000 staff for Queensland Health. We successfully merged Suncorp with the QIDC and Metway to give this State a big player in the financial game. We introduced wide-ranging industrial relations

reforms. We introduced the toughest crime laws in Australia. Despite not having a majority, we implemented 90% of the policies that we took to the people of Queensland in July 1995. In short, we left this State in a lot better condition than that in which we found it.

I turn now to my third and final point. Why do I believe that Labor is doomed to fail in this new term? Put simply, Labor has been given Government based solely on stability, not ability. The Leader of the Opposition has already referred to the letter written by Mr Peter Beattie on Thursday, 25 June to the honourable member for Nicklin, Mr Peter Wellington. I believe that we should call this letter the "Peter principles". For those members who are not conversant with management texts, I point out that the original meaning of "Peter principle" is that a person gets promoted to his or her level of incompetence.

Mr Hamill interjected.

Dr WATSON: I am glad that the Treasurer picked that up. In some cases the person may get promoted even further than his or her level of incompetence.

I return to the other "Peter principles". In his letter to Peter Wellington, Peter Beattie penned this little gem—

"Labor will maintain a surplus Budget framework and in each year will further reduce net debt."

I have already informed the House where we were headed under the last Labor Government, and it was not to reduce net debt any further. In fact, it was to get deeper into debt. We were headed for a Budget deficit by the year 2006 of \$2.7 billion.

Mr Fouras interjected.

Dr WATSON: What the Commission of Audit report showed quite clearly and unequivocally was that the percentage of recurrent expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure was increasing at such an alarming rate that we were going to have a deficit year after year, and that is why it was building up to 2005-2006. There was absolutely no question about that.

Mr Elder: It was a political document and devalued as such.

Dr WATSON: It was a political document. The commission was chaired by Vince FitzGerald—the very individual who was head of the Federal Department of Finance under Labor.

Mr Elder: Found to be flawed.

Dr WATSON: Come off it! Is the Deputy Premier saying that the individuals involved from the business community here were political? That is simply not true. That was shown quite clearly. If the member had gone to some of the business functions around town he would know that not only was it shown in that document in that first year but in subsequent years it was demonstrated that the coalition reversed that trend in its first Budget and did so over the next two successive Budgets. We are going to be looking to see what this Government does. At any rate, let me return to what I was saying before the Deputy Premier interjected.

After just two and a half years in Opposition, and under these new Peter principles, Labor is suddenly going to turn around and reduce debt each year. Put simply, I do not buy it. In fact, I cannot buy it. I simply cannot believe that the Socialist Left members, such as the honourable member for South Brisbane, the honourable member for Mount Gravatt or the honourable member for Cook, are suddenly going to adopt a financially responsible outlook.

Mr Elder interjected.

Dr WATSON: The member for Capalaba does not have the numbers in caucus. The Socialist Left always had one solution for any problem: throw other people's money at it. They are not going to change, and Labor is not going to change. We can have no confidence in a Government which has no concept of long-term fiscal responsibility, and we certainly cannot have confidence in a Government which undervalued its election promises by \$1.5 billion. If the way Labor costed the tilt train is any guide, we will end up with Thomas the Tank Engine.

The Commission of Audit showed clearly that, under Labor, Queensland was sailing into rough waters. By the year 2006, every baby born in Queensland would have entered this world with \$800 of public debt hanging over its head. Fortunately, the coalition came in and righted the ship. We were unfortunate that a shock wave called One Nation washed us overboard, and a new captain and crew—by default, not by design, as has already been said by the Leader of the Opposition—has taken over. We have no confidence in the new captain. We have no confidence in his crew. That is why members on this side of the House are going to vote against the motion moved by the Premier and seconded by the Deputy Premier, and that is why I have seconded the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr HORAN (Toowoomba South—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.44 a.m.): I do not think that members will ever see another Government that achieved as much in just two short years as did the previous coalition Government. On every single point we got in there and cleaned up the mess that was left behind. That took a few months. The important thing was that what we delivered to Queensland was, first of all, jobs. We delivered about 91,000 jobs in just two years. Those 91,000 new jobs represented 40% of the new jobs created in Australia, even though Queensland had only 18% of the Australian population.

I well remember last November picking up a Sydney Morning Herald and seeing on its front page a very striking graph that showed how far in front Queensland was in the creation of new jobs throughout Australia. It made one feel proud that we had a Government of such calibre at the time—a Government that, according to the Sydney Morning Herald, created something like 60% of new jobs in Australia. Queensland led economic growth in Australia. We had about 4.5% economic growth for the past 12 months, compared with about 2.2% growth in the rest of Australia. We increased by 50% the public Capital Works Program in Queensland. That provided real jobs for people—jobs for contractors and subcontractors and the apprentices who worked for them. That was reflected in the huge increase in the number of new jobs created here in Queensland. But the important thing about that was that, of that huge increase in capital works, we made sure that more than 50% of it was spent outside the south-east corner of Queensland—outside the capital city—because that is where more than 50% of Queensland's population resides.

Some of the achievements of the coalition Government were enormous in their magnitude. I ask members to look at the water infrastructure that was commenced. Over \$2 billion of water infrastructure would have provided real jobs in rural and regional Queensland. Look at what we achieved in Health. Some \$2.4 billion of capital works were commenced and under way under the former Government. At the end of our term, some 125 projects were either under way or completed.

Look at what was achieved in relation to putting extra police on the beat and the additional jails that were going to be built around the State, creating jobs. Look at the lift in education under Leading Schools, whereby communities, towns and districts could be a part of their schools and could have input and

some real pride in the type and style of education that they provided. Look at the electricity reforms that the coalition Government introduced and the way in which we were able to reduce by 5% the cost of electricity to small business. That represented a real and solid improvement for small business. Look at what we did with the DPI. We brought staff back there. The heart and soul of the DPI had been ripped out during six disastrous years of Labor.

Mr Cooper: Do you know how many they cut out in that time?

Mr HORAN: No.

Mr Cooper: Six hundred and ninety!

Mr HORAN: It is hard to believe that it could be that many. It is no wonder that people could not find a stock inspector. It is no wonder that they could not dip their cattle for ticks. It is no wonder that they could not get any advice. It is no wonder that they felt lost and left alone. That is what the previous Labor Government did.

Members need only go for a drive down the Gold Coast Highway and have a look at the capital construction on that highway to see how the former coalition Government was an achieving Government. Look at some of the things that we did in relation to the Criminal Code, the Juvenile Justice Act and the Penalties and Sentences Act, the improvements that we brought about and the new confidence that came to Queensland with an achieving Government.

I believe that one of the greatest records of the previous coalition Government is going to be the new jobs that it created. We have heard much from the Premier, Mr Beattie, about his new unemployment target of 5%. It is interesting to note that, when he first mentioned it, the figure was 5%. But later he said, "That will be in a little bit of time." By the end of the week it was a one-year target. By the end of the next week it was a three-year target, and now it is a five-year target. So if people want a job in Queensland and they want to get into that little bracket above the 5% unemployment, they will have to wait until three years after the Olympic Games before they can get a job. Five years! How can someone who is 18 or 19 afford to wait five years? What we want to see is some action now. We do not want more consultation, meetings, seminars, talkfests and the whole lot of it. What we want are jobs, and what we want is action.

We were an achieving Government. We are used to doing things and making things

happen. That is what we would like to see in a Government in Queensland. In creating those 91,000 new jobs, we increased capital spending by 50%. That was one of the catalysts to making things happen in this State and creating new jobs. We also created the best possible business environment for the creation of new jobs through responsible economic management and practical support for the business sector. Under the coalition, Queensland gained a worldwide reputation as a pro-business State and as an investment destination in which global companies could have enormous confidence. Companies that demonstrated that confidence by moving or expanding were Voxson, Mack Trucks, Boeing, Comalco, Shell Coal, DHL, Dascom, John Deere, Qantas, Filtronic Comtek and Silicon Graphics, to name just a few. They are real companies and real jobs.

In Government, the coalition successfully protected Queensland from the upheaval in Asia. The Australian Bureau of Statistics for April this year revealed a 20.6% jump in trade. Those latest figures confirm the exporting strength that Queensland developed under the coalition. Every month of the 1997-98 year to April showed an increase in trade over the corresponding month in 1996-97. There was a total 18.5% increase over the first 10 months of 1996-97. The coalition worked hard to fireproof and to protect the Queensland economy from the upheaval in Asia through our demonstrated commitment to Asia and our innovative trade diversification strategy. However, through the actions of the Premier and the Deputy Premier, we are already seeing the Labor Government trying to put up a smokescreen about the Asian crisis, because they are not confident that they will achieve their jobs targets or match the performance of the previous coalition Government in creating many thousands of jobs.

The Treasurer, Mr David Hamill, has put the record straight. On 23 July an article in a newspaper stated—

"However, Treasurer Mr David Hamill said the news was not all bad, with a 1.8% growth in Queensland's economy in the March quarter.

This compared with a 0.3% growth rate for the rest of Australia."

I thank him for his compliment and imprimatur of the performance of the previous coalition Government. The article continues—

"According to the report, in the year to March, the economy grew by 4.7% compared to 3.3% nationally."

The article goes on to say—

"However, Mr Hamill said yesterday that a 21.5% jump in exports suggested the Queensland economy was well placed to absorb any negative impact from Asia.

'The March quarter Queensland State Accounts showed only a slight moderation in the rate of economic growth in the wake of the Asian economic crisis,' Mr Hamill said."

The fireproofing and protection of the economy by the previous Government, the exports and the trade that we put in place are of such dimension that they can protect this State from that problem.

The Queensland coalition promoted a significant presence in Asia through the Government trade and investment offices in Tokyo, Taipei, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Jakarta and Semarang. Queensland exporters are now supported also in China through the coalition Government's opening in 1996 of a trade and investment office in Shanghai. The extension of the Government's international network has complemented our Brisbane-based secretariats specialising in Japan, Korea, China, South-East Asia and Papua New Guinea. The coalition's trade diversification strategy has been a major driving force behind Queensland's strong export performance. A key plank in that strategy has been the expansion of trade and investment resources in Europe and North America. Queensland's trade and investment office in London was given a broader focus to target markets in Europe through the appointment of associate business advisers in France, Scandinavia, the Netherlands and Germany. Industry sectors targeted in Europe included IT & T, light metals, food, education, commodities and agribusiness. In the USA, Queensland opened a trade and investment office in Los Angeles, which is working to boost tourism numbers and film and television production investment.

A further key element in the coalition's trade diversification strategy was the targeting of non-traditional markets such as central Europe, India, South America, South Africa and the Middle East. I note that one of the Deputy Premier's first announcements was that he was going to target non-traditional markets. Obviously, he was reading from information about the various projects and programs that were put in place by the previous coalition Government. Coalition efforts to diversify our trade markets have been rewarded. The latest ABS figures show that exports to the United States are up

27.1%. Exports to the United Kingdom are up 20.6%. Exports to France are up 20.9%. Exports to Italy are up 72%. The coalition was the first Queensland Government to establish a Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. The coalition concentrated on market development and many productive relationships have been established with Governments and business leaders around the world. The coalition Government demonstrated an ability to open up new markets, find trade, make things happen and generate confidence in Queensland.

The latest trade figures—plus the \$16 billion in major projects committed, planned and proposed for Queensland—offer great hope for Queensland's future. Queensland is at a crucial stage in its economic development. The achievements of the coalition Government should return even greater dividends over the next three to five years. Unfortunately and tragically, Queensland has a Labor Government, which, on its past record, will ruin much of that great work that has been done. The last thing that the people of Queensland need is a Labor Government that has a track record of completely mismanaging the economy and a Premier who is responsible for multimillion-dollar debts in the Health Department and a \$1.2 billion blow-out in the Hospital Rebuilding Program. As I have said before, the Premier, Mr Beattie, the member for Brisbane Central, should never be let near a chequebook. One needs only to look at his previous record with the Health Department to see that, after only seven months, he left that department with a budget overrun of \$54m. Worse, he endeavoured to cover up that \$54m recurrent budget overrun by transferring \$43m of one-off capital funds from the Hospital Rebuilding Program.

Mr Johnson: All their capital works programs for hospitals—we put them on Budget after Budget for six years.

Mr HORAN: What happened? Under Labor they never happened. We put them on and did them.

As I was saying, the member for Brisbane Central tried to take \$43m of capital funds to cover up a deficit in recurrent funds. One of the worst accountancy mistakes that you can make is to use capital funds to cover recurrent expenses. If you do that, where will you find those recurrent funds in the next year?

Let us not forget that, under Labor, economic growth was 2% and unemployment rose to 11.2%. The record speaks for itself. Under Labor, for the first time in a generation,

Queensland had unfunded liabilities worth \$320m in Queensland's formerly great Workers Compensation Fund. When the coalition took office, Queensland had a Health budget with a \$120m problem consisting of unpaid accounts, \$54m worth of budget overruns, unfunded enterprise bargain payments, unfunded workers compensation payments and the \$24m worth of debt left behind by the previous Health Minister, Mr Elder. That was paid off at a rate of \$8m per year. The final \$8m payment is being made in the Budget this year.

Queensland also had declining police numbers, hospital waiting lists that were blowing out and criminals being sent to jail as a last resort. That was the legacy that we were left. We fixed the problems in just two short years. The coalition moved quickly to promote jobs growth through the introduction of industrial relations reforms that encouraged more flexible workplace arrangements to benefit both workers and employers and to help create jobs. The coalition amended unfair dismissal laws to ensure that everyone got a fair go. Unfair dismissal laws are now fairer and simpler for employees and employers. That is of great assistance to small business in particular. By winding back industrial relations laws in this State, the Labor Party wants to rob Queensland's small businesses of the opportunity to grow and prosper.

Labor's draconian industrial relations policy will stifle small business and slash hundreds of jobs that can be created by small business. When the coalition came to office, the Workers Compensation Fund was financially crippled, with spiralling common law costs and an unfunded liability of \$320m. Clearly, a decisive overhaul was needed to protect the rights of workers and employers. The coalition introduced the reforms that gave us one of the fairest and best-funded schemes anywhere in Australia. Once again, Labor wants to wind back the clock and reverse all the good work done by the coalition. It would once again cripple that fund and drive up the cost of premiums with the result that people will lose their jobs and the opportunity to have employment.

The Premier, Mr Beattie, has \$1.7 billion in unfunded election promises. How is he going to pay for them? He can do it only by putting Queensland in debt, raising taxes and charges, cancelling important recurrent programs or cancelling important capital works programs. That is the scenario that we are going to see as Labor struggles to find this \$1.7 billion for its unfunded promises that just simply is not there. Already, we have seen a

Labor Government that will destroy jobs by scrapping major projects in rural and regional Queensland. The \$2.1 billion worth of dam building projects, some of the most important projects for this State, including the proposed \$120m Nathan dam project on the Dawson River, are now all under threat by another Labor review. The State Development Minister, Jim Elder, has indicated that the new Labor Government does not support the expansion of the Callide power station or the Tarong power project. What about the jobs of those people in Biloela, Nanango, Kingaroy, or around Wandoan or Miles where there are other associated projects? What about the jobs of all of those people? Are they not real people? Do their jobs not count? The minute Mr Beattie came to Government, he sold them out.

Mr ELDER: I rise to a point of order. I find the remarks unparliamentary and I ask for them to be withdrawn. They are not true. I have not said that. I ask them to be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: The member will withdraw those remarks.

Mr HORAN: Whatever the Minister finds offensive, I withdraw. Basically, he is debating the point, but I will withdraw whatever it is that he wants withdrawn.

The point I am making is that the Minister has indicated already that he is going to turn his back on Tarong and Callide. The jobs of those people in Biloela, Nanango, Yarraman, Blackbutt and Kingaroy are all at risk. Those people have had their first taste of a Labor Government that is prepared to put at risk the jobs of people in rural and regional Queensland—their families and their lives—where employment is at its worst. Labor has already signalled its plan to axe the coalition's policy of building three 200-bed prisons in locations in regional Queensland in favour of one 600-bed prison. Again, that decision could cost up to \$54m in lost economic benefits to regional Queensland cities and hundreds of jobs. Are they not the people about whom we are talking who desperately need jobs? Have a look at the figures! The unemployment figure for the State might be around the mid 8% level, but the people in some of those regional areas where there is high unemployment desperately need some form of anchor or foundation to provide them with additional employment. That is what these three prisons would have done for those areas of high unemployment. Once again, Labor has turned its back on the people of regional and rural Queensland. So we see the Labor

Government already back to its old ways of ripping jobs and services out of the bush and not supporting regional and rural development.

Of course, we also saw the scrapping of the \$210m Briztram project just to appease the member for South Brisbane. How convenient that would have been for all of those students who wanted to use the footbridge or the tram bridge to get across to the University of Queensland. What a difference it would have meant to the people of West End. I wonder how they feel. In the process, \$65m has been lost.

In the time left to me, I turn to what the coalition Government achieved in Health and, once again, put that on the record. In summary, the coalition took a Health Department that was devastated by six years of Labor neglect and incompetence and dreadful morale, turned it around and made it a professional outfit that was confident in what it could do. It was a Health Department that could work within its budget, treat thousands more people, turn around the waiting times for urgent and semi-urgent elective surgery from the worst in Australia to the best, and set difficult targets—something that the Labor Party will not do—and achieve those targets. We reached targets in immunisation and targets in breast screening. What was achieved in Health was typical of what was achieved in all the other departments of the Queensland coalition Government.

We were an achieving Government which in two years delivered some of the greatest benefits that this State has ever seen and certainly will not see under a Labor Government. We are entering a period of great uncertainty as Labor comes in and tears down things which were achieved under a great coalition Government which made this a great State.

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—ALP) (Treasurer) (12.04 p.m.): Labor in Queensland has an enviable record of sound financial management. This Government is committed to maintaining the high standards of financial management that were achieved by the Goss Labor Government, which delivered State Budgets in surplus on six consecutive occasions. I might add that it was also the Goss Labor Government that delivered Queensland's zero net debt position.

Labor will uphold its reputation as Queensland's most responsible economic manager. Notwithstanding a somewhat uncertain economic climate in which the rest of the world is also looking at the implications for

the world economy arising from issues in Japan and other east Asian economies and notwithstanding the structural problems that we inherited from the coalition's flawed 1998-99 Budget framework, this Labor Government will deliver on its commitments.

In May, the coalition presented a proposal for a Budget. It was cynically drafted to mislead Queensland taxpayers and avoid parliamentary scrutiny of a variety of unfunded coalition promises. Indeed, the very timing of the Budget was clearly designed to circumvent any scrutiny of this cobbled-together document, particularly as the election was held so quickly afterwards. In its Budget framework, the coalition left \$725m in capital infrastructure commitments unfunded, including the Roma Street parklands, the Pacific Motorway and the cultural heritage centre, not to mention its failure to provide adequate dollars for service delivery.

It was very interesting to listen to the honourable member for Toowoomba South who spoke in the debate just a few moments ago. As Minister for Health, the honourable member for Toowoomba South tried to outdo Jim Hacker of Yes, Minister fame. It was in Yes, Minister that Jim Hacker had the perfect hospital. That was one without patients: no patients, no complaints. However, the former Minister for Health who sits opposite tried to go one better. In relation to the hospitals for Robina and Noosa, he decided that it would be much better to have hospitals without staff and patients. That way he did not have any industrial relations issues either. In other words, he came up with the perfect hospitals. According to Mr Horan, the perfect hospitals were hospitals without operating budgets.

That is the same coalition that now seeks to besmirch this Labor Government's economic responsibility. On 19 March 1996 in Brisbane, the then newly appointed Treasurer, Mrs Sheldon, addressed the Conservative Club outlining the then coalition Government's approach to financial management. She used the occasion to attack the former Labor Government's Budget for relying on one-off sources of funding totalling \$137m. There will always be one-off sources of funding in a Budget. However, the same coalition Treasurer brought down Budgets in which, to quote Queensland Treasury—the same organisation that this morning was so praised by the Leader of the Opposition—the coalition Government's financial position was held together through one-off transactions. More importantly, in its advice the Treasury said that that strategy was unsustainable. What were

the sorts of transactions to which the Treasury was referring? They were the \$850m which was taken out of the electricity industry through the debt for equity swap last year and, of course, the sell-down of Suncorp-Metway to pump up expenditure commitments in the Budget. Treasury warned that that was unsustainable in an ongoing fashion. It warned further that, therefore, there will be a deteriorating Budget position in the out years when those one-off transactions ran out.

This is the same coalition that in the last couple of weeks has tried to make political mileage out of the \$34m blow-out in the Fire and Rescue Authority budget—the same coalition whose leader and his colleagues were advised over a year ago about the blow-out but did nothing about it. Not only did they take no action; they also attempted to conceal the advice from the Queensland public. In March this year when the then Opposition Leader, the honourable member for Brisbane Central, attempted to inquire about the difficulties facing the Fire and Rescue Authority and seek information as to whether new taxes and charges were being required to fill the gap, the then Treasurer, the honourable member for Caloundra, said—

"There is no such tax, levy or any other thing that one might want to call it even being contemplated."

The members opposite are silent. Why should they not be silent, because their track record on the Fire and Rescue Authority is surely an embarrassment to each and every one of them.

Labor in Government and in Opposition took a very responsible approach to economic management. We undertook through KPMG a rigorous costing process to ensure that our election policies remained fully costed and fully funded within the existing budgetary framework. That costings document, which was approved by KPMG and provided to the member for Nicklin and to other interested parties, explicitly stated a number of assumptions. There are two important assumptions in that document which need to be recognised. One of the assumptions was—

"The projections are prepared on a no policy change basis with the exception of the specific initiatives that Labor has identified."

The other key assumption was—honourable members should listen to this, because it is very important—that the existing programs of the coalition Government, both capital and recurrent, were fully funded.

We were very much aware that we had to treat the coalition Budget with caution, because for two years we had witnessed the former Government attempting to sweep unfunded promises and black holes under the rug while evading the appropriate scrutiny of Parliament. I say here and now to each and every member of the Parliament that this Government will not play political games over economic management, as the coalition did, and we will not shirk the responsible decisions that good Governments are required to make.

Within weeks of our taking office our commitment to prudent economic management was demonstrated by our decision to return the compulsory third-party insurance scheme to full actuarial funding. Despite receiving advice in February this year from the Motor Accident Insurance Commissioner, the previous Government did nothing to address the unfunded position of the compulsory third-party insurance scheme. In fact, had the then Government acted on the advice it received, there would have been a \$13 increase in CTP premiums on 1 July. Nothing happened, and the increase had to be made \$16 just to get the fund back on balance. We do not resile from that because we have a firm commitment to ensure that the unfunded and contingent liabilities of Government are fully funded under a Labor Government.

On the subject of the position of Queensland motorists, I am sure all honourable members and Queensland taxpayers would be interested in the done deal—or should I say the "dumb deal"—that was done between the coalition Government in Brisbane and the coalition Government in Canberra over fuel excise.

On 5 August last year, the High Court handed down a decision that effectively invalidated State franchise fees on tobacco and liquor and, in the other States, fuel. At the request of the States and Territories, the Commonwealth implemented safety net measures by increasing excise duties on tobacco and petroleum and wholesale sales tax on liquor, with additional revenue generated to be returned to the States and Territories, and by introducing into Queensland a 100% windfall gain tax on refunds paid prior to 5 August 1997.

In the press release dated 13 October 1997 announcing this arrangement between Mr Borbidge, Mrs Sheldon and Mr Howard, it was stated by the Prime Minister that the safety net arrangement was such that no State or Territory was financially advantaged or

disadvantaged. All States and Territories have suffered under the arrangements. This is largely associated with changes in the timing of taxpayers' liabilities and the transition from the business franchise fee regime to the safety net arrangements.

In addition to all of those losses, the then Borbidge Government allowed Queensland to incur losses of some \$69.3m as a result of fuel subsidy payments far exceeding Queensland's fuel safety net receipts. That \$69.3m in fuel losses in 1997-98 was managed in a budgetary sense by a drawdown on departmental carryover funds.

Mr Johnson: That is not right.

Mr HAMILL: It is right, and the honourable member knows it. As these funds will be required by departments this year, that drawdown represented only a temporary solution to the problem. Beyond this, there is an ongoing loss for Queensland of around \$60m per annum. That represents a contribution by Queensland taxpayers of \$5m a month to fund the "dumb deal" that was done between Messrs Borbidge, Costello, Howard and, of course, Mrs Sheldon, the former Treasurer. That is just an intolerable situation.

What is more, the Commonwealth promised that there would be a review of these arrangements within six months to fix up any problems that may have occurred. At the March Premiers Conference, the former Government and the other State Governments just charged out, so that particular issue was not addressed. It has come to my attention that the Commonwealth may now be intending to waltz on its undertakings to the former coalition Government of Queensland. That is why I have written to the Federal Treasurer, the Honourable Peter Costello, seeking his urgent advice and his reaffirmation of the Commonwealth's commitments.

The important point is that the \$60m cost to Queensland taxpayers in revenue forgone is actually revenue that was included in the revenue Forward Estimates of the coalition Budget—and that is a fact. We need a reaffirmation from Treasurer Costello that Queensland will be fully compensated under the agreement as he and the former coalition Government in Queensland promised.

I note that the member for Caloundra is leaving the Chamber. Before she goes, she might like to reflect upon something else she told the Conservative Club lunch in 1996. She criticised the former Goss Government over

the level of budgetary carryovers. Mrs Sheldon said—

"The Coalition will make sure the entire capital works budget each year is in fact spent ..."

Again, the record tells a very different story indeed. I table for the information of all honourable members details of Consolidated Fund outlays and carryovers. I seek leave to have the table incorporated in Hansard for the information of all members.

Leave granted.

Queensland Consolidated Fund Outlays and Carryovers

| Year | Recurrent Outlays (\$M) | Recurrent Carryover (\$M) | Recurrent Carryover as % of Outlays |
|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1991-92 | 7,972.4 | 101.7 | 1.3% |
| 1992-93 | 8,163 | 157.1 | 1.9% |
| 1993-94 | 8,618.4 | 182.7 | 2.1% |
| 1994-95 | 9,212.1 | 261.9 | 2.8% |
| 1995-96 | 10,153.7 | 261.9 | 2.6% |
| 1996-97 | 11,532.6 | 402.5 | 3.5% |
| 1997-98 | 11,970.8 | 504.9 | 4.2% |
| Year | Capital Outlays (\$M) | Capital Carryover (\$M) | Capital Carryover as % of Outlays |
| 1991-92 | 1,023.8 | 62.4 | 6.1% |
| 1992-93 | 1,422.0 | 59.5 | 4.2% |
| 1993-94 | 1,397.4 | 128.4 | 9.2% |
| 1994-95 | 1,563.5 | 154.8 | 9.9% |
| 1995-96 | 1,493.3 | 178.5 | 12.0% |
| 1996-97 | 1,955.0 | 160.0 | 8.2% |
| 1997-98 | 2,275.6 | 231.5 | 10.2% |
| Year | Total Outlays (\$M) | Total Carryover (\$M) | Total Carryover as % of Outlays |
| 1991-92 | 8,996.2 | 164.1 | 1.8% |
| 1992-93 | 9,585.0 | 216.6 | 2.3% |
| 1993-94 | 10,015.8 | 311.1 | 3.1% |
| 1994-95 | 10,775.6 | 416.7 | 3.9% |
| 1995-96 | 11,647.0 | 440.4 | 3.8% |
| 1996-97 | 13,487.6 | 562.5 | 4.2% |
| 1997-98 | 14,246.4 | 736.4 | 5.2% |

Mr HAMILL: The table shows a very sorry state of affairs indeed. It shows that, for the 1997-98 year—these are figures that have just been produced by Treasury—5% of all Consolidated Fund expenditure could not be delivered last financial year by the coalition Government. That 5.2% of non-delivery of outlays is a new record. The total carryover was actually \$736.4m. The carryover in the previous year of the coalition Government was

\$562.5m, or 4.2% of total Consolidated Fund outlays.

On the capital side of the Consolidated Fund budget, the coalition's lack of performance last year was second only to its capital works freeze, which it delivered to the Queensland economy upon taking office in 1996. Of the Consolidated Fund allocations for capital works, more than 10% were not delivered by the coalition Government in its last year in office. That is a shameful performance because jobs, services and facilities have not been delivered to the people of Queensland.

The lacklustre performance of the coalition was simply not good enough and the Beattie Government will put its money where its mouth is. We will outperform the coalition in the area of capital works. We are determined to do so. Certainly there will be no capital works freeze under Labor. There has not been and there will not be.

I make another point arising out of those figures. Under the coalition we saw the continued ramping up of the capital works budget but in a deceitful way. Even though coalition members came into this House and talked about capital programs of \$4.5 billion and \$4.8 billion, the then Government was never able to get capital expenditure up to \$4 billion. What is the good of coalition members running around the State saying, "We are spending \$4.5 billion in capital works", or \$5 billion in capital works—we could even say \$7 billion or \$8 billion in capital works—when they know and we know that the then Government was not able to spend even \$4 billion in capital works? I think it is time for the deceit to end. I think it is time we went back to a basis of honesty and integrity. As a Government, we pledged ourselves to delivering on capital works. We will increase the effort on capital works, but we are not going to do as the coalition did and try to con people into believing that works are happening when in fact works are not happening.

Last week I spent considerable time speaking with representatives of the financial markets in Sydney and Melbourne to explain Labor's fiscal framework and economic policies. In the light of the election it is fair to say that the financial markets have viewed Queensland with some concern. In particular, some of the economic policies being peddled by some of the parties before the election raised real questions in the minds of those in the financial markets. That perception of uncertainty resulted in the value of Queensland Treasury Corporation bills falling

by five basis points, which directly affects the cost of Queensland Government borrowings. That decline in the value of our bills effectively eliminated our advantage over New South Wales. Had the markets continued to view Queensland in that way, it would have cost the State an additional \$8m to \$9m per year to undertake the responsible borrowings needed to fund our economic growth.

I am pleased to advise that, following our message of economic certainty and fiscal responsibility being delivered, the markets have responded very favourably indeed. By the end of last week, QTC bills had recovered to a two to three point advantage over the bills of other States. We will increase that advantage further as we get our message into the international arena. The Beattie Government will continue to press home this message to the benefit of Queensland and Queenslanders.

The following are the principles within which we will frame our September Budget. Firstly, we will deliver and we will maintain Queensland's competitive tax environment. We have a low-tax status, and we will ensure that our taxes, charges and so on remain below the average of the other States. Secondly, we will fully fund employee entitlements and the other contingent liabilities of Government. That is what we did with compulsory third-party insurance, and the markets recognised that. However, we will also deliver in relation to workers compensation and public service superannuation.

Thirdly, in relation to borrowings the Government will ensure that borrowings—and, I might say, the financial arrangements equivalent to borrowings—are restricted to those bodies, projects and activities that can service those obligations from their revenue streams. Fourthly, we will maintain an overall State Government surplus not only in the Consolidated Fund but also in GFS terms. Fifthly, and very importantly as we move to accrual output budgeting, we will at least maintain, and seek to increase, total State net worth.

The Beattie Labor Government has committed itself to fiscal policy principles that will ensure that Queensland's financial position remains among the best of any provincial Government in the world. Those principles are bona fide proof of the Government's respect for the importance of sound fiscal management as the cornerstone on which good government can be built.

This morning we heard a lot from the Leader of the Opposition about mandates and

what sort of support parties had in the Parliament. I remind the Leader of the Opposition that he speaks for about one in seven Queenslanders. At the recent election the National Party vote plummeted to around 15%. The Liberal vote was not much better. I remind the official Opposition in this place that collectively they represent fewer than one in three Queenslanders. How shameful it was to have the Leader of the Opposition trying to suggest that this Government does not have a mandate to deliver on its commitments, to deliver on jobs and on sound financial management.

The undertaking that the Premier gave the honourable member for Nicklin in his letter of 25 June was an undertaking that we would provide sound fiscal management for Queensland. The principles that I read out—the principles that I extolled to the financial markets—embody that commitment. And we will go further. I will be proposing a charter of fiscal and social responsibility that will encapsulate those principles, along with a strict regime of financial accountability and reporting, to further protect the State's position and to ensure that Queensland, under Labor, maintains its reputation as Australia's best run regional economy—the powerhouse of growth in Australia.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the next member, I remind members that this is the member's first speech in this place. I ask that honourable members afford him the courtesy of the House. I call the honourable member for Caboolture.

Mr FELDMAN (Caboolture—ONP) (Leader of the One Nation Party) (12.24 p.m.): We are here today to talk about confidence. In October 1996, a distinguished QC and an equally distinguished barrister-at-law released a detailed 219 page report into allegations of high-level corruption in Queensland which happened in the post-Fitzgerald era. In their conclusion, the eminent gentlemen called for a public inquiry in the national interest to investigate the serious allegations raised by a Mr Kevin Lindeberg.

The report was the professional work of Mr Anthony Morris, QC, and Mr Edward Howard, barrister-at-law. This is also the report that has been pigeonholed by previous Governments and, until the Premier comes clean on his intentions, it may very well be pigeonholed by this Government as well. And at whom is this report directed? It is directed at former Ministers of the Crown, five of whom presently sit on the Government benches. Shame, shame and shame!

It is the belief of many eminent people that those five members should not be sitting in this House because they have disqualified themselves by being directly—I repeat "directly"—involved in what has become known as Shreddergate. Shreddergate is that notorious decision by Ministers of the Crown in the Goss Labor Government to shred evidence required for trial and, in doing so, to deprive people before the courts of natural justice, to indirectly—I repeat "indirectly"—cover up child abuse in Government institutions and to pervert the course of justice in Queensland. The whole affair stinks to high heaven and cries out for resolution, restitution and for justice to be done.

The Premier, who has recently taken a high moral position in relation to this Parliament and its operation, now holds a position from which he can clean up this stinking mess and show that he is a man of principle and high moral fibre, as well as one of word and wind. We come here with no allegiance to either side of the House. We come here as One Nation to assist the member for Nicklin to decide on this motion of confidence. I move the following amendment to the motion by adding after the Opposition's amendment—

"Furthermore to remove the cloud of uncertainty and the taint of possible illegality hanging over the heads of current Government Ministers, being the Honourable Terence Mackenroth, the Honourable David Hamill, the Honourable Robert Gibbs, the Honourable Paul Braddy and the Honourable Dean Wells, arising from the findings of the report to the Honourable the Premier of Queensland and the Queensland Cabinet of an investigation into allegations by Mr Kevin Lindeberg, under the terms of reference granted on 7 May 1996 by State Cabinet to Mr Morris, QC, and Mr Howard of counsel by—

The Premier in his capacity as leader of the party in power when the Goss Cabinet of the same party met on 5 March 1990, and authorised the shredding of the Heiner documents, immediately—

authorising the release of all relevant Cabinet papers and documents pertaining to such destruction (the privilege documents); and

tabling those documents immediately with the Speaker of Parliament."

This is a matter of great importance, because today we are speaking to a motion of confidence in the Beattie Government, and his attitude to Shreddergate is one major issue upon which we can judge whether confidence or non-confidence is warranted. This is also a matter of accountability. One Nation wants to see whether the Premier is truly accountable to the Queensland people for actions, rightly or wrongly, committed by members now sitting on the Government benches and, in today's case, including five of those members who were Ministers in the 1990 Goss Cabinet.

Shreddergate has contaminated every arm of Government and set tongues wagging in every corner of the Public Service, and since exposed by the Courier-Mail set most Queenslanders' tongues wagging in anger and disbelief. Shreddergate is a cancer of systemic corruption that dates back to 5 March 1990. It was then that the Government embarked upon one of the most extraordinary initiatives in Australian political history: to knowingly shred public records to stop their use in known court proceedings and to cover up suspected child abuse at the John Oxley Youth Detention Centre. There is hardly a more serious breach of public trust in the recent history of public administration.

This House would like to hear from the five members involved in that notorious Cabinet action. They all sat around the Cabinet table and decided to shred evidence. The other 13 members have seen the light and have since departed from this House. One Nation is resolved that this House will not tolerate such action so incompatible with the high standards that the Premier seeks for this Parliament.

Shreddergate involved a fundamental question of whether Executive Government is beyond the law—the same law to which we are all accountable. If Executive Government is beyond the law, then our notion of equality before the law is now history and absurd—and down the drain with such rights under the great Bill of Rights as the right to own and carry firearms.

Shreddergate also involves the proper and impartial protection of records. One must question the part played in this affair by our super watchdog, the Criminal Justice Commission. We are told that not once since 1990 has the CJC spoken to the key witness at the State Archives. The Australian Society of Archivists has gone public to reject totally the CJC's position, and with good cause. The Australian Society of Archivists has no axe to grind; it seeks only to uphold the professional

reputation of its members. I ask: can we in this Chamber do differently? That is a serious question. Can we in this Chamber do differently?

One Nation seldom agrees with the Australian Democrats, but apparently we are in accord where Shreddergate is concerned. Senator Woodley told the Commonwealth Senate in May 1997 that Shreddergate threatened our Government's accountability and democracy and the administration of justice. This is what he said, and I commend it to the House—

"The issue at stake is essentially a simple one, but one of great importance. If the Crown or the State, through its statutory keeper of public records, cannot be relied on to impartially and independently protect public records from destruction when those records are known to be required or foreshadowed in court proceedings or when it is known that they are the subject of a legally enforceable access statute, the due administration of justice is gravely imperilled."

According to the evidence, the State Archivist could have broken the chain of systemic corruption as early as May 1990. By remaining silent, the Archivist became party to the cover-up and the shredding of child abuse evidence. We have fresh evidence that the Archivist also allowed child abuse evidence to be shredded. Senator Woodley has underlined this ongoing situation. One Nation cannot and will not tolerate such a situation. We would urge other members not to tolerate such an on-going situation, either.

The Government cannot hide behind the CJC. It cannot claim that the CJC has investigated Shreddergate thoroughly or impartially. A smokescreen will no longer fool anybody. It certainly will not fool any One Nation member of this Parliament. Indeed, the CJC's handling of the Lindeberg allegations must also be scrutinised. Why? Because its approach to this affair has been scandalous! The performance of senior CJC officers has been a travesty of justice. The CJC must account for its performance. It must also be accountable. It must account for its performance in an open forum.

One Nation's attitude towards the CJC is this: we cannot and will not accept its continuing existence if it cannot guarantee that it will act with honesty, integrity and impartiality in all cases, no matter what the political consequences might be. Shreddergate clearly puts the CJC in the dock. The jury will stay out until all the facts are

known. Only the tabling of the 5 March 1990 Cabinet papers and associated documents will assist in cleaning up the mess and return good Government to Queensland. One Nation does not like and will not support the carrying of bad baggage for the sake of the guilty ones.

The Constitution Act of 1867 deals with the powers and privileges of Parliament. Section 41, in particular, says—

"The Legislative Assembly of the said State and any committee of such House duly authorised by the House to send for persons and papers may order any person to attend before the House or before such committee as the case may be and also to produce to such House or committee any paper, book, record or other document in the possession or power of such person."

The do nothing attitude will simply mean business as usual. It might also suggest that the Premier does not acknowledge the gravity of Shreddergate and its implications. Let me advance a few examples to illustrate its gravity.

Let us consider the Crown law office. It gives Government advice on countless matters of vital importance. The evidence would indicate that Crown law assisted in the obstruction of justice in Shreddergate. It appears to have bowed deeply to the unlawful wishes of Cabinet in the destruction of documents, knowing that they were evidence for imminent court proceedings.

A dark cloud hangs over Crown law because it just cannot offer Government advice on this matter because it has a vested interest in the outcome. Every member of this House must know that, if Crown law advice is correct, that advice will be followed. Crown law must acknowledge the rights of citizens and not just the wants of Executive Government. A dark cloud hangs over Crown law that can be cleared only by the presentation of the relevant Cabinet documents.

We call on the Premier to remove the stench about Crown law because of Shreddergate by acting quickly to clear up the mess. The scandal also touches the police, the Audit Office, the Office of the Information Commissioner, the Director of Public Prosecutions and others. We call for the Cabinet documents because the system cannot be trusted any more. The situation is incredible, totally incredible!

The Office of Public Prosecutions looked at the Morris/Howard report and concluded

that it was not in the public interest to pursue the matter. We might well ask, "Whose public interest?" It certainly was not in the interest of the public that we know—the 438,000 or so electors who voted for us. At the same time, the same office pursued a railway worker for allegedly taking home shampoo samples and soaps, and it did so in the public interest. Shame, shame and shame! That case went back 20 years and was thrown out of court because the worker had come by the articles legally. There is a huge credibility gap in the administration of justice in Queensland.

Premier Beattie was one of those who protested against our soldiers being in Vietnam and gave encouragement to communist aggression in that once free country. He probably berated President Lyndon B. Johnson and chanted a pro-communist dirge such as, "LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?" In view of Shreddergate, Queenslanders today would be quite in style to berate Premier Peter D. Beattie by chanting a similar slogan such as, "PDB, how many abuses did you devise today?"

One Nation cannot and will not tolerate such corruption. We must send the right message to voters. We must assure the voters that evidence held by Government for important court trials will not be shredded or destroyed. We must send a message that evidence in child abuse cases will be protected and saved. We must send a message that individuals and businesses seeking legal redress from the State can be assured that important evidence will be preserved. We must send a message that taxpayers' money will never be used to bribe or to buy silence. We must send a message that law enforcement agencies operate on one standard alone—the best standard. We must send a message that this Parliament cares about truth and justice.

We call on every member of this House to think hard and seriously about the implications of Shreddergate. Let us put behind us all the attempts to avoid, bury, dodge and justify corruption. We have had too much of that in the past. Let us look ahead to a brighter and cleaner future where corruption such as Shreddergate will just be a memory. We urge this House to support the amendment to the motion in order to root out the villains in public office and wipe away the tears of those afflicted and victimised by a system gone mad.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I inform members that this is the member for Tablelands' first

speech in this place and I ask that he be afforded the courtesies of the House.

Mr NELSON (Tablelands—ONP) (12.40 p.m.): Isn't it good to see that this House is upholding that tradition already! I am ashamed to be here because of the actions of those on my left.

Mr Speaker, I second the amendment to the motion of confidence put forward by the member for Caboolture and I commend him for his tireless work on behalf of the people of Caboolture and all Queenslanders. The Police Service's loss is our gain. A motion of confidence is something that cannot be taken lightly or for granted. One Nation is very serious about its charter of accountability.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member needs to second the amendment.

Mr NELSON: I did.

Let me assure this Chamber, the business community, the media and all Queenslanders that One Nation has considered this matter of confidence very, very carefully, taking into account all relevant factors.

One Nation will move an amendment to the motion of confidence for many reasons. The people of Queensland demand a great many things from their members of Parliament. Honesty, integrity and the ability to admit to error and make amends are just a few. Our confidence in the Government would depend, of course, on its ability to provide us with the information that justice demands. I ask honourable members: why hide if there is nothing to hide from? Should the elected Government of this great State shrink from questions that have been asked for the last nine years, or should it provide these documents as, in the name of fairness, all Queenslanders would demand? Should we finally clear the air? How many people from different walks of life are affected by this shameful state of affairs—public servants, prison officers, unionists, the members of our own Police service? Shreddergate reaches into every facet of Queensland public life. It is often said, "Evil can only exist when good people do nothing."

I say: let all the good members of this Assembly do something to address this festering sore that continues to besmirch the good name of this great State. We cannot engage in the luxury of cooling off or take the tranquillising drugs of gradualism. A Government must be transparent. The people of Queensland have just cause to believe that successive Governments have been far from

transparent. The Heiner documents we ask for are an obvious example of Government non-compliance. The Premier has stated in part—

"The principle of Cabinet confidentiality is a cornerstone of good government in the Westminster tradition. No good cause has been made for compromising that principle."

I ask all honourable members: is it not good enough that members of the public demand the right to information? Is it not traditional in Westminster to afford the public rights to information whenever possible? It is not also traditional in Westminster for a Minister to stand down from his post when that Minister is under suspicion? I ask again: if there is nothing to hide from, then why hide?

If One Nation stands for anything, it stands for equality before the law and respect for the laws of this State and everything that flows from those principles. One Nation does not have confidence in the Beattie Government to govern this State by our standards and by the standards set by the Premier himself. The Premier has presented to this House a Government that carries within its ranks a terminal cancer of systemic corruption. It dates back to 5 March 1990 when the Goss Government embarked on one of the most extraordinary and unprecedented acts in Australian political history when it decided to knowingly shred public documents. It did this to prevent their use in known impending court proceedings. It also did this to prevent the exposure of suspected child abuse that existed at the John Oxley Youth Detention Centre at the time.

I personally find this abhorrent. I cannot reconcile this stance with any decent or well-meaning Government directive. Surely it is hard to imagine a more serious breach of public trust. In Shreddergate can be found all the ingredients upon which a democratic society is based. One Nation has, over the last few months, been a bastion of democracy, standing up against continuous attack by a hateful and violent fanatical Left intent on the destruction of our collective freedom. Here again One Nation must defend the democratic rights that we all hold to be fundamental to good government: equality before the law, respect for the law, and the question of whether Executive Government is beyond the reach of the law. All these principles are brought into question by Shreddergate.

Another principle corroded in Shreddergate is the proper and impartial protection of public records—something experienced first-hand by One Nation

members taking up their offices for the first time. The complaint about the shredding has been with the CJC since late 1990. The CJC is the so-called impartial super watchdog organisation and, according to the records, it has never—not once—spoken to the State Archivist. I ask: why not when she is a key witness? The CJC, the Government's champion of justice in this great State, has so misrepresented and twisted the role of the State Archivist for its own purposes to reach a finding of no official misconduct in the shredding that the impartial and respected Australian Society of Archivists has been forced to come out publicly and totally reject the CJC's position. The CJC's misrepresentation of the Archivist's role has enraged the world community of archivists and, may I add, with good cause. It is madness to suggest that a State Archivist anywhere, let alone in the great State of Queensland, can lawfully approve the destruction of public records, especially when she knows that they are required for court, that they are the subject of an access statute, or that they contain evidence of suspected child abuse. It puts her above the courts and it makes her a danger to the due administration of justice.

This great State is now a pariah State in how it manages its public records. That is totally unacceptable. On hard evidence, we have a rogue Archivist on our hands and no-one in authority, until now, seems to give a damn. We do! This is something that One Nation cannot and will not tolerate. The Australian Society of Archivists does not have a political axe to grind. It is not anyone's tool in this affair. I must say that it is no-one's fool, either. It seeks no political advantage, it is entirely independent and it speaks with absolute authority in its field. It seeks merely to uphold its profession's important role in a democratic society. We in this Chamber can do no less.

According to the evidence, had the Archivist done her job properly and impartially, she could have broken this chain of systemic corruption as early as May 1990. But she did not. She remained silent and became party to the cover-up. She is still allowing her statutory role to be critically misrepresented by the CJC without one murmur of public protest, whilst on the Internet she allows her State Archives work colleagues to condemn the CJC's position on their archivists' mail service line. If it were not so serious we would consider it a sick joke. One Nation cannot and will not tolerate an ongoing situation such as that set out by Senator Woodley. The fresh evidence that the

Archivist also allowed evidence of suspected child abuse to be shredded only heightens our concerns.

The Beattie Government cannot hide behind any claim that the CJC has investigated the shredding thoroughly and impartially. To do so would amount to an attack on the intelligence of the honourable members of this Assembly. The Heiner inquiry was no spat between public servants. The CJC's handling of this affair is quite scandalous. It now admits that it has never accessed all the available evidence. However, it still has the audacity and the gall to pretend that its findings have substance. The performance of senior CJC officers has been a travesty of justice. The CJC's independence and impartiality are in the balance. One Nation wants the CJC to account for its performance in an open forum. And if abuse of office has occurred, then let the full rigour and rage of the law fall upon the perpetrators where it is needed.

I ask again: if there is nothing to hide from, then why hide? One Nation cannot and will not accept the continuing existence of the CJC if it cannot be guaranteed that it will act with honesty and impartiality in all cases no matter what the political consequences may be. As far as One Nation is concerned, Shreddergate plainly puts the CJC's future in the dock.

Let me also deal very quickly with the office of Crown law so that this Parliament understands the gravity of the shredding and its implications. From the evidence it is quite clear that the office of Crown law assisted in the obstruction of justice in Shreddergate. It was prepared to sit back and allow records to be deliberately destroyed, knowing that it was evidence for imminent court proceedings and knowing that it was the subject of an access statute; it was prepared to bow to the unlawful desires of the Cabinet to destroy the material. The citizens of this great State are entitled to know that advice from Crown law is correct and that Cabinet will follow that advice once it knows what the law requires. Its advice must always recognise the rights of all citizens, not only the desires of Executive Government and its agencies.

Other One Nation members will highlight the other serious questions associated with this scandal, touching the police, the Queensland Audit Office, the office of the Information Commissioner and others. I call on the Premier, as a fellow Tablelander—if he is serious about being a man of integrity—to finally clear from this Parliament and our public

administration the stench of this festering sore that is Shreddergate.

How the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions could have suggested, after reading the Morris/Howard report, that it was not in the public interest to pursue this matter is beyond me. I am in shock. If the Premier does nothing and continues to avoid facing up to this systemic corruption inherited from the Goss regime while allowing the fatal five to stay at his Cabinet table, we will be entitled to ask what further abuses he is planning in the secrecy of the Cabinet room to save his old Labor mates, in particular the fatal five, from facing up to the legal and political consequences of their decision and the knock-on effects associated with the unlawful shredding, and the Premier will have failed his first real test of leadership. I can assure him that history will not forget.

One Nation will pursue this issue. We will pursue it down every burrow and at every opportunity in this Parliament, the Federal Parliament and in forums throughout the State and the rest of Australia. We will not tolerate this type of systemic corruption leeching on the body politic of this State just to save Labor Party hacks and to perpetuate the infectious poison of corruption which lingers over the head of this great State. One Nation implores the honourable members of this House to support the further amendment to the motion of confidence. We cannot and will not ignore the seriousness of Shreddergate and its continuing impact on the stable and clean government of this great State. Unless it is addressed, this Parliament will be sending a message to the electorate, the business community and the nation at large that Governments in Queensland, whenever they come into possession of embarrassing or hot public records that they know are required for impending court proceedings, will secretly shred them.

We will be sending a message that public records containing evidence of suspected abuse against children in lawful custody will also be secretly shredded. We will be sending a message that even when our Governments know that certain public records are the subject of a claim of access by law, they will be secretly shredded. We will be sending a message that any citizen or business contemplating legal action against the State of Queensland may have his or her course of justice obstructed by the Crown with impunity. We will be sending a message that our Governments are prepared to use taxpayers' money to buy the silence of public servants to cover up corrupt practices. We will be sending

a message that law enforcement agencies in Queensland operate by double standards—one for Executive Government, allowing it to get off the hook, and another for the rest of us.

We will be sending a message that trust in public office means absolutely nothing in this great State. Even in post-Fitzgerald Queensland, justice cannot be seen to be served. We will be sending a message that public records can be shredded on the basis of deliberately false and misleading information. And even when the deception is later discovered, our State Archivist is only too happy to cover up the deception perpetrated against herself and to cover up the offence. We will be sending a message that this Parliament does not care about integrity in public office, that this Parliament does not care about truth and justice. We will be sending a message that the Cabinet room in Queensland has turned into a place where plans to obstruct justice can be hatched and ordered at the expense of individuals' rights. We will be sending a message that the office of Crown law, pivotal in maintaining public faith in the system of justice, can and will generate complaint advice for Executive Government to suit unlawful political objectives.

I ask the member for Nicklin to think long and hard about what I have said in this Assembly today. I ask him to think about every aspect of Shreddergate. As a former policeman, councillor and solicitor, this should—no, this must—concern him. The facts are here to back up my claims. The member for Nicklin is now as much on notice of this unresolved case of systemic corruption as is anyone else. And should he attempt to avoid it, bury it, dodge it or justify it, he may rest assured that it will inevitably engulf him, just as it has engulfed the Beattie Government. I call on the member for Nicklin to defend the youth of this State from abuse, to defend the good people of Nicklin and, ultimately, to defend the citizens of this great State of Queensland.

Sitting suspended from 12.57 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Nicklin. I remind members that this is the member's first speech in this place. I ask honourable members to extend him the courtesies of the House.

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—IND) (2.30 p.m.): Mr Speaker and honourable members, I most humbly seek your patience and tolerance as I rise for the first time to pledge my support for Premier Peter Beattie and his Government. In pledging support for

the Labor Government, I stress that it is limited to confidence motions, the Appropriation Bills and a commitment that I will not abstain from voting. However, I will not support the Government if there is evidence of gross fraud, misappropriation or like illegal activities. I render this pledge because I believe in my heart that it is in the best interests of the people of Queensland.

My decision to support the Labor Government is not so much an endorsement of the Labor Party or of its policies, but more a chance to secure for Queensland stable government and to give certainty to Queenslanders. The alternative to Labor was a National/Liberal coalition with, maybe, the support of One Nation and my colleague Independent Liz Cunningham. My pro-Labor decision was made after discussions with all of the parties concerned and after much soul-searching. I will leave it to history to judge whether my decision was right or wrong.

Today I am overwhelmed with feelings of pride, humility and gratitude and am greatly honoured to be here. It is the realisation of a dream that began approximately 20 years ago when I was studying law next door at the Queensland University of Technology. I used to sit upstairs in the gallery, look down into this Chamber and wonder whether one day I would take my place in the Chamber. For helping to make that dream come true and bestowing on me this great honour, I thank most sincerely the people of Nicklin. I also thank my wife, Jenny, who was my campaign director and chief supporter and without whom I would not be standing here today. I want to assure my constituents and the people of Queensland that I will do my very best to be worthy of the honour that they have bestowed upon me and make them all proud of me as the member for Nicklin. While I am delighted to have won my seat in Parliament, I am conscious of the heavy burden of responsibility that comes with it. I give this unflinching undertaking to the people of Queensland: I will consider every piece of legislation carefully and take appropriate advice before I make any decision that will impact on their lives and future prosperity.

In the lead-up to today, I have been overwhelmed with messages and telephone calls of support from within this State of Queensland and throughout Australia. I had a very touching letter of thanks from Brisbane's Chinese community and even a letter from a student in Japan. From the bottom of my heart, I sincerely thank all of those people for their best wishes. However, my decision certainly did not please everyone. I will be

working very hard to convince those people that I did what I believed was in the best interests of Queensland.

To date, I am impressed with the manner in which Mr Beattie has gone about the task of running the State. He has been out there working from day one—leading. I applaud his regional Cabinet meetings where he is getting out there and listening to the people of Queensland. He appears to have a genuine desire to deliver those promised jobs and improved services. I will be watching him with great interest. I wish him well in the days ahead. There is no doubt that Mr Beattie took on board matters that I raised with him at our first meeting. At that meeting I said that the bells were ringing for change and, if politicians did not listen, they would signal the end of the party political system in Queensland. We are at the crossroads. Throughout the State Queenslanders are watching us as never before. Television has turned the political scene into prime-time viewing and political scandal sells newspapers better than anything else. People are fed up with doing it tough. They believe that no-one gives a damn, particularly politicians. There are real problems out there, real poverty and real despair. There is a sense of alienation among many Queenslanders who have delivered a serious rebuke to both the major political parties at the ballot box. When I was doorknocking in the Nicklin electorate, I discovered people who were not just angry—they were very angry. They said that they had been treated with contempt by politicians at all levels. Many people I spoke to in the lead-up to that campaign had said that they had never even spoken to a politician. I believe that never before in the history of government have politicians been as despised as they are currently.

The reasons are there for all to see. Many of our young people are growing up without any prospects of a job, families are breaking up and many of our middle aged are being retrenched from jobs that they have held all of their lives. Crime is escalating and many of our elderly live in fear behind locked doors. Everywhere there is uncertainty and distrust. The National Competition Policy has contributed to the demise of our small towns and communities. A centralisation of services has dealt them a death blow. Service industries are vanishing. The station masters, police officers, bank managers and postmasters are disappearing and with them thousands of jobs. Most of the time, there is nothing to replace them except social security and despair.

Something must be done, and done quickly, and I caution those honourable members who may be inclined to declare war on the Government to focus on the real enemy: unemployment. It is unemployment that is destroying Queensland. The message to us from the recent election is: stop attacking each other and start finding ways to improve the lot of the people we represent. There are tough times ahead. We will suffer a backlash from the Asian crisis, but, if we are prepared for it, we will survive it. We will not survive if we are so busy fighting each other that we lose track of the real issue, that is, unemployment.

We need to focus on delivering to Queenslanders the dignity that they so rightly deserve. We must learn from the past. We must encourage and help small business and clean industries. We must promote our wonderful tourism destinations and give our farming sectors a fair go. Forget the "develop at any cost then jet off to Spain to spend the loot" scenario and the white shoe brigade and their brown paper bags—this State needs strong and steady growth that will drive its economy and deliver those real jobs. Queensland has some of the best brains in the country. We must harness their talents and put them to work for us so that they can provide us with the solutions that we need. No more jobs for the boys—let us give the jobs to those who can deliver the goods for Queenslanders.

The ballot box has proved what we all should have known: there was a massive protest vote out there. It told us that politicians were out of touch and that they needed to get back to basics, get out in their electorates and find out what it is like in the real world. The voters of Queensland told us to lift our game—to play fair, play clean and do the right thing. Only by behaving decently towards each other and by concentrating on the game instead of trying to score political points against each other will we win back the respect of Queenslanders. The slanging matches must stop. Honesty and integrity must replace greed and arrogance.

We are fortunate to live in the finest State of Australia and in one of the last remaining true democracies. And, because we are a democracy, I as an Independent could aspire to political office. The reason that I ran as an Independent was that I was disillusioned with the party system. I had been a member of the National Party and the Liberal Party, but I decided that loyalty to my constituents—to my electorate—would come before loyalty to a political party. The punters said that I had no hope, yet I rolled the Speaker of Parliament

who I think at the time had about a 13% plus majority. I won Nicklin against the odds because I had a strong support base in Nambour, Nicklin's heartland. As the local councillor for more than four years, I had provided a grassroots style of representation that involved massive community involvement, including hand delivering my own newsletter to my electorate on a regular basis. It was roads, rates and rubbish stuff. I knew very well what my electorate wanted and I did my jolly best to provide it. My hard work paid off and I was deeply grateful to the people of Nambour for giving me such a huge vote of confidence at the ballot box. Although I doorknocked the major settlements of Nicklin, the people at the southern end did not know Wellington very well, but they will. I make them this promise: I will become as familiar to those people in the southern end of Nicklin as I am to the people of Nambour, the northern end of Nicklin.

I believe strongly that people power is presently stifled by the party political system. For example, a politician tied to a party must toe the party line no matter what the people in his or her electorate think. The only way that the people can show their disapproval is at the ballot box. But there is a way that the party system would be more acceptable to me and that is if Parliament embraced citizen's initiated referendums. I am informed that this piece of legislation was first introduced to this Parliament at the beginning of the century. It is perhaps appropriate that towards the end of the century this same legislation will be presented to Parliament and, hopefully, will become law. Citizen's initiated referendums have the capacity to deliver true democracy to the people and, by supporting it, I believe that this Parliament will redeem itself with the voters of Queensland. I will not speak further on citizen's initiated referendums but foreshadow that they will be the subject of my first private member's Bill.

The recent election has been a serious lesson for us all and one which we must learn from in order to go forward. It is my sincere hope that in the coming term I will see hospital waiting lists slashed, police back on the streets, our economy stimulated and thousands more real jobs created. In this way our weak and sick will be cared for properly, our elderly will be able to feel safe in their homes, our young can look forward to a future and our battlers will be given some real hope. But we cannot achieve any of this unless we are prepared to put our differences aside and work together for the common good of Queensland. With this in mind, I make this appeal: during times of war, politicians buried

their differences and worked for the common good. Let us unite and go to battle together to make this great State of ours a better place for all. I thank members for their patience.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mr COOPER (Crows Nest—NPA) (2.43 p.m.): I acknowledge the previous speaker, the member for Nicklin, in his new role. It is certainly going to be a difficult role for that member of Parliament. I do not think that members would disagree with a lot of the things he said. However, everything depends on what happens in the next few weeks and months. Most people who come into this place for the first time come in with high ideals. I believe that every parliamentarian—on this side of the Chamber or that side of the Chamber—comes into this place with the right ideals. If that were not the case, I doubt very much that the people would have elected them in the first place and they would not be here.

So I pay a tribute to all parliamentary representatives. I certainly believe that on many occasions they have been persecuted. Quite often it is very difficult for members to send out the decent, good message. So I wish the member for Nicklin well. I have no doubt that, today, he will send out his decent message. I sincerely hope that that continues into the future. I wish the same for every other parliamentarian in this place. However, in the same breath, I also say to members, "Do not kid yourselves", because I know only too well that there are people out there who are only too willing and ready to denigrate us and put us down. It is very hard for members to constantly pick themselves up when they are constantly put down. I see members on this side of the Chamber and the other side of the Chamber nodding, because that is fact; that is reality. As I said, I wish the member for Nicklin well. I wish everyone in this Chamber well. This is the 49th Parliament. Maybe it can do well. Who knows? I believe that in this State there has been a sea change in politics and that we will see a sea change in Federal politics. I believe that that has come from people in the rural and regional areas of Queensland and other parts of Australia. Who can blame them? Over the years, as the member for Nicklin said, to a certain extent people have been ignored. I believe that there are reasons for that, which we need to look at.

This is nothing new. It is not as though for the past 20-odd years people have been feeling tops and good about everything. I could go back to the Whitlam era when changes were made in relation to moral

standards, family breakdown, discipline in the home and discipline in schools. I believe that it started then. That is when I became a little annoyed and a little frustrated. I also know that following Whitlam a fellow called Malcolm Fraser was elected to put it right. He had two massive mandates to put it right and did nothing. So I think that he can be condemned, too. He brought discredit on a lot of representatives throughout the nation. I for one felt——

Mr Borbidge: He knows how to fix everything now.

Mr COOPER: He knows how to fix it all now. It is easy when one leaves politics; one becomes an instant expert. It is while one is in politics that one experiences difficulty and wrestles with problems and issues. We have been doing that and I believe that we will continue to do that. I hope that we all do it with the best of intentions. It has always been the way that people would like things to happen, but they should stick around for a little while and see how the place operates. Then we will see whether Parliament can work. Let us start off the new Parliament in the right way, as we always do, and let us see if we can make it happen. However, I say that the change goes back to those days when Malcolm Fraser was going to put everything right. He was going to restore moral and family values; he was going to bring back discipline into the schools and in the home. Yet he did nothing. I will never forget it as long as I live. I wanted to walk away from politics then.

Mr Purcell: Wasted years.

Mr COOPER: They were wasted years. The member should not forget I have given Gough a bit of a clout, too. I believe that he started it. I believe that is when the rot started. I am going to be fair and ecumenical about this. Let us keep it on track: I believe that was the start of the breakdown, of the disillusionment, of a lot of Australians—a lot of Queenslanders—certainly in rural and regional Australia and Queensland. I was one of those people. I felt very let down.

Then along came Bob Hawke and Paul Keating. Guess what? That is when economic rationalism and political correctness started. As the previous speaker said, the National Competition Policy, political correctness and economic rationalism have caused a massive amount of disillusionment in people, unemployment, and a loss of their sense of ownership and control. A lot of people feel that control has been passed out of their hands. Into whose hands? It certainly has not come into the State politicians' hands. I wish it had

because then we could have done something about it. Back then, it was taken out of State politicians' hands because everyone signed off on the NCP. Wayne Goss signed off on the NCP with Paul Keating. Then along came our lot and they ticked it off, too, and said, "What a great idea." All of that came from Canberra. If members opposite want to do something about Canberra, I will be with them—as long as it is a few waves of B52s going over the top. I think that the best thing that we can do is get rid of the place. Members would know that I was asked to run for Federal politics. I said, "Never do I want to go down there. I never want to become like you lot."

Mr Gibbs interjected.

Mr COOPER: I think that the members opposite should be mighty glad that I am here. What has emanated from Canberra has taken control out of State politicians' hands, and that is a tragedy. As representatives, we like to represent people. That is what we are here for. It does not matter whether it is the deregulation of the dairy industry or the pork industry, NCP comes into it. It does not matter who the Federal politician is, he or she says, "We cannot do that. That has been signed off by Hilmer and, therefore, we cannot do anything." I am sick and tired of that. I believe that every single person in this place would be sick and tired of that sort of thing.

I would like to get back some control so that we can make some decisions for the people. Often we see people, such as the pork producers, go down the tube and shoot their pigs. They are told, "This will be good for you." We might help them in five years' time but, meanwhile, they go out of business. Isn't it terrific! That is true. That is exactly what has happened to so many of our industries. I go back as far as the car industry. Once upon a time we could actually build a car. Weren't we terrific! Now we cannot build anything; everything has to be imported from everywhere. Isn't that great! I bet that this once great country that back in 1948 built the first Holden could not even build one today. The industry has gone somewhere else. All I am saying is that these are the sorts of things that cause the frustrations, and it goes to right back to then.

I want to talk a little bit about political correctness. A few members on the other side of the Chamber would love political correctness. Quite frankly, I cannot stand it. I am a keen cricketer. I love cricket. I always called the players "batsmen" and "fieldsmen". I still do and I always will. Do honourable members know what they are called now on

good old Aunty, the ABC? They are called "batters" and "fielders". I thought, "Heavens above! Who made the changes?" I do not know. I would love to get a hold of them. I would love to wring their necks, because they made changes and made me say something I do not want to say. So I say, "Hang on. Who is in control? Are they in control, this grey, amorphous mass somewhere out there?" They say, "You must say 'Madam Chair' or 'Chairperson' or 'Chair'." I say "Chairman", and I am going to keep on saying "Chairman" until the day I die. Nobody is going to stop me.

Can honourable members guess what people say now? There used to be "fishermen". Tommy Burns used to love a bit of fishing. He was a fisherman. Now he has to be called a fisher, for heaven's sake, because political correctness said that he had to say so. I bet that he does not, and I hope that he does not, because as far as I am concerned he is a fisherman and that is the way it is going to be.

Believe it or not, this is the frustration we see when we talk to people. I, as well as I think most people in this Chamber, do talk to people. We have not ignored them. Control has been taken away from us in many respects and we do want that control back so that we can help people. I have been into electorate offices in electorates of every different member of Parliament, regardless of what side of politics they are on. They do much the same thing: they represent people. In 99% of the cases I believe that they do help and do their darnedest. It is when control is taken away that worries set in.

I do not blame people for getting angry one little bit. The storm that came towards me was nearly a tidal wave. I feel no bitterness whatsoever, because I feel that those people were so angry because they had lost control. They were going broke, and all of the things that they stood for and lived for had been taken away and they said, "We don't care who you are or what you are. Cop this." And they meant it. All I say is: good luck to them from here on in.

Some candidates certainly got some pretty good publicity out of it. As we know, the Courier-Mail gave them hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of publicity. I guess that I can say good luck to them again. It will not happen every day, I can assure them, because on other sides of politics people have to pay for everything they get and pay through the nose for advertisements.

The campaign just run was very frustrating for a lot of people who wanted to actually

release and publish policies. We would try it every day. I have a whole stack of them here. We used to call press conferences and everything. One example is Project Renaissance for the Queensland Police Service, for the rejuvenation and uplifting of the Queensland Police Service. I have a whole resume of things about that initiative. I also have information about initiatives in relation to domestic violence and a domestic violence task force—a brilliant initiative. Other examples are the PC cops program and a prisoners levy to help victims of crime. The list goes on and on.

Guess what? The media did not publish a thing. They were not interested. They were only interested in their own agenda and to hell with policies. But that is what people wanted to hear. People wanted to know what Labor stood for and what we stood for, but the media was not interested. I therefore table this package of information. I also table a letter from my press secretary at the time, who was shocked and stunned that we could go through a campaign with media saying, "There are no policies; no-one is interested", and then going off with their own agenda. That is exactly what happened, and everyone in this Chamber knows it.

New members should not point the finger at all politicians as being the ones at fault. We have tried our damndest to get our message across. They should just see how it is. One day the same will happen to them, but right now they have the limelight. I wish the member for Nicklin well. I wish him all the luck in the world, because he will not have the limelight for too much longer. That is the way it operates, but he has started out well. We all start out well. If he can give us a bit of heart to get right into it again, to do the things that we want to do—that is, represent people—then good on him for that. I welcome all new members into the Chamber.

Mr Gibbs: I thought you said you were not bitter.

Mr COOPER: I am not. I am in a good mood. I have had an interesting run in politics, I believe. I am one of those—I know that the honourable member has been the same, believe it or not—who would have liked some good camaraderie across political boundaries. We should know where we come from. We also know that we all represent people. We all have our jobs to do.

Again, new members will find that it can get a bit nasty in here. That is when they will find the good and the bad that comes out of different people. I leave it to the honourable

member for Nicklin, as well as the other members of Parliament, to be the judges.

I mean it when I say that this is a tough job. Every single new member will find that. I wondered what on earth I was doing when I came here in 1983 as a stick picker from Wallumbilla, having loved every bit of it. After about three months of wondering what bells were for, bumping into people, getting vertigo and wishing I was not here, I thought, "This is the strangest game." I also found that there were members of the media then who whistled me over and said, "What went on in the party room today?" I said, "You know I can't tell you that." And they said, "Listen, mate, we can make you or we can break you. Please yourself." Labor members know; the media has done it to them. Not all the bad guys and girls are down in this place. I do think a little bit of honesty like that does not hurt.

I have read with interest the letter Peter Beattie wrote to the member for Nicklin. I have read with interest the response from the member for Nicklin. I do believe that everyone in this Chamber can commit to the sentiments of the letter and should commit to them in this House, not just in the newspaper. That is where the letter has been—it was published—and readers of the Courier-Mail read it and took it at face value. So I say to those in this Chamber: every single person here should be able to commit to everything that was stated in this letter, and that should be done in this Chamber. Otherwise, it falls to the ground. If we cannot commit to it, all the talk about accountability, responsibility, credibility and integrity falls to the ground. Let us commit to that here today and then we will all be fair dinkum and we can all move forward. If anyone does not commit to that letter, then they are not serious. If honourable members support our amendment, everything will be under control.

It has been said by those on the other side of the Chamber how great things were during the previous Labor administration, from 1989 to 1995. I have to say that, from the perspective of this side of the House, they were not. I remember things. I was Premier in 1989 when we were defeated. That defeat came after about 32 years of National/Liberal Government. Of course, there was a lot of euphoria on the Government side of the Chamber—and good luck to them. It was a long time to have been out of Government. When coming into Government, people judge their predecessor's record. I look back over Labor's six years in Government at primary industries and at services to rural Queensland. I look at the closure of courthouses. I look at

the closure of railway lines. I look at the gutting of DPI, which had 690 people taken clean out. I look at the tearing down of the social structure of rural Queensland. That is when that particular episode started, and it has taken an enormous amount of effort to try to get it back.

The member for Nicklin mentioned that police were leaving. In two and a quarter years we put hundreds of police back into all police districts. All 27 police districts received extra police. That program is off and running now and we want to keep it going. We will be watching to see what happens under this Government. The coalition Government got massive increases in police budgets, as well as in corrective services budgets. This year alone it has increased by 45% and capital infrastructure has increased by 113%. We will be watching every bit of that.

The coalition was going to construct three 200-cell prisons in three different rural areas from Inglewood, Yarraman, Roma and Maryborough. That was a deliberate attempt to get something going back into rural and regional Queensland. I ask those in Government to recommit to that initiative and show just what they can do. It is amazing what people can do if they have the will. From this year's \$16 billion Budget, 58% was going to rural and regional Queensland. That was putting our money where our mouth is, too. We put so many things back. Services were going back to rural and regional Queensland.

I know that the Minister for Primary Industries has a different attitude from that of previous Primary Industries Ministers of former Labor Governments. I know that Trevor Perrett and Marc Rowell from this side of the Chamber really started to put things back. That is the productive sector we have to look after so much. It is a great employer.

We also need to look at forestry areas so that we can put forestry workers back in where those opposite previously took them out. That is not a good record at all. I want this Labor Government to commit to that. If Labor can commit to those sorts of things—and I will keep them to it all the way through—then things will improve out in the bush. I am happy to help the Minister achieve those things. I have been there, done that and am glad to be back in a position to be able to do something like that.

Mr Palaszczuk: We can work together.

Mr COOPER: Yes, we will give it a go. This is a new era, and we will make sure that we do give it a go.

Recently we have heard some comments mentioned on the radio and in other media. I am referring to the classic claim that we hear from any incoming Government. I point out to the member for Nicklin that that is one thing that we should wipe out. For example, when a new Government comes in it immediately says, "There is a big black hole. There is a \$720m black hole in the Budget." That represents a condemnation of and a slur on all of our Treasury officials—people who are apolitical and who do all of the work down the line in preparing budgets. The Government is saying that all of those people must be crooks. That is not true.

Mr Pearce: He never said that.

Mr COOPER: I have heard that claimed and it is in print. Government members, including Mr Hamill, have said that there is a \$720m black hole.

I will return to the letter that I have been speaking about. All Government members are doing is setting up Queenslanders for increases in taxes and charges. We know that only too well. I notice that paragraph five of the letter states that Labor can deliver its capital and recurrent program without imposing any new taxes or increasing existing taxes and charges above current levels. That letter is signed by Peter Beattie. We will be holding members opposite to that.

The Budget, as we presented it, is perfectly okay. It is heading in the right direction and is very well tailored. The Government should not fool around with it. I know that the Government has to introduce its own programs and priorities, but the Budget should not be altered too much.

I wish to address the Minister for Police's claim regarding new prison officers. He promised 50 officers and said, "That's going to help you." However, we promised 642 officers over the next three years and put in place 650 officers over the past two years. What is 50 officers compared with that number? The Minister's claim just sounds good; the sympathisers in the media get behind it and make it sound terrific.

Let us have a look at the \$1m for security—flak jackets, handcuffs and so on. The Government said that it would provide \$1m, but we budgeted \$22m. That was in our Budget and was funded. We provided \$14m in the previous Budget. The Minister complained about the new Hummers, which are being used to provide security on the prison perimeters to protect our officers. They were put in place because of the massive

outbreaks that occurred, supported by firepower from outside the prison. Prison officers were in danger. They deserve nothing other than the best. To protect them and the rest of the community, we gave them the best, and we make no apology for it.

The Government should make sure—and we will be watching—that it sticks to all of its budgets, from primary industries to law and order. If it does not do so, we will tell the world. As I said, we often have great difficulty telling the world about these things. However, we will do our best. I sincerely hope that the member for Nicklin and all of the new One Nation members have a reasonable amount of success in getting their message through. They have probably already found politics rather disconcerting; one day they support us, but the next day they cut the ground from under us. Members should be ready for that, because that makes our life in this Chamber extraordinarily difficult. Let us not lose faith.

Time expired.

Mr JOHNSON (Gregory—NPA) (3.03 p.m.): In rising to oppose the motion moved by the Premier—

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr JOHNSON: I will get to that directly, Henry. The Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Clark): Order! I remind members that Christian names are not an appropriate form of address.

Mr JOHNSON: Madam Deputy Speaker, I did correct myself.

At the outset, I congratulate the new Speaker of the 49th Parliament of Queensland, the Honourable Ray Hollis, on his elevation to the very honourable position of Speaker of the Parliament. At the same time, I wish to congratulate each and every new member of this House who has been duly elected to the 49th Parliament. As my colleague the honourable member for Crows Nest mentioned, the people have elected us. It is our role to represent the people accordingly, and I respect the points of view of other honourable members. However, I also have a point of view, and I will certainly be putting it across, as many honourable members would know, including the member for Sunnybank and the Honourable Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing. I can see a grin on his face; he would like to say something, but I can see that he is refraining.

Mr Gibbs: You'll find it very hard over there.

Mr JOHNSON: I do not find anything too hard when it comes to the honourable member.

I wish to recognise one member in this House today, and that is the new member for Callide, Jeff Seeney, who is the one new member on the National Party side. I extend a very special welcome to him. That man will certainly make a valuable contribution to this place. He is a hard worker and, over time, the people of Callide will recognise that they made a very good selection.

The amendment to the Premier's motion from the Leader of the Opposition states that, in recognising the commitments given by the Premier to the member for Nicklin, the Premier and his Government should resign if those commitments are not honoured in full. That is a very worthwhile amendment to this motion. As the elected representatives in this Parliament, our duty is to the people of Queensland. This is all about the quality of the Government. The 48th Parliament saw a Government presided over by Rob Borbidge and Joan Sheldon, with the support of Mrs Cunningham, the honourable member for Gladstone. That was a Government of integrity and commitment and it represented all Queenslanders.

I hope and trust that the Beattie Labor Government, with the support of the member for Nicklin, will in the future be able to say the same. We in Opposition will be keeping the Government on its toes to make certain that it represents the whole of Queensland, because it is all about people, not individuals, not one party or another and not personalities. It is about the whole State. We are here for the betterment of the State, as the members for Nicklin and Crows Nest said. It is about time that we started to realise that. On 13 June the people said exactly that. It is now up to us to listen to what the people said on 13 June so that we can put in place policies and values that will be to the betterment of the people of Queensland. I thank the people of my electorate of Gregory for once again placing their trust—

Mr Fouras: They show good judgment.

Mr JOHNSON: My word they do. I thank the honourable member for that comment. The honourable member was right in saying that it is all about trust. If people cannot be trusted, they are certainly wasting their time in here. The people of Gregory will certainly get my trust and commitment during the life of this Parliament.

The electorate of Gregory covers the largest landmass of any electorate in

Queensland. It covers some 343,000 square kilometres of country and consists of just on 16,000 electors, plus the children who live there. It stretches from the Territory border through to just east of Emerald. It is a very diversified electorate, but at the same time, although it is a rural electorate, Emerald is a dormitory town for the coalmining area in the electorate of my friend the member for Fitzroy, where most of the big mines are located. The agricultural industries in my electorate are doing it hard. For example, the price of wool dropped another 20% recently. Cattle prices are also down. They should be 100% up on what they are now. Primary producers are receiving \$500 for a big bullock and around \$600 for a bale of wool. Unfortunately, the Minister for Primary Industries is not in the Chamber at present. That is not even a break-even price.

Sadly, one of the most significant exports from rural Queensland today is our kids. The member for Nicklin referred to employment issues in his speech today. I hope he keeps working hard with the Government to achieve the Government's election commitment to reduce unemployment to 5%. I will do everything in my power to assist the Government to get it down to 5%. But I do not know how the Government will do that. I know what we did in terms of major capital works infrastructure in two years and four months. My former portfolio area of Transport and Main Roads had a budget for works of \$2.14 billion, which represented 43.8% of the capital works infrastructure program for the State.

Mr Bredhauer: What about the \$120m for the Pacific Highway?

Mr JOHNSON: I say to my fine feathered friend on the other side of the House that I will come to the \$120m. If he, too, reads the Budget papers, he will find that that is in the Forward Estimates for 1999-2000. It has been taken to Cabinet. It is all square and aboveboard. The member opposite can shake his head and walk away, but his old mate here will keep reminding him that he got it wrong again.

We drew the Treasury spokesman to his feet this morning. My colleague the member for Moggill, Liberal Leader and shadow Treasurer, Dr Watson, said, "What about the \$73m that the Labor Party spent on building the eastern tollway and the koala tunnel?" That was \$73m just gone to the wind. However, that is Labor policy; \$73m means nothing to some of the people on that side of the House, but it means a hell of a lot to those of us on this side of the House. I just hope

that the new Minister for Transport and Main Roads will take on board what I am saying here today. He can hold up every bit of paper that he likes. I cannot read it from here, although I know what he has.

While the honourable Minister does represent a large remote electorate, as I do, I think he understands the needs of people in decentralised Queensland, remote Queensland and rural and regional Queensland. I just hope that he will continue to progress some of the great projects that I set in train. I think he will. I have already spoken to him about a couple of issues and he has given me fairly favourable comment on them. I hope that, for the sake of the productivity of the State, we can continue to work in that vein.

However, it disheartened and saddened me somewhat when two days ago we saw the Briztram concept pulled. That is an absolute disgrace. The Lord Mayor of the City of Brisbane, the honourable Jim Soorley, supported it and embraced it. His own concept appeared in the Courier-Mail. I have great respect and admiration for the job done by Maureen Hayes. She supported and embraced it, too. She said, "Vaughan, it is a great job and we support it all the way." But, no, not the Lord Mayor; he wanted to play his own game. He wanted to get out in the front and say, "This is my grand plan." The Government came in with the responsible and costed project as well as \$65m of Federation Funding that the Leader of the Opposition made mention of this morning, but "no, we are going to pull that".

Do honourable members know what that means? Thirteen private enterprise companies in this State had shown interest in being a joint venture partner with the State Government and the Brisbane City Council in putting Briztram in place—that \$215m project. That project was going to be an innovative and state-of-the-art concept leading into the 21st century. This morning I read in the Courier-Mail that the Minister was talking about 19th century technology. I say to that clown that the trams were not going to be drawn by horses. However, that is the Labor Party in 1998. During the two years and four months that it spent in Opposition, it did not learn a damned thing. I will give honourable members opposite the mail. We are going to be monitoring what they are doing very closely. We will be watching those programs. I will give the member opposite the mail once more: we will show him up every time he makes a slip. I will wipe the grin off his face.

While I am speaking about the Department of Transport and Main Roads, I want to pay special tribute to the departmental heads of that great department: Dick Wharton, Director-General of Main Roads; Bruce Wilson, Director-General of Transport; and Vince O'Rourke, Chief Executive of Queensland Rail. Those three gentlemen gave my Government total and professional advice. The Government has made one grave mistake in dismissing Dick Wharton as Director-General of Main Roads. That man is one of the most honourable and most distinguished road builders in not only Queensland and Australia but also Australasia. At every ministerial council conference to which I went, he was called on to make comment more times than any other public figure whom I know. The man is apolitical; he is a man of integrity.

Mr Bredhauer: Apolitical?

Mr JOHNSON: He is apolitical. The member opposite shakes his head now, but he should look me in the eye and cop it. He knows as well as I do that that department has workers who are Labor supporters, National supporters, Liberal supporters and workers who support nobody at all. I did not go in there with a vendetta as he did to destroy the livelihood or the career of a professional person. He will rue that till the day he dies, and I will give him the mail whilst he is the administrator of that department.

I will just speak momentarily about Dick Wharton. As far as road building goes, there is not a road, bridge, local authority or any other part of Queensland that that man does not know about. I want to put on the record here today my total support and my thanks for the support and advice he gave me and the Government and for the way that he redirected the Department of Main Roads. Full marks to him! All I can say to Dick Wharton and his good wife, Julie, is: I wish them well in their endeavours. I know that comes from the record of the previous Borbidge/Sheldon Government and the current Borbidge Opposition. He is one fine, hell of a Queenslander; he is a bloke who knows the job well.

I will always recall that, when I became Minister and Dick Wharton was the director-general, he said to me, "Vaughan, the FBI is in charge." I said, "What is the FBI, Dick?" He said, "The forgotten bastards of the inland." Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that we do not normally use that type of language in the Parliament, but it meant that the people from rural and regional areas of Queensland would at last have their needs for road building and

the provision of road infrastructure recognised. We put those programs in place. Even in the electorate of the honourable member for Cook, we provided for the sealing of the road to Cooktown. That was a \$60m program, and I know that he supported it. Those are the types of programs that Dick Wharton oversaw during that period. That was the sort of great work that he did as an engineer and as Director-General of the Department of Main Roads. At the same time, we recognise the need for all Queenslanders to enjoy good rail and road infrastructure. I salute those three people and that department.

Another issue I would like to touch on is the transport projects that we put in place: the South East Transit Project, a \$520m program; and the Gold Coast motorway, a \$750m program to upgrade the Pacific Highway to six and eight lanes. Those members who have travelled to the Gold Coast will appreciate the magnitude of that operation and the works that are under way there. I am proud that my Government put that program in place. Within six weeks of coming to power we had acted on that. The policy started to be implemented and the engineers started drawing up the design of the project.

At this point I also salute two men. The first is Bob Higgins, who is the manager of the Gold Coast motorway project. I think he has done a very able job down there. Again, it is the commitment and the professionalism of these sorts of people that make these things happen. The second person I would like to salute is Don Steele, who has made the South East Transit Project work, too. I salute the efforts of both those gentlemen.

One issue that I want to touch on is something that comes close to the hearts of everybody in this Parliament, and that is road safety. In Government, we embarked on one of the toughest road safety programs that I think any Government has ever embarked on in this State. In conjunction with my colleague the honourable Russell Cooper, who was Police Minister at the time, we introduced speed cameras into the State. It was not an easy decision, but it was a decision that we believe was a social decision, not a political decision. It was one for the betterment of road safety in this State so that honourable members, our families, friends and everybody concerned could travel on roads in this State without being run over by a hoon, killed by a hoon or crashed into by an irresponsible driver.

It gives me great pride to say that as of today the road toll in this State is 60 fewer than for the same period last year. I think that

that speaks volumes for itself. I would like to salute everybody for that. I would also like to pay tribute to Paul Blake for the hard yards he has put in in his area of land transport and road safety in helping us bring about the introduction of speed cameras and putting them through the infancy stage. I also pay tribute to the Queensland police for that initiative.

I want to refer to the great work that Inspector Michael Hannigan and his team carried out. This whole operation has been a team effort. I hope that the Honourable Minister for Transport and the Honourable Minister for Police receive the same support as Mr Cooper and I received. I hope that those two Ministers will continue to pursue the road safety issue in the same way as we pursued it when we were in Government. It is not a political issue; it is a social issue and it is one that affects each and every one of us, although I hope that it does not directly affect any of us.

I want to refer to Queensland Rail and mention the capital works program. We recognised the importance of maintaining the Townsville workshops. We spent \$8m to refurbish the south yard. This action saved the jobs of railway workers in Townsville. We had the \$170m upgrade of the northern railway line to Mount Isa. No-one knows how much mineral wealth lies under the ground in the north-west mineral province in the Mount Isa/Cloncurry region. When the mineral is extracted from the ground in that area it will be taken by Queensland Rail to the port of Townsville. I do not believe any of us can appreciate what is happening in the port of Townsville. The figures are going up every day and will continue to go up.

While in Government I was proud that the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Mines, Tom Gilmore, and I made absolutely certain that we were able to get the minerals industry working in the north-west of the State. We made sure that the industry interfaced with Queensland Rail and the port of Townsville. This action created jobs and wealth for that part of Queensland. This whole subject is about wealth generation, about a future for our kids and about a future for coming generations in this State. Townsville is certainly going to become the industrial capital of Queensland and Australia. We have to plan accordingly with the Townsville City Council. We have to ensure that it is to the benefit of companies to invest in that area.

In Government we undertook a \$350m upgrade of Queensland Rail rolling stock for

the Brisbane network. That upgrade should have been undertaken by the former Labor Government but was pushed onto the backburner because it said the money was not available. We had to find that money. Those cars are now being built by Walkers in Maryborough. This project is creating jobs in the City of Maryborough. Walkers are performing a very important function in that area. Some of our friends in this House represent Maryborough and Hervey Bay and I am sure they recognise the importance of the Walker workshops continuing to operate. It is important that we continue to get contracts in this area. I am running out of time, but I want to touch on a matter that was mentioned by the member for Crows Nest, Russell Cooper—

Time expired.

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (3.23 p.m.): I rise to move an amendment to the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Surfers Paradise. I move—

"That all words after the word 'Nicklin' be deleted."

The amendment of the member for Surfers Paradise was—

"... and recognises the commitments given by the Premier to the member for Nicklin and requires the resignation of the Premier and his Government if these commitments are not honoured in full."

I think we have to ask ourselves who in this debate is fair dinkum, because there is no doubt that the only reason why the member for Surfers Paradise has moved that amendment is so that he can come in here week after week, playing politics, scoring cheap political points, following his assessment or his assertion that the commitments made to the member for Nicklin may or may not have been delivered on by this Government. The people who are to judge whether the commitments given to the member for Nicklin are delivered or not will be the member for Nicklin and the people of Queensland, not the member for Surfers Paradise with his jaundiced view. We must remember that the member for Surfers Paradise is the member who, prior to the 1995 election, signed a contract with the people of Queensland and said, "If we don't honour our contract, throw us out." The people of Queensland spoke and threw out the coalition Government and that is why those opposite find themselves on the other side of the House. This Government will allow itself to be judged on its performance and its commitment

to the member for Nicklin. Our judges will be the member for Nicklin and the people of Queensland.

I want to refer to a couple of issues that were raised earlier today in this debate. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to make a contribution to the debate on this motion of confidence in the first Beattie Government. It is with great pride that I stand here today as the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads. I am the first Minister with portfolio representing the electorate of Cook. The member for Gregory pointed out the nature of his electorate. In many respects his electorate and mine are similar in size and in the industries that they contain.

I thank the people of the electorate of Cook for the confidence that they have shown in me in the 1998 State election. Indeed, I was honoured to receive an increased majority in my seat and to have seen the strength of the support that emerged from across the electorate. It is curious that in the 1998 election, when many sitting members in rural or regional parts of Queensland suffered swings away from them, in the Cook electorate there was a swing to me in virtually every one of my 50-odd booths. I can assure the people of the Cook electorate that their confidence will continue to be justified by the hard work that I put in on their behalf.

The member for Gregory referred to the issue of Briztram. I want to comment on this matter because I did describe Briztram as old technology. I did not say it was 19th century technology. If it has been reported that I said that, I inform the House that that is incorrect. What I said was that it was 1950s technology. The Briztram proposal was predicated on 1950s technology and it was designed to use the old-style trams. It even anticipated refurbishing some of the old trams as part of the Briztram project. It also anticipated using standard gauge line. It would have brought back to the City of Brisbane and the south-east corner of Queensland all of the old traffic congestion problems that were part of the reason for us doing away with our tram services all those years ago.

The Labor Government has committed itself to a modern light rail service using the latest technology. We will not go back to the old-style technology. We will not be seeking to turn the clock back. The Briztram project was not a project that emanated from the Transport Department. It emanated from the 15th floor of the Executive Building when the member for Surfers Paradise was Premier. It was submitted over and above some other

projects which would have been given a higher priority by the Transport Department or the Main Roads Department for Federation Funding. It was an election stunt. It was a pre-election gimmick—no more and no less. It was done without consultation with the Brisbane City Council.

There has been criticism in this House today of Lord Mayor Jim Soorley. The only reason why Jim Soorley criticised the project was because the Premier of the day did not have the decency to talk to him about it before he announced it publicly. We support a role for light rail but it has to be integrated with all our other public transport modes. The Integrated Regional Transport Plan—and the member for Gregory knows this—anticipated that a light rail service would be introduced in the south-east corner to service the needs of the City of Brisbane in the year 2003 or 2004. By using it as an election—

Mr Johnson: Are you saying it's not integrated public transport? You are using planners within the department. You know full well that they would have done that properly and professionally.

Mr BREDHAUER: Just to give the honourable member an example of the problems with his proposal and how it would not be integrated, I point out that Briztram was based on standard gauge rail. As a former Minister for Transport and Main Roads, the member should know that the heavy rail track in Queensland is narrow gauge. Therefore, we cannot have light rail vehicles sharing the same corridors as heavy rail.

Mr Johnson: Never had that intention.

Mr BREDHAUER: But the member should have. That is the whole point. If the honourable member had thought the process through, he would have organised it so that it could be integrated. Under a fully integrated light rail service, we could have a situation in which people could get on a light rail service on the Gold Coast and, without having to change trains, be brought into the centre of the city or taken out to New Farm or Teneriffe. It could use the same corridor as heavy rail, and there is no reason why it should not. If it was properly planned and implemented, it would be able to coordinate with the heavy rail network.

The busway network, about which the honourable member spoke in such a complimentary fashion, was never designed to accommodate Briztram. Since I have been the relevant Minister, we have modified the design of the busways so that they can accommodate light rail. In that way we can

actually have busways and light rail sharing corridors. That would have been a sensible planning approach for the member to have adopted to this project. If the former Minister had not used Briztram as an election stunt, he would have got these things ticked off before he announced the project; he would have sorted out the problems in South Brisbane and Boundary Street at West End, but he did not. He rushed at it like a bull at a gate. It is not an integrated process.

We will get it right. We will take out the bugs that the former Minister left in it. We will make sure that the planning process enables us to fully integrate public transport systems. We will make sure that the busways help to relieve traffic congestion in the city. The city council is talking about the city/valley bypass, which will help to reduce traffic congestion in the process. Then we can use light rail as an effective people mover for the inner-city area. It will be a system that takes us forward into the next century and not backwards into the 1950s, which is what Briztram is all about.

I make a plea to the Prime Minister. There is a story in today's Courier-Mail—and it is not actually sourced to the Prime Minister—suggesting that the Prime Minister will not allocate the \$65m to our light rail project or other integrated public transport projects in Brisbane. I make a very strong appeal to the Prime Minister to reconsider that if that is in fact his view. It might be a cheap political point to score against a new Labor Government in Brisbane, but the people who will suffer as a result of that are not us. The people who will suffer will be the people of Brisbane and the south-east corner who do not get the fully integrated public transport services to which they are entitled. If the Federal Government wants to be churlish about it, it can take the \$65m and run, I suppose. But I make this honest and earnest plea to the Prime Minister not to do that but to consider the implications that it would have on the south-east corner of the State if he were to withdraw the \$65m in funding. A light rail service should be part of a fully integrated public transport system for the south-east corner, providing services, getting cars off the street, improving our quality of life, improving our environment and air quality and encouraging people to use public transport as much as possible.

I want to talk about the \$120m hole in the budget for the motorway. I heard the comments of the member for Gregory, the former Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I also heard the comments this morning of the member for Surfers Paradise. I have read articles like the one in the Gold Coast Bulletin

on Friday, 17 July, in which the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for Moggill, described the alleged shortfall as follows—

"The alleged shortfall is just a figment of Mr Hamill's fevered imagination."

I will table this just in case the member has not read it.

I draw the attention of honourable members to a couple of letters that I have unearthed on the files as I have been going through my briefing notes. One letter dated 9 April is from a fellow by the name of Dick Wharton, about whom the former Minister has just spoken fulsomely, to the Under Treasurer, Doug McTaggart, about Pacific Motorway funding. I am going to table these letters, but I will read them briefly. The letter states—

"Following the decision of Cabinet to approve the increased project scope and resulting overall budget for the Pacific Motorway Upgrade, senior officers from our respective agencies have been working together to resolve a joint funding submission for consideration by CBC"—

Cabinet Budget Committee—

"Ministers and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads prior to the 1998-99 State Budget.

While there are a range of issues involved, it seems to me that there are two primary objectives of Government to be met:

the 1998-99 Budget documents should reflect the \$120 million extra funding required in the subsequent two years, and the split between years needs to be consistent with the published expenditure forecasts for the Pacific Motorway; and

the Budget documents should demonstrate that, in the 1999-2000 and 2000-01 years, there will not be any adverse impacts on the balance of the State-funded Roads Program. (This can only be achieved if additional funds are provided to Main Roads for the Pacific Motorway project.)

Following a number of iterations, the attached draft reflects Main Roads' position for your consideration.

As discussed, I look forward to resolving this issue with you as soon as possible."

Guess what? There was no reply from the Under Treasurer to the concerns raised by the former Director-General of the Department of

Main Roads on 9 April. The money is not in the budget. \$113m of the \$120m which was meant to have been allocated in the Forward Estimates is not in the budget figures, and the former Minister for Transport and Main Roads knows it.

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order. The Honourable the Minister is misleading the House. The situation is that that figure of \$120m is in the Forward Estimates for 1999-2000, and he knows it. If he gets a full and proper briefing from his department he will know precisely where I am coming from.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Clark): There is no point of order.

Mr BREDHAUER: I shall now read another letter from the files. The letter is dated 6 May 1998, which was less than a week before the State Budget was brought down by the former Government. Members opposite who know the Budget process would be aware that the document would have been locked up, all the Ministerial Program Statements would have been printed, the Budget would have been finalised, and the Treasurer would have been beavering away on her speech. This letter, dated less than one week before the Budget came down, states—

"In the presentation of this year's budget, it is important that we do not inadvertently give the Opposition an opportunity to criticise the Government over the increased project scope and budget recently approved by Cabinet for the Pacific Motorway."

It was approved in March, three months prior to this. The letter continues—

"There is work underway between our respective Departments to resolve this issue consistent with the Cabinet Decision.

The attached submission developed by the Director-General, Department of Main Roads and Under Treasurer represents the respective views of our Departments. Our respective officers are working towards an agreed position, and we would seek agreement consistent with the following two points:

the 1998-99 Budget documents should reflect the \$120 million extra funding required in the subsequent two years, and the split between years needs to be consistent with the published expenditure forecasts for the Pacific Motorway; and

the Budget documents should demonstrate that, in the 1999-2000

and 2000-01 years, there will not be any adverse impacts on the balance of the State-funded Roads Program. (This can only be achieved if additional funds are provided to Main Roads for the Pacific Motorway project.)

I would like your support in confirming that the key requirements are met."

The letter, signed by Vaughan Johnson, Minister for Transport and Main Roads, was addressed to the then Treasurer, Joan Sheldon. Guess what? There was no answer. It was never in the budget. There was never a reply from the Treasurer to the request for the \$120m to be put in the Forward Estimates of the department. The former Minister has left me with the need to find \$113m in next year's Road Implementation Program and \$7m in the following year. The figure does not appear in the budget. I was left with a \$113m hole to patch next year, and another \$7m hole to patch the year after that.

Not even after writing to his own Treasurer one week before the Budget was brought down could the member for Gregory obtain confirmation that that arrangement would be included in the Budget. He did not receive a reply. It was not included in the Budget. Next year, unless I can do the right thing, we will have to find \$113m in the roads budget. I will protect the interests of the Roads Implementation Program, because it is important to all the people who live throughout the length and breadth of Queensland—particularly in the regional and rural areas—to have the road services to which they are entitled. For the information of the House, I will table the letters to which I have referred.

The former Minister failed to deliver and his Treasurer left a \$120m hole in the budget of the Pacific Motorway. If the former Minister comes down to my office at Capital Hill, I will give him the full brief from the department. He will see for himself what I have demonstrated, that is, the \$120m hole in the budget. Senior officers in the Department of Main Roads are quaking as we pull together our budget submissions, because the former Minister failed in his attempt to have the former Treasurer, Mrs Sheldon, the member for Caloundra, include the \$120m in the Forward Estimates of the Budget.

While I am discussing failure to release information in briefings to the Minister, I will discuss briefly the Quaid road. In March when he was under pressure from the Mareeba Shire Council, the Cook Shire Council and some of the members of the Douglas Shire

Council, the former Minister received a briefing about the Quaid road. That briefing set out how much the opening of that road would cost. It would cost \$29m to bring the Quaid road to a reasonable standard that would be trafficable by all vehicles. It would cost another \$75m to upgrade the Cook Highway between Wangetti Beach and Buchan Point. That figure does not take into account native title and environmental issues. Over \$100m would be required before the Quaid road could be opened to service a private development. I asked the people in the Mareeba and Cook Shires whether they wanted the Government to spend another \$29m on another corridor between the tablelands and the coast just to service a private development when all the planning had gone into the Kennedy Highway and we have the urgent need for upgrading——

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order. The Honourable Minister is misleading the House. I never signed off on the Quaid road. He knows that. He should withdraw that statement.

Mr BREDHAUER: I never said he did. I am saying that he did not release the information that would have provided the background material for the shires and for the people of far-north Queensland and the rest of Queensland to make an objective assessment about the need for the Quaid road.

Time expired.

Mr BRISKEY (Cleveland—ALP) (3.43 p.m.): I rise to second the amendment moved by the honourable member for Cook. I will speak briefly about this most significant day in the history of Queensland. This is the day when the Parliament of Queensland will pass a motion of confidence in the Beattie Labor Government. Today is significant not only because Queensland will have another Labor Government—and not before time—but also because it provides stability in Government in Queensland. That is what Queenslanders want. That is what Queenslanders voted for at the last election. I congratulate the member for Nicklin on providing the extra vote that was required to provide stability for Queensland. This debate is about one issue and one issue only: stability.

As the member for Nicklin mentioned in his maiden speech in this House, unemployment is the biggest problem in the State that needs to be tackled by this Government. During the election campaign, Peter Beattie, now the Premier of Queensland, made a commitment to fight unemployment. I congratulate him on that.

That is what this Government will do. That is why this day is so significant in the history of this State. This debate provides for stability and for those jobs to be provided for all Queenslanders.

All of us as elected members represent our constituents. My electorate of Cleveland has 26,000 constituents. I thank them sincerely for the confidence that they have shown in me by once again electing me to be their representative in the Queensland Parliament.

Mr Lucas: They made an excellent selection, too.

Mr BRISKEY: I thank the honourable member.

When travelling around the electorate and talking to electors—as we all do in our electorates—we hear first-hand the problems being faced by our constituents. Their children cannot get jobs. People who were in the work force for some time and then lost their employment are now on the scrap heap. Many people over the age of 50 in my electorate and in other electorates in Queensland cannot get jobs. Dealing with those issues is what Government should be about. As the member for Nicklin said, we have to work together. The Opposition, the Government and other members in this place must work together to ensure that there is stability and that jobs are created. We have to look to the future. That vision has been lacking during the little more than two years that the coalition was in Government. The coalition was all about running the State for the few instead of running the State for the many.

I will spend a little time discussing some of the initiatives of this Labor Government in its first of many terms. The low tax rate that Queensland has had for many years will be maintained by this Queensland Government. That will continue to provide the incentive for businesses to come to this State. As businesses in other States see what is being done by the Queensland Government, they will be motivated to move to Queensland. The heart of Labor's policies is jobs and more jobs. The 15 September Budget will reflect that. Our first target will be the Capital Works Program. Last financial year, the coalition underspent its Consolidated Fund Capital Works Program by \$250m. As a result, 2,750 potential jobs were not created last year and the community did not receive the service delivery that it deserved, particularly from the portfolios of Health and Corrective Services.

One need go no further than my electorate of Cleveland where the previous

Labor Government made a commitment to construct a new police station and a new courthouse in Cleveland. When it was elected, the new conservative Government put those projects on the waiting list as a result of its capital works freeze. No jobs were created and no new police station or courthouse was built in the coalition Government's first 12 months. In the past 12 months, we have seen those much-needed jobs and construction projects go ahead. Soon the people of the Cleveland electorate will see those buildings opened. I am proud that they will be opened by Labor Ministers.

It is good to see that the motion moved by the Premier this morning contained a commitment that no general election would be held before 5 May 2001 without an express resolution of the Parliament. That commitment is required for stability in this State. This Labor Government will turn around job creation projects in this State. We will be accelerating spending and implementing a Capital Works Program that has the potential to create 65,000 jobs for Queensland. During our first term in office, we will hit the ground running with our Community Jobs Plan, a \$276m program to get people back to work. As part of that plan, we will create 24,480 new apprenticeships, traineeships and job placements. We will offer a \$2,000 cash bonus to private sector employers for each additional apprentice employed in areas of skills shortage. This will be achieved despite structural problems in the Budget created by the previous coalition Government. As the Treasurer outlined this morning, there are a number of issues that are placing increasing pressure on ongoing Government finances both for the 1998-99 financial year and more critically in subsequent years. However, we will not use that as an excuse to back out of our election commitments.

I turn now to the National Competition Policy. The Beattie Labor Government will seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Queensland industry but not at the expense of secure employment for Queensland workers. That has to be a priority and will be a priority of this Labor Government. Labor will apply a thorough public benefit test to ensure that job security and economic and social stability are not needlessly squandered in the name of competition. The public benefits test will take into account all the effects of proposed changes including job security, social cohesiveness and service quality. The test will also consider regional employment, particularly with local

government, so that economic theory is not permitted to decimate local work forces.

Additionally, Labor will seek to further strengthen the public benefit test in the form of the Competition Principles Agreement, which is to be reviewed in the year 2000. Importantly, it must be remembered that the previous Borbidge/Sheldon Government failed to apply this public benefit test to its restructuring of the electricity industry even though there were real concerns about job losses and the price impacts of these proposed changes. The Beattie Government considers that the onus of proof should be on those advocating competitive reforms to demonstrate the benefits of change. That approach to National Competition Policy reforms will help to reduce the uncertainty and insecurity that many employees and industries have endured in the past.

As I said at the outset, this Government will be about looking to the future of Queensland—where jobs are created, where unemployment is reduced substantially. It is important to go into any commitment that is given with some view to the future—with aims and objectives. We have an objective to reduce unemployment. It is not going to be easy: we never said that it was going to be easy, but one does not go into anything without having good aims. That is what Labor Governments are all about. It is about looking after the people of Queensland and it is about providing jobs for their children and providing jobs for those who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

As the member for Nicklin said, we have to work together. I wish to take this opportunity to once again thank him for his courageous decision—and it was a courageous decision—to provide Labor with the ability to form a Government. As he said, he will leave it to history to judge him on his decision. I can tell members now that I believe that history will write up his actions well. He has given Queensland stability and given Queenslanders an opportunity to see a Queensland Labor Government once again elected to this State to provide jobs for this State.

Mr QUINN (Merrimac—LP) (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.53 p.m.) It does not matter the political colour of a Government, one of its overarching aims is to provide the economic and social advancement of the people of Queensland. Underpinning that goal would be the provision of a high-quality education system. Unfortunately, during Labor's previous six years in office, it did not really come to grips with what it means

to provide a high-quality education system. Education is the single biggest department in Government. It has a budget of approximately \$3.4 billion, over 43,000 staff and some 1,300 schools across Queensland working for the benefit of over 460,000 students. So really, the Education Department touches the life of every student from preschool or kindergarten right through to university in both State and non-State schools.

During the election campaign, we had from the ALP a large number of commitments—or alleged commitments—in relation to education. As usual, its performance in Government has made a mockery of its rhetoric in Opposition. We can now see that the words have no substance at all. Under the coalition, Education's seniority in the ministerial pecking order was highlighted. By the end of the term of the coalition Government, Education was No. 4 in seniority. Under Labor, Education has sunk to No. 12—it has zoomed to the backblocks out to No. 12. Three years ago, the Minister who has been appointed was not up to scratch. He was dropped from the Ministry because of his poor performance. Yet, under this Government, he has been brought back and given the Education portfolio. Such is the Government's regard for the Education portfolio in giving it to this Minister who is No. 12 in the pecking order. Obviously, in the past he failed and I have no doubt that history will repeat itself in the future. Again we will see another failure by this Minister in the not-too-distant future.

Nothing can illustrate that more than his actions in his first couple of weeks in office. He has demonstrated that he has been at the beck and call of the Queensland Teachers Union. Within the first couple of weeks of his appointment, the Minister is supposed to go out and meet all the stakeholders, consult with the various interested parties and find out what they want in terms of education policy—where they see the problems and what ought to be done by a new Government in correcting some of the mistakes that have been made by the previous Government. As I understand it, within the first couple of weeks of his appointment, on about five occasions this Minister met with the QTU. I wonder on how many occasions he met with the other key stakeholders in education. I think that he might have been too busy with the QTU to even manage to put an appointment in his book for any of the other stakeholders.

So we are not really talking about consultation by the Minister with the key stakeholders, simply a Minister who is kowtowing to one particular interest group

within the educational fraternity. We have a Government that puts political pragmatism before excellence in education, industrial favours before good management, union interests before student interests and QTU officials before parents and principals. It is the grand old traditional Left Wing politics: all stakeholders are equal, except some are more equal than others.

I believe that it is also of concern that, within the first couple of weeks of this Labor Government, one of the greatest advancements in public education in Queensland was substantially derailed. The Leading Schools program has been recognised widely as breathing fresh life back into our State school system. There would not be an electorate in Queensland that has not benefited by the move to the Leading Schools program. It was a program based on incentives—asking schools to come in and perform additional duties but at the same time giving them more authority, more flexibility and more resources with which to carry out those additional responsibilities. We had in place a program to provide additional funds of \$56m on an ongoing basis after three years to all of those schools that came into the Leading Schools program.

It was not an elitist program. I will repeat that: it was not. The former Government had opened up the program to all schools in Queensland. Even if only the larger schools, the Bands 8 to 11, came into the program, about 90% of our students would have been in a Leading School within three years. So to label the Leading Schools program as elitist is wrong on two counts. The vast majority of students would have been in the program within three years and it was open to all schools. No school was barred. So the tag of elitism is simply wrong. More importantly, the previous Government had allocated an additional \$56m per annum on an ongoing basis to these Leading Schools at the end of the three-year period.

We have had from the Minister a rather confusing mishmash of statements by him and then directives put out by the department. The Minister said—and it was repeated here by the Premier—that all schools would be Leading Schools. Yesterday, the Governor in his address said that the Leading Schools program was abolished. Is there any wonder that there is confusion in the educational community? They do not know whether they are a Leading School and they do not know whether they are going to get ongoing or recurrent grants. The Minister says yes, but

the Education directive says no, that it is a one-off grant.

There is a confusion out there that needs to be resolved. More importantly, the issue of funding needs to be resolved. The Leading Schools program provided for an additional \$56m on an ongoing basis, on a recurrent basis, to go into the schools. To date, the Minister has said that the ALP will be providing an additional \$20m. That is far short of the amount of funds we were going to provide to the schools within the three-year time frame. I think a lot of schools are concerned about the move from the Leading Schools program. There is policy confusion and funding confusion out there at the present time. That is another reason why we ought not have any confidence in the ability of the ALP Government to manage and administer the education system in the foreseeable future.

The issue of teacher numbers is also of critical importance to our schools because it has to do with class sizes, providing additional human resources to manage students with disabilities and providing additional resources for literacy and numeracy programs to pick up those kids who need additional help.

Over the past couple of years we have seen a substantial increase in the number of teachers in our schools. In fact, 1,900 teachers have been added over a two-year period. That stands in stark contrast with the Labor Government's record of the previous six years. It provided a net addition of only 867 teachers. That is a 3.3% increase. It did not even keep pace with enrolments, which increased during that period by some 4.3%.

Six years of Labor Government saw a lot of rhetoric about commitment, but when it came to funding and to the number of teachers in classrooms, very few of those commitments were kept. It was not until the coalition came into Government that the focus was really put on schools and the additional resources our schools needed were provided. I am pleased to say that, over the time we were in Government, schools certainly saw an increase in teacher numbers, over and above the enrolment increases, to take account of a whole range of additional programs that were put in place.

In fact, during six years of Labor teacher numbers actually fell, despite enrolment increases across-the-board every year. There were two years in which numbers fell—by 569 in 1992-93 and by 85 in 1994-95. That is the level of commitment we have seen from Labor in the past. Is it any wonder that we on this side of the House have no confidence in

Labor's ability to provide those additional teacher numbers to our schools in the foreseeable future?

I think our lack of confidence can be easily demonstrated by a statement from the now Treasurer when he was Education Minister some years ago. When he was justifying the expenditure of money, he said—

"We doubled education spending from \$1.8 billion ... to \$2.7 billion ..."

Anybody could tell that that is not a doubling; it is a 50% increase. That statement was made by the person who is currently serving as Treasurer. He is in charge of the Budget.

During the six years of Labor Government very little was done in terms of behaviour management and improving standards of discipline in schools. The cane was abolished and nothing else was put in its place. Our schools, our principals and our teachers were crying out for help for a number of years, yet not one dollar was spent on providing additional resources to help them manage those problems at the school level.

It was not until the coalition came to Government that the legislation was changed. We gave principals more authority and more flexibility, and then we provided a special program for funding behaviour management specialists and a range of other specialist teachers in our schools to assist teachers to come to grips with some of the problems such as theft, bullying, serious behavioural problems and so on. In our first two Budgets we provided an additional 200 behaviour management specialists and we provided for more in our last Budget. Those resources were aimed at allowing our schools to come to grips with these issues and to put in place the sorts of programs which improve discipline within schools so that the vast majority of students can get on with their work and get a decent education and not risk being disrupted by a very small number of students.

One of the other great things we did when we were in Government was to introduce school-based constables. This initiative was opposed by the ALP at the time. If anyone goes to the schools in which those constables are now working they will see an outstanding success. Those police constables were not allocated on the basis of political priority; they were allocated on the basis of need. I believe there are about 22 school-based constables operating around Queensland now. Most of them are in Labor electorates.

If anyone asks the schools whether they want to give their police constables back, they

will find that the schools want to keep them. They want to keep them because of the tremendous work the school-based constables are doing in terms of working with students, reducing truancy and talking about drugs, behaviour management and minor misdemeanours and so on. That is another significant program that I hope does not suffer any sort of damage now that the Labor Party has assumed office.

We now have in place a national agreement for testing students' numeracy and literacy skills at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. That has been arrived at on a national level after a lot of discussion among Ministers from all States of the Commonwealth, with representatives from across the political spectrum. All States are now committed to it. From some of the comments I have heard from the Minister recently, it seems that that is at some risk. I suggest that we should not look to go backwards. We have arrived at this point after a lot of discussion nationally and after a lot of conjecture among the Ministers.

For the first time, we have a system in place whereby we can collect hard data about literacy and numeracy levels at Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. That hard data is necessary because it can in fact drive policy and resource allocation within the schools. If we move away from that, we will go back to the touchy-feely program we had before. We did not have any empirical evidence on which to base our decisions. I think a move away from this system would be a retrograde step. We really need to keep that program in place.

I am heartened by the fact that the Queensland Schools Curriculum Council has taken this system on board. That council is where all the key stakeholders are and if we allow that sort of body to work through the issues we are more likely to come up with a system that is acceptable to all the key stakeholders rather than have a ministerial directive that "this will be done". I think that issue needs to be clarified and supported.

The recent announcements about technology in our schools have led to many of the schools really being opened up to a wider horizon of resources and teaching styles that were not available before. The Connect-Ed program deserved its gold medal award at the Government Technology Awards in Canberra. This has given many of our students, particularly those in rural and remote Queensland, something that was not available before. It has brought things into focus in an equitable way, because the cost of Internet

access has been substantially reduced by means of the Connect-Ed program.

I wish to comment on the capital works program. I think the coalition's actions in the last two years really did address many of the issues that it was left with when the previous Labor Government vacated office. I instance the Building Better Schools Program. I think we ought to focus on it because there has been much debate this afternoon about the capital works program.

Let me tell the House what the capital works program in the Department of Education was like at the change of Government. We had a budget of about \$150m, a large proportion of which was allocated to what was then called the Building Better Schools Program—a \$44m program. I will tell honourable members how much the former Labor Government spent of its budget in eight months. For new schools it had allocated \$8m, but it had spent only 3% of the budget in eight months. For classroom upgrades \$12m was allocated, but it had spent only 1% after eight months. For school security \$5m was allocated, but it had spent only a quarter of it. For accelerated maintenance \$7m was allocated, but it had spent only about half of it. For a program to create shade \$3m had been allocated, but only 0.3% of that budget had been spent after eight months. For vocational education \$6m was allocated, but nothing had been spent after eight months. For students with disabilities \$2m was allocated, but only 1% was spent after eight months. For asset relocation \$1m was allocated, but only 12% had been spent after eight months.

The ALP's claim that it will manage the capital works program much better than we did is a claim that falls on stony ground, because its record gives us no confidence at all that it will do so. Its record was shameful. Our school system was crying out for more schools, enhanced classroom upgrades, new shaded areas and so on. The former Labor Government's pathetic record was that, after eight months of its budget, it had spent only a fraction of the money it had allocated. It was not until we came back into Government and got the program on track that in all areas 100% of the budget was being spent.

In relation to the capital works program, the best the Labor Party could achieve after six years in Government was a capital works program of \$150m. Our first capital works budget was in the order of \$271m. Our second budget was \$279m. We had a cutback in the third year because of the mix of funding and that brought the budget back to

\$201m. So even our worst budget was \$50m better than the Labor Party's best budget after six years in office. Our schools look so good at present because of the additional capital works money that we pumped into the budget.

After six years in office, Labor left us a maintenance backlog of some \$100m. Its record in respect of schools is a maintenance backlog of \$100m, yet Government members claimed proudly that they had a commitment to education. What a furphy! It was not until we came in and ramped up the capital works budget that we really saw some progress in our schools, with upgrades and maintenance getting up to scratch. Over the past couple of years, more money has been spent on maintenance in our schools than was spent in the past six budgets put together. That is why over the past couple of years we have seen some progress with respect to painting, restorations and a whole range of projects in our schools.

A range of other issues also need to be addressed. We are not confident that this Government can deliver the additional resources it said it would provide for students with disabilities—one of its keynote election promises. That is because its record in Government is absolutely pathetic. It moved to close special schools and to integrate students into mainstream classrooms, but it failed to provide the resources. Again, when we came into Government we trebled the amount of money going to students with a disability. All of those issues are at risk again as we go back to the old Labor Government, which tries to manage interest groups through the QTU network. That has never worked in the past. We cannot lock out all of the major stakeholders and take one source of advice, as this Minister has done.

As I said before, going back to the past in education simply will not work. We have now put in place a Leading Schools program that in many respects was the envy of a lot of schools around Queensland and in some other parts of Australia. It was a move in the right direction. To attempt to scuttle the program and create a lot of fear and confusion is to hold back a tide that cannot be held back. Schools want authority and flexibility. I hope that we will see the program supported as it was in the past and that we will not see it scuttled.

Time expired.

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumbidgee—ALP)
(Minister for Education) (4.14 p.m.): Madam Deputy Speaker, may I take the opportunity to congratulate you on your elevation to the high

office that you have now assumed. May I also take the opportunity to pay a tribute to the honourable member who has just spoken. From time to time, and indeed perhaps during the course of this speech, I will offer some criticisms of the performance of the honourable member while he was the Minister for Education. However, I wish to begin by saying that during the whole of the time that he was the Minister for Education he always behaved like the former teacher that he is, like a man who had a vocation for teaching and who was desirous of delivering a better education system. Indeed, his desire to deliver a better education system was exceeded only by his incapacity to do so. The situation in which he found himself today is illustrative of the reasons why.

The honourable member's whole philosophy is found in his first put-down. His first put-down in his speech was along the lines that education has been demoted because now it is being handled by somebody who is No. 12 in the pecking order, whereas under the previous Government he was No. 4 in the pecking order. Does that not sum up the whole philosophy of Leading Schools—it does not matter how competent they are as long as they are leading, as long as they have the label or the tag? According to the former Education Minister, who has just spoken, the correct way to compare people is to see whether they are No. 4 or No. 12, and not whether they have better policies. We take a somewhat deeper view of these matters on this side of the House. I wish to acquaint the House with some of the considerations that we take into account.

One of the considerations is equity. Another one is justice and another is fairness. That was what was singularly lacking from the Leading Schools concept. The Leading Schools concept was a concept concerning glitz and glamour. It was a concept about managerial claptrap. It was a concept about training the mums and dads to be management consultants after dark instead of educating our children. It was a concept which was, despite the shadow Minister's denials, an elitist concept. Leading Schools was all about pitting schools against each other and making schools competitive with one another. However, education is not about competition, it is about human development. If we turn it into a tawdry capitalistic contest between State schools, we cut out the vitals of an education system that would otherwise be capable of enabling young people in this State to maximise their human potential.

Leading Schools was all about hierarchies. There were 104 phase 1 Leading Schools. Then there was to be another phase 2 Leading Schools set consisting of 300 schools. Where were the others going to come? Much further down the track! Where were the Leading Schools concentrated? One hundred per cent of the band 8 to 11 schools in the honourable member's electorate happen to have been Leading Schools. One hundred per cent of the schools in the electorate of the honourable member for Surfers Paradise happen to have been Leading Schools. In the electorate of Cook, for example, almost none were Leading Schools. In the electorate of the honourable member for Brisbane Central less than a third were Leading Schools, as was the case in my electorate. It was an elitist program and it was concentrated in particular electorates which happened to suit the demographics to which the honourable member opposite found himself drawn and in which he found himself comfortable.

Mr Gibbs: The silvertail electorates.

Mr WELLS: The silvertail electorates were those which benefited most obviously.

The honourable member also went on to say that I was the ideological captive of the QTU, because I happened to consult with it. I consulted more with the QTU in the first week—indeed in the first two days—of my Ministry than he consulted with it in the whole of his two years as Minister, that is, in the first two days I consulted with it once. The fact is that the honourable member opposite went around to his Liberal Party branch meetings and said, "What I am all about is destroying the QTU." What a foolish objective! Fancy making the school kids of Queensland the ping-pong balls in an industrial game that he was playing against the teachers. That is not an appropriate way to run things.

I was determined not to have gratuitous industrial fights with the teachers or the cleaners either, as the former Minister did. I was determined to maximise the possibilities for a good education for the kids. I am not going to be spending \$1.2m on conferences about Leading Schools, which he budgeted for. I am not going to be spending \$800,000 to send the mums and dads away to learn how to become nocturnal management consultants. I am going to spend that money on education; it is going to go to the schools.

The former Minister had tagged \$10.92m to go out to the schools in his so-called Leading Schools grant. That was going to go out the Monday after the Labor Party came to

Government. One would think that \$10.92m is a lot of money. I sent out \$20m. The Labor Government bestowed \$20m on the school system at the same time. That \$20m will be recurrent. It was paid one semester at a time, but it is always paid one semester at a time. To say, "How do you know that there will not be any money next semester?" is a bit like saying, "How do you know that you are not going to walk out of here and step under a bus?" Of course, it could happen. One of us could step under a bus. But we are talking about that degree of improbability. The money is recurrent. It goes out one semester at a time. It is always going to go out one semester at a time because that is how the school system is run.

The former Government was putting \$10.92m into its Leading Schools program and that was going to the favoured schools. Those schools were not chosen according to any rational criteria. There were schools—and the former Minister knows this—which jumped through all the hoops, which set up their school council, but still did not get funded because they were not part of the club. However, all band 8 to 11 schools are going to be funded and have been funded in the last round.

As for the honourable member's \$56m—we heard much about that from honourable members sitting opposite. Let me tell honourable members about that \$56m. It is unfunded. It has never been to Treasury. It is not in the departmental forward plans. It was not in the Ministerial Program Statements. It was not in the Budget papers. It does not exist, except perhaps on the back of an envelope. The way the member worked it out is by multiplying \$30,000 by 1,300, which is roughly the number of schools. If one adds it all together and multiplies it all and puts in the \$11 per student, one can get to \$56m. The trouble is that the figure of \$56m is merely a fantasy. It does not exist in any departmental records. It does not exist in Treasury. The money is not there. The member has not got the cash in the bank and he is saying, "I was going to do this." I applaud his good intentions. I suppose it would be churlish if I said, "He was saying \$56m. Why not \$156m?" If he is just pulling rabbits out of a hat or just pulling figures out of the air, why not \$1,056m? It would be just as real whichever one he said.

The truth of the matter is that all he put up was \$10.92m and we put up \$20m. As I said, that \$20m is going to be recurrent. It will, however, have to be subject to a process of consultation with school communities as to

how that recurrent \$20m is divided up. Let me be perfectly clear about this. There are inequities in the school system. At the moment the school system is not one which is based on perfect justice. The funding base of the school system has been skewed by the Leading Schools program. Some schools have been left out completely and others have been given privileged status. Those equity considerations will have to be taken on board.

Over the next few months we will have a process of consultation with the school communities throughout Queensland. We will run this through the 36 districts in Queensland, which were set up by my predecessor. In the course of that consultation, we will ask school communities a number of interesting questions. We are not going to lay down the law to them. We are not going to go and get some management consultant from Wisconsin to prescribe how we should make human beings fit into the straitjacket of some managerialist ideology. We are going to ask the school communities what level of school-based management they want. We will ask them instead of telling them. We will consult with them instead of bossing them and ordering them around.

Mr Springborg: 100 days of consultation.

Mr WELLS: No, we will have a swift period of consultation. We are not going to keep people talking just for the sake of talking. We will give them the opportunity to give us an indication of what they want, so that the school communities can address the equity issue as well as the issue of what aspects of school-based management they want to undertake. It is absolutely ridiculous for a Minister to sit up on the 22nd floor of Education House, as the former Minister did, and hand out decrees about how schools should run their business. The people who know how schools should be run and what degree of school-based management schools should appropriately adopt are the people who are in that school environment themselves. We are going to let them speak.

Mr Speaker—I did not see you resume the chair. With your usual unassuming humility, you resumed the chair in complete silence. I would like to interrupt my remarks, Mr Speaker, to congratulate you on your elevation to the honourable position that you now hold. Your election to the position of Speaker honours not only your own constituents in Redcliffe but also mine who regard you also as a representative of the city in which they live. On behalf of all of them, I say congratulations and best wishes.

To conclude, I would just like to say that the former Minister really had \$10.92m; \$56m is pure imagination. It never existed. We are talking about his \$10.92m and the Labor Government's approximate \$20m that we put into the school system. That \$20m is recurrent. For the former Minister or for any other person to go around spreading fear that that sum of money is not going to be recurrent is irresponsible, mischievous and damaging to the school system. The school communities themselves have got to have some say in how this much larger cake is divided up. We will also take into account the views of school communities as to how the new ingredients in the growing cake will be divided up.

Prior to the last election, we entered into commitments for new behaviour management programs for cooler schools, for enhanced capital works programs and for literacy and numeracy programs, and it is important that these should be targeted in order to have the maximum effect on a needs-based criterion. Education funding is now going to be about a needs-based criterion. It is no longer the criterion of leading and of hierarchy; Leading Schools is finished and in its place is going to be just schools—schools funded according to distributive justice under the principles of distributive justice.

It is pretty obvious what members on the other side of the House stood for in Government and in the school system and what we stand for. We stand for equity; they stand for inequality. They stand for some Leading Schools and some presumably receding schools, following schools or at least second-rate schools in comparison. We stand for, as far as is humanly possible, giving each child in Queensland a good opportunity and an equal opportunity for a valuable and improving education.

I have been to schools which were not among the Leading Schools. When I said to them, "You are not a Leading School but you are now up there with them because the Leading Schools program is abolished and here is the funding which makes you a Leading School along with the rest", those schools enjoyed the money. They could use that money for all sorts of useful purposes. But mostly that was not what they wanted. What they valued most was the self-esteem. They were no longer being subjected to the put-down of the Leading Schools concept. They were no longer being subjected to the humiliation of being told that somebody else was leading and they were following. They were no longer being subjected to the kind of

denigration which goes with that kind of hierarchy. The people to whom this was being done were the young and the innocent.

I visited a special school and at that particular special school—which was a Leading School—there was a child who was intellectually handicapped and was confined to a wheelchair. He had a touch-screen computer. He would touch the screen of the computer and he could turn a teddy bear into a golliwog or into a frog and so on, and his little face lit up with a smile when he was able to do that. Not many miles down the road there was another special school and it happened to have some children with the same disadvantages. There was a child at that school who was also intellectually handicapped and was also confined to a wheelchair but he did not have a touch screen computer. He did not smile, whereas the child at the Leading School did smile.

That is what the Leading School's concept eventually came to. That is the hard edge of the Leading School concept: that one little intellectually handicapped and wheelchair-bound child had a touch-screen computer and another child did not. That is not fostering an education system. That is not equity. That is not justice. That is not fairness. That is not the Australian way. The abolition of the Leading Schools concept—the abolition of the notion and its substitution with a funding policy based on needs is a substitution which follows the correct path in education. It is the path which will lead to the maximisation of human potential amongst the next generation.

Mr SANTORO (Clayfield—LP) (4.32 p.m.): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the Honourable the Premier and to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition and seconded by the Leader of the Liberal Party. Before doing so, may I add my congratulations, Mr Speaker, to those which have been extended to you by other members. Together with all members in this place, I am sure that I look forward to wisdom, balance and fairness being inherent features of your judgments and utterances. May I also congratulate the new members who have made their maiden speeches here today. They remind me of the time when I made my maiden speech. I believed in what I was saying. I believed that I spoke with sincerity. I also committed myself to working very hard for my electorate. If we are able to maintain that commitment and that sincerity, irrespective of whether others agree with our views, at least we will be faithful to our principles and that is something of which we should all be proud.

May I also say thankyou to the electorate of Clayfield. The voters have been good enough to elect me for the fifth time in a row and I am very grateful to them for the honour that they have bestowed upon me. The coalition Government was very good to the electorate of Clayfield and I want to remind the House of just how good it was. After 35 years of dithering by many Governments, we funded, to the tune of \$35m, the solving of the problem of the Nundah bottleneck. Although many politicians tried to take the credit for solving that particular long-standing issue, it was the coalition Government which funded the solution. We also kept our commitment to the people living in Woolloowin and Kalinga who feared a major freeway going through their homes and their neighbourhoods. We sold off what was called the Leckie Road transportation corridor. That removed an enormous amount of anxiety from the minds and the consciousness of the people living in that part of the electorate.

Honourable members and the people of Queensland will appreciate that the previous Government closed down many railway lines and stations throughout Queensland. The Government closed down what used to be referred to as the Eagle Junction-Doomben branch line. Prior to coming to Government I committed myself to reopening that line. I had the support of the then shadow Minister for Main Roads and Transport and we delivered on that promise and reopened that line.

Before mentioning two other achievements in my electorate by the previous Government, may I place on record my very sincere appreciation to the member for Gregory and former Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I think more than almost any other Minister he took more interest in my electorate and delivered for the people of Clayfield in a most honourable way. He delivered on the promises that he made prior to coming to Government. I am very proud of him and of the achievements of which we are able to boast today.

Former Police Minister Cooper also helped tremendously. He delivered a new police station to my electorate without it even being promised. I did not promise it and I did not ask for it. I lobbied strongly for a greater police presence and, suddenly, the possibility materialised in Mr Cooper's mind—and subsequently in mine—and he delivered on a new divisional police headquarters in the electorate of Clayfield. This will be a 24-hour facility and will do much to relieve anxiety in terms of fear that results from bad people in our community doing bad things to others. As

Minister for Racing, Mr Cooper delivered on something else that had been promised by many other Ministers for Racing—Labor, Liberal and National—and that was a safe horse walkway for the racing industry which has a very sizeable presence in my electorate. I am grateful to Mr Cooper for that.

I wish to turn to the substance of the debate, and that is the motion of confidence. I want to reflect on why we are here today. The Premier is very strong on promises. He is strong on making commitments. He is strong on leadership. In fact, he keeps on telling us that he is obsessive about jobs—or so he claims. It is on the strength of these claims that he obtained the nod of the member for Nicklin and thus the commission of the Governor as Premier.

We on this side of the House share with Queenslanders everywhere the desire that the Premier and his Government, if confirmed in their offices by the confidence of this House, act well and act openly and act transparently in the public interest. If he does, and if the Labor Party in Government does, we shall see new ground being broken in Labor-ruled Queensland. It would be fertile ground for the growth of true public benefit and a very welcome augmentation of Queensland's robust democracy. But we on this side of the House will not be holding our breath for this grand new dawn.

Labor's record is one of machine politics, factional deal-doing, fanciful or alternatively anodyne presentation where the facts are concerned, a predilection for government by chloroform rag, and a cowed, mandarin-ridden administration. Nothing we have seen since the member for Brisbane Central was independently anointed by the member for Nicklin provides any evidence to suggest that we should be persuaded that this particular St Paul has been converted, or even that he is on the road to Damascus.

The Premier announced that he would govern as if he had a majority of 10. How much better if he had announced that he would govern wisely and with due regard, proper democratic regard, to the electoral facts that underpin the 49th Parliament. But those facts apparently are an embarrassment to the Labor Party and to the Premier as they head back as quickly as they can to their true political home—the familiar territory of sectional preference, blunderbuss bureaucracy, and budgetary misdemeanour. One of these facts is that the member for Brisbane Central does not have a majority of 10 and cannot pretend that he has. He does

not even have a majority, far less one that might give him double-digit protection. But perhaps he does have a majority after all—a majority of one—delivered through what, on today's evidence, is the craven position of the member for Nicklin.

For that would be the effect of the member for Nicklin's rejection of the Opposition amendment to the Government's confidence motion, or of a proposition that the amendment should be castrated by removal of its requirement that if the Beattie Government does not keep the commitments it solemnly made to him, the Premier and thus the Government must resign. The member for Nicklin obtained from the Premier a letter of some considerable detail, binding the incoming Labor administration to a set of unshakeable achievements in office in return for his support on confidence and Supply. In the context of Queensland's new political reality, that is, the reality of a four-party House with two Independents and a minority Government, that was a principled position and one that fairly dealt with the circumstances of the day.

That was Premier Beattie's contract with the member for Nicklin. It sought to satisfy him on many points of substance and several that are absolutely fundamental to Queensland's future. But contracts must be capable of being enforced. In a democratic system where the contract is one pertaining to the political administration of the State, the only weapon of enforcement lies in the power ultimately to require the resignation of the Government. It would appear that the member for Nicklin is the one who is contemplating resignation as a viable option by signalling that he will reject the only measure—the threat of dismissal—that can enforce the daily practice of honesty on this minority Government. If he fails to vote for the amendment moved by the Opposition, he will give away any power that he might have to keep the Government honest. The electors of Nicklin, only 20% of whom cast primary votes for Labor, will be wondering where this leaves them. It leaves them, I submit to the House, as the agency by which the Labor Party and its Premier, "Mr Unpreferred", came to power not by leave, which is a proper democratic outcome, but by supine acquiescence.

What members are debating here today is the issue of credibility, because it seems that the numbers have already been predetermined. Members have come into this place with high ideals about saying and doing things which are credible. But members sat here this morning and listened to the Premier taking credit for the Goodwill Games, on which

he signed off less than three weeks after he was commissioned to form a Government. Members also heard the Premier take credit for the Cancer Research Unit, which I remember going through Cabinet in the dying days of the previous Government, and which we approved and partly funded—as we should have, and as any Government should have.

We now hear the Premier beginning to back down from that famous commitment of a 5% unemployment rate. That figure will continue to haunt him, as it already obviously is, for the rest of the days of his Government. I wonder whether the commitment to behaving credibly and honestly in this place is a real commitment by members opposite when we hear them talking about employment and unemployment in the context of that 5% commitment, and when they are so graceless as to not give credit where credit is due, not just in relation to the Cabinet decisions and commitments to which I have referred but, indeed, to the achievements of the previous Government in relation to unemployment and employment creation. One wonders whether, in fact, they have really learnt anything from the recent election.

The coalition's commitments in relation to employment were many. Although we did suffer considerably at the hands of the electorate, I am not sure that they really understood precisely what those commitments were. Perhaps it was one of the failures of the previous Government that we failed to communicate just how much good we did, particularly in relation to employment. I believe that, in a place like this, particularly when members come in here mealy mouthed, espousing such high ideals, we should at least acknowledge with good grace the achievements of Governments, including those that have preceded us.

More than 97,700 new jobs were created by the former coalition Government. Actually, I should qualify that statement, because I know that, in the future, this Government will take credit for creating jobs. Every media release that I issued in relation to jobs when I was the Minister nominally responsible for coordinating the employment efforts of the previous Government, which were substantial, never referred to my Government creating jobs or the Government creating jobs. No Government creates jobs. The real jobs in this place—unless they are Public Service jobs created by direct decree by members of Government—are created by small business and the private sector. More than 97,700 new jobs were created when the coalition Government was in power. More than 25,500

new traineeships were approved in the last 12 months alone. Total employment achieved an all-time record of 1,616,100. The lowest unemployment rate in eight years—8.3% in March 1998—was achieved under the coalition Government. Forty per cent of all the new jobs that were created in Australia were created right here in Queensland. For the year ended May 1998, employment growth stood at 4.3%, compared with a national growth rate of 2.1%.

Within the Budget, which will not be the Budget of this State in a few weeks' time, many other plans for the future were in place to create or to help to create even more jobs. I ask members to contrast that with the record of the previous Goss Labor Government. Unemployment was 6.7% in December 1989, when it took over the governance of the State, and that figure increased to a record 11.1% in July 1992. That Government presided over a loss of 58,000 real jobs, and the level of unemployment increased by 65%. Therefore, one can see why this place should not have confidence in this Government's ability to achieve that 5% unemployment target.

People such as myself and, indeed, all members on this side of the Chamber will pursue the Premier and the Honourable the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations on this target. I wish the Minister well because, in taking on that particular role, I believe that he has taken on the most onerous task in this place: the achievement of a 5% unemployment rate, which was so cynically committed by the then Leader of the Opposition and his entire team for the sake of winning votes and winning Government. He won votes and he won Government, and we are going to keep this Government totally and utterly accountable to that figure. We will be fair about what we say and do, but we will keep the Government accountable.

Job security, about which members opposite had a lot to say during the election campaign, is guaranteed by one thing and one thing alone, that is, job creation. When it comes to job creation, the coalition Government stood head and shoulders above every other Government in this nation, including the Federal Government, particularly when this State boasted the second-highest participation rate in the nation behind Western Australia.

Let me deal with how the Labor Party in Government says that it is going to increase the incentive of business, and particularly small business, to increase jobs. This

Government claims that small business is going to increase its propensity, ability and willingness to employ more people. The Government will amend the unfair dismissal laws, or at least it will seek to amend the unfair dismissal laws that have worked so well—the coalition's unfair dismissal laws. What is that going to do to the incentive of small businesses when the Government tries to do that? Will that make small businesses more inclined to employ more people?

This Government will seek to reintroduce union preference into the industrial relations system—a pervasive, dogmatic and unprincipled union preference situation. Will that increase the willingness of small business to employ more people? It will move more towards a centralised wage-fixing system by removing flexibilities that the coalition Government introduced. Will that increase the ability of employers, and particularly small businesspeople—the backbone of this State and nation—to increase employment?

The Government is also committed to abolishing QWAs—union-free workplace arrangements. Before I go on, let me say that, in the two and a half years when the coalition was governing, never once did the Labor Party—either in the media or in this place—put forward one example of abuse of an employee within a workplace as a result of the changes to the legislation and the laws that we made in this place. Sure, abuse occurred, but abuse occurred under every system of industrial relations in this State and nation over the 100 years or so in which we have had a centralised wage-fixing system. But never once, either in the media or in this place, was any issue raised that, because of the coalition's legislation, this abuse had occurred. And it did not occur because we had protections built into the system for those in the workplace who were weak, and we did not extend privilege and strength to those who did not deserve to have that privilege and that strength. The Government will seek to change the workers compensation system. That means only one thing: increasing premiums, increasing uncertainty and increasing bureaucracy for employers. That certainly will not encourage small businesses to employ more people.

The Environmental Protection Authority will place even more bureaucratic burdens upon small businesses and business generally. That certainly will not increase their ability and willingness to employ more people. When one considers the baby of them all—which undermines any willingness on my part to support the motion of confidence—that

is, Labor's \$1.9 billion worth of unfunded policies, one knows where we are headed. Queensland is headed up two or three paths: an increase in taxes and charges, new taxes and charges, and, of course, the raiding of hollow logs. Two and a half years ago when the coalition came to Government, there were not many hollow logs to be raided. One of the last remaining hollow logs was the Portable Long Service Leave Fund—a fund that was set up by the previous Government to look after the retirement benefits of itinerant workers in the construction industry.

The first announcement of the new Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations was that he would seek to bring onto the floor of this House legislation to raid that hollow log so that he could fund apprenticeships and traineeships within the building industry. He did not say that he was going to come in here and deliver on the promise of introducing a training levy. He is raiding the hollow log of the Portable Long Service Leave Fund in order to fund the training that he promised via a training levy. One does not have to be Einstein to understand why he backed down on the election promise of a training levy. The Housing Industry Association objected to it; most other independent builders in Queensland objected to it; and, of course, it might have offended the member for Nicklin had the Government introduced a new tax. So what did he do? He broke a promise and he will be trying to raid the Portable Long Service Leave Fund—a fund that was established to protect the retirement benefits of the workers whom the members opposite pretend to represent.

This new Government does not deserve the confidence of this Parliament for the reasons that I have stated and the reasons stated by members who have preceded me in this debate. I certainly will not be supporting the motion of confidence. We will be looking forward to the honourable member for Nicklin acting in a principled manner that will uphold and entrench the integrity of the commitment that he gave to the new Premier, Mr Beattie.

Mr SPRINGBORG (Warwick—NPA) (4.51 p.m.): Mr Speaker, let me congratulate you on your elevation to the Speakership of this Parliament. I have confidence in your ability. Our relationship is one of mutual respect and dignity and has been since we came into this place in 1989. I look forward to your controlling this House in a very dignified and even-handed way. I think it is fair to endorse the comments of the Leader of the Opposition who indicated that there will be

times in this Parliament when debate will be robust and you will face some extremely challenging times in the chair.

Firstly, I will make some general comments on the election result. In common with many other members, I take the opportunity provided by this motion to thank my constituents very much for again having faith in me and re-electing me to this Parliament, albeit with a somewhat reduced margin. However, I am still considered to have a seat that is a bit above marginal. As I have indicated previously, none of us should ever take our seats for granted. Certainly, many safe seats are the first seats to go. That is something rather quirky that has been happening generally in politics in Australia and particularly in Queensland over the last couple of elections.

In response to the concerns and ideals raised by the member for Nicklin, I point out that we are all idealistic. It is great to have those ideals while we continue in our capacity as members of this Parliament. He mentioned that when he was campaigning for election, people indicated that they had never seen a politician. That is one of the great difficulties that we face as members of Parliament. I point out to the member for Nicklin that no matter how long he is in this place—whether it be one term or six—some constituents of his will say the same thing about him. It is a quirk of nature that, no matter how many times one visits a place, one cannot see everyone. I remember going to one community in my electorate and somebody said to me, "Well, I haven't seen you here for about 18 months or two years." I said, "I've been here 12 times in the last year. I haven't seen you here, either. You must not come to town very much." That is the reality: we can visit a place, but because we are not there when a particular person is in town and they do not see us they believe that we are not representing their interests.

It is fair to say that members on both sides of this House and those elected to this House only recently will endeavour to serve their electorates extremely well. I know that they are entering Parliament with all of the right ideals. Today, members of Parliament are more accessible than they were 50 or 100 years ago—or even 20 or 30 years ago. As members travel around their electorates on the weekend or during the week, they will find that they will go to a number of functions and attend a number of community meetings in one day. Fifty years ago, there would have been no hope of doing that using early means of transportation. I will share a story that was related to me some time ago by a person

whose father held the old seat of Carnarvon up till 1930 or thereabouts. His salary was about 35 quid a year. In order to attend functions he had to catch the steam train or his wife would drive him. On one occasion, when he had to attend an official function at Stanthorpe, the vehicle was unable to ascend the steep hill south of Warwick, whereupon he was forced to turn around and catch the steam train from Warwick to Stanthorpe.

Members of Parliament should not be too critical of this institution, because self-criticism only feeds the negative perception of this place in the community. We have to be very, very careful. Generally, members of Parliament are able to be contacted more easily today than they were in those times. We all have a couple of telephones. We all have email and fax. In some ways, familiarity breeds contempt. We stand in this place day after day. As was indicated earlier by other members, only the things we say that are likely to be controversial are reported on television. People do not necessarily report what is said in this place during the hard grind of debate. In fact, members agree on 70% of the legislation that is passed in this Parliament. We must be very mindful of that.

Anybody who believes that what happened in Queensland at the last election is confined to our State really needs to consider what is happening worldwide and the insecurity worldwide as a consequence of globalisation. As a result of change, people are very concerned. We have been singularly unable to manage the consequences of change and soften the impact on people of some inevitable change and include them in the changes to the system. That is our great challenge. If we fail to do that, if we continue to go down the road of economic rationalism without considering the negative consequences, we will be confined to the scrap heap of political history. That is the great lesson that we must learn from the election result. As I say, we are faced with a tremendous challenge.

I turn now to the reasons why my electorate and I cannot have confidence in this Government. When the Labor Government occupied the benches opposite from 1989 to 1996, much happened in my electorate which I believe led to people losing faith in both the political process and the Government of the day. Many Government services were stripped away during that time. Courthouses were closed in places such as Inglewood and Texas. The Department of Primary Industries was gutted. We saw agronomists being taken away, research

facilities downgraded and stock inspectors go. That certainly did not do very much at all to uphold the morale of those communities. I believe that that led to much negativity and many people moving away.

Four local government areas were amalgamated into one, without a great degree of community consultation. What consultation there was was mock consultation. That certainly undermined the faith of people in the process of government and created a great degree of ongoing community division and resentment. In a bizarre twist, that was manifested in a backlash against me at the last State election. If members think that the effects of negative actions by members of another party when in Government expire with that Government, they need to think again, because those actions can feed the resentment that some people feel towards that Government and its successor.

Railway staff were also taken away and stations were closed. In some towns such as Wallangarra, which is a small community that has a very, very low socioeconomic base, that did a great deal to undermine the morale of the community and took away business from some small businesses. However, places such as Inglewood, which lost its Department of Primary Industries building, its agronomist and stock inspector in 1990, had its position of agronomist restored by the former coalition Government shortly before its term of office finished. That has been greatly appreciated by the people of that area as they endeavour to get into new, alternative agricultural industries such as olive growing. People are always looking at new and innovative ways of underwriting and increasing the viability their enterprises. For example, my area has a growing peanut industry. I say to the honourable member for Barambah that I hope at some stage we are going to very much challenge the peanut industry in her part of the world. I think that we might be able to do that.

Today, my challenge to the new Government is to make sure that that proper process of reconstruction of the Department of Primary Industries—which was entered into by Trevor Perrett and continued on by Marc Rowell, the member for Hinchinbrook—which replaced half of those departmental people who were taken away from rural areas continues. I hope that the agronomist in Inglewood is kept on to make sure that the department is able to provide a service to the people in that community. As well, the former coalition Government reopened the Inglewood Court House as a place for holding court. That

is something that has been greatly appreciated by the local community, which did not have access to that fundamental justice service. People had to travel either to Goondiwindi, which is an hour's drive away, or to Warwick, which is an hour's drive in the opposite direction, to have matters, such as simply having a debt claim, dealt with. People may say, "Those people can drive", but we are dealing with small-business people. When somebody has to appear before a court, sometimes he or she does not have access to transport to be able to get there. So it is very, very important for the morale of those communities, for the continuing fabric of those communities, that we maintain those facilities. So my challenge today to the Honourable Minister for Justice and Attorney-General is that that courthouse stays open. It has been greatly appreciated since it has been reopened. What has also been appreciated is the extension of the operating hours of the Queensland Government agency, which operates out of the same building.

During the term of the coalition Government, throughout my electorate a range of facilities, such as roads and schools, were upgraded. It would be remiss of me if I did not commend the former Minister for Police and Corrective Services for his great vision in putting forward a plan to decentralise our correctional facilities throughout the southern part of Queensland. That would provide an economic opportunity for people in that area. As well, it provides good, forward planning. If we had a number of small prisons they would have the capacity to expand as the prison population grows. In effect, that planning killed two birds with one stone. My challenge to the new Minister is to make sure that he considers Inglewood when he goes through the process of deciding whether the Government is going to construct a new correctional facility in the southern part of Queensland. That consultation process, which was mentioned yesterday in the Governor's Speech, was already under way and largely completed. So I ask the Government to not throw away that consultation work. I know that the honourable member for Inala is thinking that this has not been funded. The issue is forward planning. I am talking about something that the coalition Government would have brought on board in a couple of years' time. It would have popped up in the coalition Government's next Budget or maybe in the one after that. It was good, proper forward planning.

I turn to the issues relating to the portfolio of Attorney-General and Justice, for which I am the Opposition spokesman.

Mr Palaszczuk: Where is your wig?

Mr SPRINGBORG: I say to the new Minister for Primary Industries that at the moment out my way it is pretty sad for the wheat. It is turning yellow and standing under water. The situation is quite the opposite of that of a drought.

Mr Palaszczuk: I did not say "wheat"; I said, "Where is your wig?"

Mr SPRINGBORG: I thought the member was talking about wheat. My wig comes a bit further down the track. I pay tribute to the now Leader of Opposition Business and the shadow Minister for Family Services, Denver Beanland. I believe that he should be remembered as an extremely proactive Attorney-General who achieved a great deal for Queensland. Unfortunately, over the past year or so there has been a lot of debate that did not necessarily give him the great credit that he deserved. He worked extremely hard. In a short period, the former Attorney-General put in place a new Criminal Code that met the aspirations of the people of Queensland in ensuring that people who committed offences had sentences imposed on them that properly met community expectations and properly met contemporary expectations. In some cases, penalties in the previous Criminal Code were doubled or trebled.

The previous Attorney-General brought in the new juvenile justice legislation, for which, owing to the splitting of the previous Government's portfolios, he is still responsible as the spokesman for Family Services. That Act gave the courts a greater ability to impose just and fair sentences on juvenile offenders—something that had been concerning members of the community for a long period. The previous Attorney-General beefed up the Penalties and Sentences Act to ensure that the protection of the community was the first responsibility of the courts, not that a term of imprisonment was considered to be an absolute last resort. Under the coalition Government's Penalties and Sentences Act, people who should have gone to jail actually went to jail. The previous Government also implemented people's right to choose whether or not to accept medical intervention.

The establishment of uniform court rules was an absolutely wonderful achievement of the former Attorney-General. We had the situation in which we had something like 700 rules and forms for our courts. The former Attorney-General was able to break down the process so that there are now only about 100 rules and forms, which are coordinated and uniform throughout the Magistrates, the

District and the Supreme Courts. I believe that that process has made it a lot simpler for the lawyers and solicitors who participate and interact with the judicial system and, hopefully, that will reduce the cost on people who are required to use the judicial system.

On that point, I believe that we have to make the judicial process more inclusive. As I move around the State, a lot of people say to me that we have a legal system that is not really a justice system. People feel disconnected from the justice system in the same way as they feel disconnected from the parliamentary system. They feel that it is overly complicated and does not necessarily represent them. People go through the judicial mill, spend hundreds of thousands of dollars and, at the end the day, do not necessarily feel as though they have received fairness and justice. I am not saying that that is easy to fix without undermining the fundamental and very important tenets of our legal system, which has developed and evolved over a long period. However, a lot of people are extremely concerned about it.

The former coalition Government increased the number of Supreme Court judges, District Court judges and magistrates. It put into process the development of the discussion paper on stalking laws, which recently was released by the Attorney-General. I indicate to him that, although I commend him for doing that, that was a discussion paper that was developed by the former Attorney-General and was very necessary.

I reiterate my call for a review of the Bail Act to make sure that the Attorney-General has clearly defined powers and ability to be able to act in terms of an appeal or a revocation of bail. I believe that there are some grey areas in the Act and it may be in the best interests of the Attorney-General and the people that we look at the Bail Act. Whilst I am on that matter, I would like to say that, although I have confidence in magistrates getting things right 99.9% of the time, I believe that they are like members of Parliament, or like anybody else: there is always a concern that they may get it wrong. Recently, a decision was made about an incident that occurred in Noosa. A decision was made by a magistrate that was subsequently adjudicated by a higher court to have been the wrong decision. It would help if we had a circuit-breaker that was more clearly defined in the Act. What occurred in that situation helped to undermine the community's faith in our legal system. I understand that matters relating to bail are very finely balanced. However, we have to move in that area.

The fines legislation was introduced by the former Attorney-General, Denver Beanland, and he deserves much credit for it. It is legislation that will help keep fine defaulters who should not be in jail out of jail. A lot of such people are in our jails and should not be there. There is no doubt that those people who do not pay their fines are at a lower level of offending. I think that most people agree with that.

I would like to differentiate between people who go to jail but should not be there and others. There are alternative ways of dealing with the former, such as by the revocation of their driver's licences. That might be an incentive to pay a fine, for example. Once these people, whose behaviour may have been minor or petty, get into jail, they have a chance of going on to become hardened criminals. At the other end of the scale, I have also flagged my intention—I believe this is in line with community expectation—to make sure that the worst types of serious violent offenders serve their full sentences. I will be bringing before this Parliament a private member's Bill along those lines.

Another innovation of the former Attorney-General is video linking across Queensland. The size of Queensland is such that if it were turned upside down the tip of Cape York would extend 500 kilometres south of Tasmania. When dealing with a State such as Queensland it is extremely important to make sure we can continue to deliver justice to its rural and regional areas. I think that is very sensible in this modern information age.

I refer to the discussion paper on the issues of consent and rape. Those sorts of issues were looked at by the former Government and measures were actually put in place. Much was achieved in the time the coalition was in Government.

I will be watching the actions of the new Attorney-General. I will be working with him in a constructive way. I congratulate him on his elevation to the position, but I indicate that we will be watching to make sure that those very great and necessary reforms are properly funded and that the things the coalition Government put in place continue to be taken forward. Also, I will be taking the initiative from time to time by introducing legislation into this Parliament as a private member, something which I believe is extremely necessary and overdue. I will be doing that as people come to me with other concerns as well.

When I was Minister for Natural Resources I oversaw the water infrastructure

program—a \$1 billion, 10-year program of Government funding. I challenge this Government to put that in place. That program is necessary and essential to ensure that we have right levels of economic development in the rural and regional areas of this State. I would hate to see the Government throw out that program. It has been properly developed. It is the best planned program this State has ever seen. It would be unfortunate to see it go by the wayside now.

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—IND) (5.12 p.m.): I rise to speak to this motion of confidence. Other members have taken the opportunity of this debate to refer to their electorates and to the election. I would prefer to leave that to the debate on the Address in Reply, except to say that I do value the support of my electorate.

The 25 new members of this Parliament have an opportunity for a very rewarding three years. Electorates generally want a member who will work for them and who will represent their concerns. While not necessarily always getting the outcome that is requested, provided those community members feel they have been fairly represented they will be more than happy that their member has acted for them.

In common with many of the other speakers, I pass on my congratulations to the new Speaker. I believe the previous Speaker, Mr Neil Turner, encapsulated the role as to fairness and equity, and I look forward to enjoying that same characteristic in the new Speaker. It will be challenging, because the make-up of the new Parliament is dynamic, to say the least, and I am sure that as the three-year period unfolds our new Speaker will have many opportunities to exercise his right of control.

I also pass on my appreciation to the previous Government. The previous Government faced some very difficult situations, yet I always found that, irrespective of my voting pattern, I was dealt with fairly and with evenness of hand. Those in Government were always approachable and they were not vindictive. I can only hope that the Independent member for Nicklin, who has assumed a similar role in the current Parliament to the one I had in the last, will enjoy the same openness and availability of Ministers that I had with the previous Ministry.

I also look forward to the situation espoused by the new Premier that the new Ministry will deal fairly and equitably with all of us in non-Government seats. I particularly look

forward to my electorate being dealt with in a non-prejudicial manner.

For the months prior to the recent election many asked about the possibility of a Queensland Parliament being once again hung as a result of the June election. My response at the time was that the possibility of that occurring was remote, to say the least. Time has proven that expectation to be wrong. Today we again debate a motion of confidence in a minority Government. This same debate held approximately two and a half years ago remains clear in my mind. Its contents are significant indeed in my considerations.

One very keen Labor supporter in my electorate recently attempted to interrogate a public declaration regarding my likely support on this confidence issue. In his argument he applied the same factors to this election result as were applied in my decision relating to the previous Parliament of Queensland. One of these was the actual percentage of votes received. In 1995 the coalition received 53% of the much vaunted two-party preferred vote. My opposition to the party system is well documented; however, I recognise the regular use of the two-party preferred assessment. This same formula cannot be directly applied to this election result, given the significant shift in voting patterns in Queensland.

Previously, a second issue was the significant change in seats held by each party. The previous Labor Government lost 18 seats in the 1995 election. In 1998, both Labor and the conservatives lost seats to One Nation. Labor lost six and the coalition lost five. Additionally, the coalition lost the seat of Nicklin to the Independent. Overall, however, the ALP retained the same total number of seats in this House—44.

A third indicator previously used was the work or lack thereof in my own electorate. I used a number of issues—hospital maintenance, police numbers and the like—as indicators only. This single factor has been most misused and abused over the past two and a half years. The tiny leak in the hospital roof, a reality which existed under both coalition and the Labor leadership, cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to repair properly. On behalf of all who work at the hospital and those who are and will be patients, I thank the former Minister for Health for the necessary work that was done. If work in electorates were a major factor in my decision, I would have to say that the coalition enabled a great number of concerns to be

addressed. Residents in the Gladstone electorate can be justifiably encouraged.

I could not, however, apply on an identical basis the criteria used after the last election to this election result. There is, however, one very important component not new to this election but nonetheless a vital consideration, given the Statewide results of the 1998 poll: the issue of stability. In spite of repeated allegations from the Opposition in 1996 that a minority Government should not be tolerated, amid suggestions of the need for new elections, the coalition showed it could provide stable Government in a minority position for a full two and a half years. Given the call now for this Parliament to support a Labor minority Government, I can only accept that the opinions previously expressed have changed.

An example used earlier in this debate was that the president of the Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry had called for a Labor minority Government as the only possible stable option. Ironically, I believe it may have been that same person who in 1996 said that the only chance of stability, given the option of a hung Parliament, was to call for fresh elections. His opinion must also have changed.

On Wednesday, 24 June, the member for Nicklin and I met separately with the Honourable Rob Borbidge, the then Premier, the Honourable Peter Beattie and Dr David Watson. I met also with the representative of One Nation, Mr Peter James, their State director. I am unsure whether the member for Nicklin's meeting list was identical.

At these meetings discussions on a broad range of issues were held. Although the facts were very important to me, I was also seeking to understand each party's attitude to stability in this State. What level of priority would be given to stability of Government as separate from predictable voting patterns, given the effect of instability on the economy, job creation, general employment and the like? Would the importance of stable Government be used to enforce a particular issue or political agenda in the State? Would the various new party groups place less importance on the State's best via stability as opposed to advancing any separate agendas?

At the conclusion of these discussions I could not feel confident that the overall importance of a Government serving its full term—the message of stability—would be paid the necessary regard as opposed to the potential for an unnecessary early election, excluding, of course, gross misconduct or

proven criminality on the part of Government members.

I note that the Premier's motion includes an undertaking not to go to an election before 5 May 2001 without the express resolution of the House. Had the Premier not included that in his motion, it was my intention to move such an amendment, and I commend him for giving that undertaking.

In this election, the ALP succeeded in obtaining only approximately 39% of the primary vote. As mentioned before, there is no appropriate way to apportion this result into the mythical two-party preferred stream. That is a bonus, because in addition to two Independents, there are 11 representatives of a new political entity, One Nation. This fundamental shift in representative composition is a plus for the people of Queensland. It means that there are 25 new representatives in the Parliament adding a fresh perspective to debate. Whether sitting on the Government benches or on the non-Government benches, this new and significant block can and will influence the form and ethos that this 49th Parliament will take. That position of influence was also a factor that I considered. Those who would criticise the election result must, however, acknowledge that a very large proportion of the voting community chose neither established party. At least for this Parliament, the complexion of the decision-making process has changed.

We have before us a motion of confidence and three subsequent amendments. The first two amendments represent two very separate issues. However, they incorporate the same basic components—honesty and integrity. The first amendment recognises the undertakings given to the member for Nicklin. All matters have received publicity and have been a basis of the Premier's presentation of his new Government to the State of Queensland. I support the intent of the first amendment. The member for Cook proposed an amendment to significantly water down that motion, which I will be opposing. The second amendment covers a very different matter. However, it goes again to the heart of the Premier's commitment to the State, to honesty and integrity. Therefore, I will support the second amendment also.

The current Government has all the support it needs to retain power. The undertakings given by the member for Nicklin ensure this. However, each one of us is required to consider this confidence motion and to consider our position. When the

election outcome was evident, I spoke with a cross-section of people in my electorate. Most wanted a stable term ahead, not an Executive Government whereby this House is merely a rubber stamp. People now accept that close numbers in this unicameral Parliament ensure better scrutiny of proposed legislation.

I fully continue in the view that a Parliament of 89 Independents could work successfully, but that is not the scenario that we are considering in today's confidence motion. On the basis of all of the matters available to be considered, particularly the issue of stability, given the fact that the new Government has been formed and made quite marked changes to the various departments and has offered to the State stable albeit minority Government, I will support the motion of confidence, including the amendments of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of One Nation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves): I call the member for Callide. As this is the honourable member's first speech, I ask that honourable members afford him the courtesy of the House.

Mr SEENEY (Callide—NPA) (5.23 p.m.): As the only newly elected coalition member, I am deeply honoured to be able to deliver my first speech in this Parliament as part of this debate on the motion of confidence in the new Labor Government.

My electorate of Callide covers 14 towns—14 communities—from Biggenden and Wandoan in the south to Monto, Biloela and Baralaba in the north, extending west to Rolleston. It covers the area known as the central and north Burnett on the eastern side and the Callide and Dawson Valleys to the west. The electorate of Callide's greatest asset is its people, and I am here on their behalf. I am very proud to represent the people of Callide, and it is about them that I wish to speak tonight. I wish to use some of their words to convey to this House what is essentially their message.

I am the fifth generation of my family to have lived, worked and raised their children in the Burnett Valley—five generations over a period of 150 years since the area was first settled. Like so many other people, some of my family have taken up small land-holdings, especially when the area was opened up to closer settlement in the 1920s. Today Callide has many such small land-holdings—a legacy of the closer settlement schemes—and Callide has many small businesses, a characteristic of the many relatively small communities.

I come to this role with the right background to understand the people I represent. My first job when I left school was as a labourer with the Monto Shire Council. I have worked as a stockman and as a contractor, and I have built up my own agricultural and marketing business from scratch. I know all about the challenges of balancing big mortgages, the needs of a growing family, and an active involvement in community life. Immediately before coming to this role, I was the Deputy Mayor of the Monto Shire Council for five years.

Monto Shire is one of eight shires that make up the Callide electorate, and I recognise tonight the role that local government plays in our communities. I pay tribute to all of those people who serve in those local government roles, most of the time for very little financial reward. Many other people also work for the future of our communities in a voluntary capacity, for example, on economic development councils, progress associations, committees and local organisations of a hundred different sorts. I recognise and congratulate all of those people who contribute to the communities of Callide in this voluntary way. Our communities are better places in which to live because so many people are prepared to give their time and effort for the common community good.

The 14 communities that make up the electorate of Callide are not just physical infrastructure, nor are they corporate entities; they are about people. They have a spirit and a soul. Our communities have a culture and traditions of their own. These communities are all similar in some ways and yet they are all unique in others. Our communities are very different places in which to live compared with the large urban centres. They are very much better places to live in some ways and very much more deprived in others.

It is no exaggeration to say that today the spirit of so many of our rural communities is somewhat jaded and they are sick in their heart. It is also true to say that the overwhelming emotion in many of our communities at the moment is frustration and uncertainty—even anger and cynicism. It is an emotion that I can well understand and one that I share. It has been too tough for too long in rural Queensland. It has been too tough for too long for many reasons. Some of those reasons are the direct result of Government policies. Some of those reasons are beyond anybody's control. But all of them have a cumulative effect that is wearing down the legendary resilience of the people who have lived in rural Queensland for generations.

In common with other rural areas across the State, our most valuable export in Callide is our children—strong, healthy, intelligent, capable children—who invariably leave when they reach their late teens for regional or capital cities in search of elusive work and job opportunities. With them goes our future and our very reason for being. Our communities are fighting back. All too often it seems we must fight those who should be helping us. How can the people of Callide have any confidence in this Labor Government when they have not yet recovered from the tragic effects of the last Labor Government in this State? Many members of that Government are still here today.

In the six years from 1990 to 1996, the Labor Government in Queensland combined with the Labor Government in Canberra to tear the heart and soul out of rural Queensland. They gutted so many of our rural communities as they rationalised and regionalised or simply closed every Government service they could. The threat to close the railway network became the symbol of the withdrawal of rural services, and I was involved in the fight to save the Burnett railway line in July 1994. I experienced at close range the anger and frustration of normally quiet, ordinarily placid people as they mobilised to force the Goss Government to back down. In 1994, those people, many of whom had never demonstrated about anything before, hanged in effigy the then Transport Minister in Monto's main street. Today, that member is still here and is in this Government. I hope he reflects on that experience when he considers how his decisions as Treasurer will impact on rural and regional Queensland.

At the same time as the State Government was stripping rural Queensland of essential services, the Federal Labor Government drove a policy agenda which destroyed the viability of many of our farming businesses and our agricultural industries. These were industries that have provided a sound economic base for our families and our communities for generations. Good solid people have fought helplessly as their ability to provide for themselves has been lost and their much prized independence and self-reliance has been eroded.

So many of us who live in Callide have felt our security being eroded. We have felt ourselves losing our ability to control our own destiny and we have felt our ability to provide for our own future slipping away. It is entirely understandable that anger and frustration should increase in such circumstances. We in Callide share the anger and frustration of

much of rural and regional Queensland. We are people who are traditionally loyal and slow to anger, but our anger when aroused can be a profound and all consuming thing, and so it was on 13 June.

Over the past two years Queensland has had a major injection of resources into rural and regional areas. We have had a major injection of resources into the electorate of Callide—a major attempt to turn the tide, to correct the mess left by years of Labor Governments. That injection of resources was only just starting to have an effect. Because of the lead times involved, many of the projects planned and developed in the past two years in the Callide electorate are still in advanced planning and early construction stages.

In March 1998 the Borbidge coalition Government announced a \$3 billion Surat Basin development project located in the Callide electorate to generate jobs and growth for the whole central Queensland region. This project includes the \$120m Nathan dam on the Dawson River, rail construction, power stations at Wandoan and Callide C, new coalmines to access some 4 billion tonnes of thermal coal in the Surat Basin and the opening up of 20,000 hectares of new, irrigable agricultural land.

The water infrastructure task force set up by the then Minister for Natural Resources, Howard Hobbs, identified infrastructure projects across Queensland. The coalition Government committed \$1 billion to water infrastructure construction to be supplemented by another \$1 billion of private sector funds over a 15-year period. Millions of those dollars have already been spent in Callide to progress the essential impact studies and the necessary planning processes for the best of the projects identified on the Dawson and Burnett River systems.

In many of the communities that make up the Callide electorate the local authority is the major source of local jobs, and these local authorities depend heavily on Main Roads construction work. During those two years, funding for roads all over the State was increased by the then Minister for Transport, Vaughan Johnson. Commitments were made for major road construction projects on the Dawson and Burnett Highways as well as increases in essential maintenance funding. Almost all of those extra roadworks in Callide were allocated to local authorities. This created jobs locally and provided security of employment for local government work forces as local governments were exempted from the more extreme National Competition Policy

requirements, some of which would have decimated their work forces.

Nearly \$5m to improve substandard town water supplies was shared between Gayndah, Mundubbera, Eidsvold, Thangool, Goovigen and Wandoan. Funding was also provided for a new million-dollar bridge at Theodore, a swimming pool at Eidsvold, a new hospital and a new library at Mundubbera, a million-dollar upgrade for the Biloela Hospital, QCAP offices throughout the region to give back to people access to Government departments, school and kindergarten upgrades throughout the electorate, sport and recreation club funding, and so the list goes on.

None of this would have happened, none of this would have been delivered if the coalition had not won Government in 1996. This record of infrastructure and service delivery stands in stark contrast to what happened in the six years of Labor Government—six years when services and infrastructure in the Callide electorate, as in the rest of rural and regional Queensland, were either withdrawn or allowed to run down.

Any attempt to repeat the gutting of rural Queensland, any attempt to delay or whittle away the projects planned for the electorate of Callide will provoke a savage reaction from the people I represent. They were angry in 1994 when their communities were gutted by the Goss Labor Government, and they are a whole lot angrier and ready to fight now. We want to reverse the decline in our communities. We want to build a better future in those communities for ourselves, our children and our children's children. We can do that with projects such as the Surat Basin development. We can do that with projects such as the Nathan Gorge and Paradise dams.

We have an abundance of natural resources which can be sustainably developed to provide opportunities for our future. The key to that future is water—water for agriculture and water for industry. Agriculture has always been and will always be the economic base of the Callide electorate. Other industries such as mining—especially coalmining—power generation and tourism also make major contributions to that economic base. Together with agriculture in all its forms, they provide the Callide electorate with a huge potential for the future. For that potential to be realised, the priority must be the provision of the infrastructure needed to ensure those adequate and reliable water supplies.

To its credit, the previous Government recognised this and put in place the Water

Infrastructure Task Force and made that billion-dollar commitment to investment in this type of infrastructure. Nearly 50 submissions were received for projects from within the Callide electorate and that clearly indicates the need that exists for water, which is the catalyst for all other development—development that can provide real, sustainable jobs and real income from export-focused industries.

The largest and most ambitious of those infrastructure projects is, of course, the Nathan Gorge dam, but there are equally important projects on the Burnett and Auburn Rivers where the citrus and horticultural industries already exist. There already exists in the Burnett Valley a huge resource of human skill and ability and a large amount of private capital investment in industry infrastructure that is currently being restricted because of the lack of the development of those water resources. These infrastructure projects must proceed to fruition and not be held up by green minority groups staging media events or a Labor Government reluctant to invest in rural Queensland. We must be prepared to learn from the past and develop the potential of these resources in a sustainable way. We cannot let past mistakes be an excuse for not doing anything in the future.

We must also recognise and change the economic policies that have proven to be a terrible mistake—policies that have stripped away the viability of so many of our rural industries. We must abandon forever the law of the jungle type economic policies. We must abandon the discredited level playing field concept. These concepts have and will inevitably destroy family farming operations and family businesses and the jobs they provide across this State and this country.

My electorate of Callide is almost all about family farms and small family businesses and the people they employ. We who own those family farms and small businesses increasingly face the threat of being destroyed by the predatory corporate giants who hold all the market power or being destroyed by the unfair competition from overseas. As I stand here tonight, many pork producers in my electorate—many of my friends and contemporaries—are trying to determine how they will survive another month of disastrously low prices, which are well below the cost of production, in the face of the importation of over 1,000 tonnes per month of foreign product.

Many dairy farmers in my electorate, many of whom are my friends and contemporaries, will spend tonight

contemplating their inevitable financial ruin if the National Competition Policy inspired deregulation scheduled for 1 January 1999 produces the same reduction in farm gate prices as it has already done in New South Wales. That was a reduction in milk prices to the farmer which did not end up as a benefit to the consumer, but rather went to boost the profits of the big retailers.

In Callide, as in the rest of rural and regional Queensland, we believe that in a world of economic rationalism people matter, too. We do not believe and we will not accept that our families and our communities are expendable in the big picture politics of globalisation. We will not accept that our future should be forfeited to powerful corporate giants and the law of the jungle economic policies. We will not accept that our future should be sacrificed on the mythical level playing fields. We do not believe that it is fair and just for our efforts to build a better future for our communities to be continually frustrated by single-issue minority groups. We do not believe that it is fair and just for our future in rural Queensland to be denied by yet another Labor Government with an urban and coastal focus.

I do not believe that the answer to the problems that we face in rural and regional Queensland lies in some sort of regression to the past. I have no doubt at all that the oversimplistic solutions and the shallow wish list type policy position of the Far Right would see us much worse off within a very short space of time. But we in Callide, as in many other areas in rural and regional Queensland, want the chance to build a better future for ourselves in today's world. As we approach the year 2000 we want the chance to be able to build a better future for our families and a better future for our communities within the realities of the 21st century. We want the next generation to have the chance of some security on our family farms and in our small businesses, and we want our children to have a decent chance of getting a secure job in rural and regional Queensland. I have to say that we in Callide have absolutely no confidence that the task we face will be made any easier by the election of this Labor Government, but we are ready to fight every inch of the way for a fair go.

Mr VEIVERS (Southport—NPA) (5.41 p.m.): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition earlier today. However, I must firstly congratulate the member for Callide on his maiden speech. I also welcome all new members to this House.

It is a place where one can be interrupted by a lot of people when one is trying to speak. The new members have all joined an elite club. My remarks apply equally to the member for Nicklin. People outside say, "Oh, you are a polly and you are in here." The quickest way to shut them up is to say, "You run against me at the next election." This is an exclusive club. I think the member for Crows Nest, Mr Cooper, explained it very well indeed this afternoon.

I was not very happy with Gough Whitlam. I was less happy with Malcolm Fraser. We State members are not always happy with the parties at the Federal level. I am certainly not happy with the confidence motion that those opposite have moved. I think the honourable member for Callide has explained it very well. The new members cannot interject on me, but the older dudes over here, such as the member for Murrumba and the member for Kedron, can interject if they really want to. I do not have any confidence in this Government because we saw Labor rip the heart out of us over six or seven years. I remember being a shadow Minister at that time and thinking, "Will we ever get these blokes out?" We got them out, but now they are back in again. I do not know if that is a big wrap for Mr Wellington, but it was his decision and I am not picking on him because in this place—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves) Order! The honourable member will refer to the member by his correct title.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, the member for Nicklin. Mr Deputy Speaker, I was just about to congratulate you, even though you have not previously occupied the chair. As I am feeling warm-hearted this afternoon and I have waited a while to speak, I will congratulate you. You told me you would not pick on me, so I will not pick on you! I congratulate the new Speaker on his elevation to a very honourable position in this place. He has a very hard act to follow in the former member for Nicklin, my very good friend Neil Turner. I am one of those blokes who will stand up in this House and say that if he is not the best Speaker we have had since Federation I will jump off a bridge. However, I do not want to do those sorts of things.

During this debate I want to put on record my thanks to the thousands of emergency service workers and volunteers right across Queensland for their help and support during my period as Emergency Services Minister. I cannot speak highly enough of them. They train and work for the benefit of their fellow Queenslanders. As those opposite would know, the SES workers would send the Treasurer into heart attack mode if we had to

pay them. We do not pay them. They do their job for the benefit of the community.

I remind the House of the helicopter rescue people who received the Golden Hour Award last year. That is a major worldwide award for rescue. Those people have brought great honour to our emergency services. The former shadow Minister, who is now the Minister for Education, loved that. I gained that impression from the way he spoke this afternoon. He looks as though he is loving it, even though sometimes words fail him.

Mr Wells: I particularly liked what you said about the SES.

Mr VEIVERS: I thank the member very much. The member for Murrumba is a member of the SES. I must say that on occasions I was hoping that when he was at training on certain nights and the wind was blowing the rope would slip and he would fall off! That was just a thought that crossed my mind. I did not really mean it.

Mr Wells: Every time you thought that, you had another jelly bean.

Mr VEIVERS: Speaking of jelly beans, I want to talk about the Ambulance Service whose officers are undoubtedly the best in Australia. They set benchmarks and at times they were maligned by the member for Murrumba.

Mr WELLS: The honourable member's suggestion that I ever maligned an ambulance officer is untrue and offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr VEIVERS: I withdraw.

An Opposition member: Ask him if he knows what an ambulance is.

Mr VEIVERS: I know more about it than you, sonny.

The rural fire brigades are always on hand to do the job for no reward. They are simply doing it to look after the members of their community. I am going to refer to the members of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority. Before I do that I want to thank some individuals. I wish to thank my former director-general, Mr John Hocken, who worked very hard for the services. He did a great job. He came through the ranks. He worked for a former Minister, Don Neal, in the Department of Harbours and Marine. He was quite expert in that field. He also worked for the current Treasurer, Mr David Hamill. I thought, "If he can work for him, he can work for anyone." So I asked him to work for me.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr VEIVERS: Yes, a big silver bullet. He was a good man who was thrown out very unfairly by this new regime. How many did this Government get rid of? These people were just wiped out. The Government said it would not do that.

I must congratulate the member for Brisbane Central on becoming Premier. The Premier said that his Government would not throw out public servants. However, these people were just shot out the door within two days. I suppose the Premier thought that if he did it quickly the pain would be gone and everyone would forget about it. I have not forgotten about it. I am sure Mr Hocken has not forgotten about it. I know that the One Nation members have not forgotten about it. It is just not on.

The Premier said that he would not send people to the gulag. He simply fired them and sent them straight out the door. He gave them \$50,000 or \$60,000 and said, "DCM—don't come Monday." That was not good. I think a promise was made that some of these people would get a job, but they did not get a job. They were all good men, and Hocken was one of them. As the member for Crows Nest said this afternoon, they may have been affiliated with political parties, but they were apolitical in their work because they were professional public servants. For God's sake, I even hired Michael Kinnane. He is a member of the Labor Party and a person who stood as a candidate for the Labor Party. I knew that, Russell Cooper knew it, and Vaughan Johnson knew it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr VEIVERS: Mr Deputy Speaker, for a bloke who was not going to pick on me, you are doing a good job.

These people are professional. I may joke about a lot of things, but I am deadly serious about this issue. One cannot malign public servants. This is not the United States of America. We cannot change them every time there is a change of Government. Governments in America are in power for five years, whereas here we have three-year terms. Those public servants have hardly warmed their seats, but this Government is pegging them out again. We should retain them, because that is all they know.

Mr Cooper: You want to have a look and see how it affects their wives and families.

Mr VEIVERS: That is true, but members opposite would not be interested in that. That

is why we cannot support this confidence motion in this Government. We should not do that to public servants, but members of this Government have done it. That is completely despicable, and it will come back to bite them. I am not necessarily referring to the new members, because they do not know about this, but the longer-serving members across the Chamber know all about it. They have seen it done before. They were professional at sticking those people in the Gulag. We did not put people in Gulags, but members opposite did.

I now want to give an accolade to a particular man. It will be hard to do, but I must give credit where credit is due. I refer to the secretary of the United Firefighters Union, Mr Henry Lawrence. There is no doubt that, because of his input to the board which I put in place—and I will get to that shortly—and with his help, we really made great advances on behalf of firefighters. He did not agree with everything I said, and I definitely did not agree with everything he said. We used to have some blues. However, we did say that we would talk about things and that we would never hit the streets or the newspapers, and we did not. We talked things through and came to decisions. I do not care what members opposite say; I know that it was for the benefit of the Fire and Rescue Authority, because morale there increased dramatically. I thank Henry and all those firefighters and officers throughout Queensland. They were tremendous.

I want to also thank the voters of Southport, because without them I would not be here. I thank them for their confidence in me.

Mr Johnson: They know quality when they see it.

Mr VEIVERS: I must say that it involved a bit of quantity as well as quality. The swing against me was only 0.3%. This is my fifth term as a politician, although I am not a career politician. Isn't that amazing? I have lasted for five terms, but I am not a career politician, and I will tell members why. I am in a 54% Labor electorate, but I work hard. I am there all the time. If anyone wants to try to beat me at an election, they can try that at any time—although I do not want One Nation to stand against me next time. Things might change a bit over the next four months. If a member works hard and does the job properly, people will respect that member and vote him or her back in. I thank the voters of Southport.

I also thank my wife and family, because they have had to put up with a hell of a lot

over the past 12 years. Another thing that I could talk about is how families of all politicians cop denigration when they go out into the workplace. That is unbelievable. It does not matter whether one is a member of the Labor Party, the National Party, the Liberal Party or the One Nation Party; over the years one's kids cop a hell of a hiding. That is not fair. Some people should say something about it. Maybe the members of the press will say something about it. Family members do not get paid. They answer the phone at night if I am not there. As those members who have been Ministers would be aware, Ministers are out all the time, so their wives have to answer the phone. Or if their children are home, they have to take the abuse—take whatever is coming—write notes and hand them on. Those family members also have their lives to live. My children are both professional youngsters. Well, they are aged 30 and 33. I call that young these days. Anyway, they are great children and they support me, too. But they should not have to put up with all the muck.

I want to thank the members of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority board, who have done a magnificent job, as have the members of the Queensland Ambulance Service board. I put in place two statutory authorities to take the politics out of all this, and I believe that I succeeded. I was taken aback at Kemp Place. I was invited there to have some tea and talk about a hypothetical problem that they had there. I walked in and they presented me with a trophy for being a very good Minister. I must admit that I was taken aback. I was lost for words—which is something!

I also take this opportunity to clear the air regarding certain uninformed statements made recently by the new Minister for Emergency Services, the Honourable Merri Rose. The debt from the former Queensland Fire Service is historical. It resulted from Labor getting rid of the old boards. The Staib report, which I commissioned, indicated that there was a need for \$30m extra funding per year. There was also the Masters report, which was commissioned by the board of the Fire Service. That report indicated a trust fund balance of \$6m in the red in 1997-98 and an \$8.5m deficit in 1998-99. The honourable member for Murrumba can take down these figures and give them to the Honourable Minister for Emergency Services, who is not in the Chamber at present.

I want to emphasise that this year's budget came in at \$18m in the black. The Minister has been saying that the budget is

going to be in deficit. It is not. It is in the black, and it is up to her to keep it in the black. She has put lots of promises into that budget.

Mr Johnson: Fabricating it, too.

Mr VEIVERS: It is a fabrication, because the figures do not lie. I cannot condone the telling of mistruths. That is what has been done.

The member for Crows Nest said that when a new Government comes to power it always finds black holes everywhere. The members of this Government are jumping around and saying, "We cannot do this and we cannot do that", because they have to fund the billion-dollar promises of the Premier. Members should not delude themselves. That is what this Government is about.

As I said, this year's budget came in at \$18m in the black. There was an \$11m carryover and \$7m in savings through my good management. The Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority changeover from the former Queensland Fire Service involved a debt of \$21m. That debt is now only \$13.5m. My Government reduced that debt by \$7.5m over 29 months. The 1997-98 budget indicated that the trust fund would be in overdraft for eight months. The actual time was only two months. This was achieved despite not drawing down on the loan funds available for the Kedron Park complex. Kedron Park was paid for from cash flow. They call the complex at Kedron "Camp Veivers".

During 1997-98, under my guidance, we also focused on bedding down a range of industrial relations and human relations issues. A new award and certified agreement were finalised. I also bedded down an enterprise partnership as well as funding the costs of the change to a 38-hour week. In the last 18 months there has been enormous change in management through workplace reform. The entire management structure was changed. When the structure was put in place two years ago under my management, the morale of firemen was at an all-time low as a result of Labor's absolute mismanagement. Do members remember Tom Burns talking to firemen at the front of this building and calling them wankers? That has all changed, and the Fire and Rescue Authority has developed real pride in itself. Management has been devolved to all levels, and the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority men on the red trucks have a sense of ownership as never before.

Let me highlight another significant fact, that is, the massive drop in sick leave these days. I can honestly tell members that, at one

station, the drop in sick leave has been over 40%. That is a massive decrease in sick leave. It is money in taxpayers' pockets. The high level of sick leave was the result of six years of Labor's mismanagement and financial incompetence and the fact that it did nothing to rectify the problems. Why did the Goss Labor Government not act on the recommendations of the Leivesley report, which referred to a \$40m shortfall in funding? This Minister fails to mention these very significant facts. Why did the then Labor Government not act on the Public Sector Management Commission review that it commissioned? We have never been told why.

As the former Minister, I was very aware of the financial mess that the former Goss Labor Government left behind for me. In conjunction with the board of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority and Henry Lawrence, I was proactively working to address Labor's financial incompetence and mismanagement. I challenge this Minister to tell the people of Queensland how she intends to address any anomalies in the current fire levy system. I will be watching her very closely.

I have always believed that there should be some reimbursement for road accident rescue work. The options range from a charge of \$10 per registration or fuel or tyre charges through to charging for any call-out. In some areas, most of the work is related to road rescue. At present nothing is received for that crucial emergency service. Savings can be made by hard decisions on some of the stations that have a low call-out rate and making them into day stations only. Decisions could be made to close stations in Brisbane and build new ones that are more strategically placed and which would cover greater areas. Some excellent work has been completed and would clearly justify the positioning of stations to achieve those objectives. That would also have the effect of providing better manning levels and providing greater safety for the firemen. That process was started with the construction of the new Chermside station. Once again, it was my Government that took that very progressive step forward. Financially, that is a positive as there are enormous savings as a result of adopting that process.

Big decisions have to be made regarding the urban interface in the rural fire brigade areas. There is a need to make big changes in that area and it will have an impact on income and costs. Residents in the Currumbin Valley, that is, in the Honourable Minister's own electorate, would be most interested to hear the Minister's plans in this regard. Enterprises

such as the Mount Isa Mines project and the provision of training have the potential to provide income. It is to be hoped that Labor does not walk away from that aspect of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority. The Minister has brought pure politics into the debate. That is most unfortunate. Her moaning of late has been the first major destabilising influence on the QFRA in the past 18 months.

Time expired.

Sitting suspended from 6.01 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Mr CONNOR (Nerang—LP) (7.30 p.m.): Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your elevation to that high office. I am sure you will do a very good job. In debating this motion of confidence in the Government, we must ask: does the Labor Party deserve our confidence? Before answering that question, we need to examine whether the ALP reflects what the electorate wants. What was the message the electorate was sending to the Parliament? Let us consider the actual numerical election results. Labor won back all the seats that the Liberal Party won from them in 1995. One Nation won 11 seats: five from the National Party and six from the ALP. One new Independent won a seat from the National Party. From the ALP's perspective, it is the status quo. Of course, the real gain was made by the One Nation members and the Independent, who took six seats from both sides of politics.

During the election, the regular, recurring theme behind much of the message that was being sent to us was economic rationalism. However, I will discuss "political rationalism". Economic rationalism is similar to economic liberalism. I am not talking about laissez-faire economics. Economic liberalism goes back to the turn of the century. It was about competition and productivity. It was not a "let them eat cake" philosophy. It was not survival of the fittest. It was about competition and productivity. If one wanted to have a job or to be in the marketplace, one had to be competitive. If one was not competitive, one was not in the marketplace. If one was not productive, one was not in the marketplace. According to that model, one was paid according to one's productivity.

Mr Fouras: That's why the Liberal Party has got nine seats—you don't know what is happening out there.

Mr CONNOR: Yes, I do: competition and productivity.

I remind this Parliament that it was the Labor Party that brought in economic rationalism about 15 years ago. Before that, Australia had the settlement model. That was all about entitlement and position. That model goes back almost to the settlement. According to that model, everyone in society in Australia was entitled to a certain remuneration according to where one was in the system. One received a basic wage plus increments above that depending on one's skill or position in society. That is opposed to the economic rationalism model, which is all about competition and productivity.

I coined the term "political rationalism". How should we define political rationalism? It is similar to economic rationalism. It is in the style of laissez-faire economics. It is all about competition and productivity plus, perhaps, a bit of survival of the fittest. The results of the Queensland election suggest that the message being sent to us by the Queensland electorate was this: "If you continue to give us economic rationalism as you have for the last 15 years, we will give you political rationalism." From the perspective of economic rationalism and political rationalism, let us consider what some of the commentators and others have had to say about the election. The day before the election, the Courier-Mail published an article written by Mr David Oldfield—from the One Nation Party, of course. The article headed "Doing it Pauline's way" states—

"Why should you vote for One Nation?

The alternative question should also be put—why would you vote for National, Liberal or Labor again?"

That is the issue that we are currently debating: why should we vote for Labor again? He went on to say—

"The front page of one of Australia's biggest metropolitan newspapers on October 20, 1997, showed Australian business and Governments retrenched 3.3 million full-time workers in the past 12 years in a massive downsizing of the nation's workplace and that more than one in two full-time jobs have disappeared in just over a decade."

I repeat: one in two full-time jobs has disappeared in just over a decade. He went on to say—

"Australia is being transformed—from a nation of prosperous full-timers into impoverished part-timers.

Twenty years and more of laissez-faire economics has done savage and perhaps irreparable damage to Australia."

If that is right—and I am not saying that it is—and if the electorate expects the same to apply to the political system, the electorate would be saying, "We'll sack about half of you and put you on the economic scrap heap. If we do not scrap you, you will be put there on conditions." Of the 89 members in this Chamber, 25 are new. If that one-in-two approach is coming, there are a still a few of us who might be in trouble. Perhaps what the electorate is saying is this: "We want those members who are left to have a savage cut in their pay and conditions."

Perhaps the electorate is quite simply sending us the message that they do not like the policies that both sides of politics are giving them. On election day, in an article in the Courier-Mail headed "The jolts the elites needed", Lawrie Kavanagh made the following quite interesting comments—

"The important thing on this day of a most historic election is that the rise of Hansonism has already achieved benefits for the average voter ... it has frightened the living daylights out of the academics, bureaucracy's Sir Humphreys and those major-party politicians who picture themselves just as much born-to-rule and stuff-the-workers as did the overlords of last century."

He went on—

"Do today's alarmed academics, bureaucrats and politicians know the cause of what they see as dangerous levels of support for Hanson's party? Probably not; it may be too close to home since it is mostly of their making. For their benefit, it's like this: A lot of Hanson support comes from disillusioned average Australians who have witnessed the dismantling of this nation's traditional family values to a point where enlightened crackpots set community standards which would be unacceptable in a pig sty."

Mr Kavanagh went on—

"Come down and have a look, you mugs."

He was referring to us. He went on—

"You might try explaining about economic rationalism, globalism, the big picture and all the other pathetic academic waffle we've come to expect from major-party politicians.

It's the sort of elitist buffoonery that might look good on the drawing board up in the ivory tower, but it translates into joblessness, hopelessness, tears and torment at street level."

That is what Mr Kavanagh had to say on election day before we knew the result. I might add that these were ALP policies put in place 15 years ago. In case members think that Lawrie Kavanagh is on his own when he makes these sorts of comments, they might like to listen to another Courier-Mail article that summed up the situation after the election. This article was not written by Lawrie Kavanagh; it was written by Terry O'Connor and Gordon Collie. On 27 June, two weeks after the election, under the heading "The disenchanted" they had this to say—

"What used to be seen as a slow, sad but inevitable decline in rural economies has turned into a gallop, courtesy of economic rationalism, globalisation, privatisation, the march of technology and, perhaps worst of all, indifference and ignorance.

Governments centralise regional services so that a few country towns benefit and the rest suffer; banks decide that decades of service to, and profit from, a small town count for nothing and close the local branch; primary producers find themselves battling 'dirt cheap' imports from countries intent on dumping their surpluses."

That is what two journalists from the Courier-Mail had to say a couple of weeks after the election. However, I would not limit their comments to rural communities; this feeling existed throughout Queensland. Why is it that One Nation can get around 30% of the primary vote and, I might add, win seats in places such as Ipswich, Logan and Waterford? This issue is not a rural or a regional issue; it is a Queensland-wide issue.

What is the message? I believe that the people of Queensland are saying to us, "If you continue to give us economic rationalism, we will give you political rationalism." I believe that what they mean by "political rationalism" is this: "We will give you politicians 15 years of unrelenting instability. We do not care what side you are on. We have no party allegiance. We will throw you out on the economic scrap heap with no notice, the same as you have done to us. We want productivity, we want payment and conditions for politicians based on work, not entitlements, like the old settlement model. You have no security and you have no tenure. We will have no loyalty to

your brand"—meaning political party—"and we will consume cheap imports like you have forced on our society." They are saying, "We will give you political rationalism." Then again, maybe they are saying something else. But one thing that they are not saying is that they wanted Labor back.

Mr GRICE (Broadwater—NPA)
(7.43 p.m.): Mr Speaker, firstly, I would like to add to my personal congratulations on your nomination by doing so publicly in the House. Congratulations. I am sure that you will do a very good job in the chair. I rise to oppose the motion moved by the Premier. I rise further to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition and to support the amendment moved by the Leader of One Nation.

I am on the record many times in this House in speaking about the Heiner documents and that whole episode. It is a matter that the public in Queensland is very aware of and, for that reason, it should be resolved. Similarly, I have been quoted in the paper as saying that the matter with regard to Mark Le Grand and the CJC and the inquiry should be resolved, because they are matters of public record. For all the parties and all the players—and I singled out Mr Le Grand in that particular article, particularly in respect of his future and his personal life—it should be resolved. Similarly, the Heiner affair—Shreddergate and all the other names—should be resolved because it is entrenched in the public perception in Queensland. It should not go on to fester forever. It is very easy to say that it is all too old and it should be left to blow away with the wind. It is too well known publicly. It should be resolved. I support the amendment moved by the Leader of One Nation as I am sure the member for Nicklin would also because of his public comments about the Heiner affair.

I would like to point out to the House some of the record in the 27 months of coalition Government with regard to police and corrective services. Once Labor gets into power again, it produces a very well-financed, smooth machine that puts on the mud with very large trowels. It tries to bury the previous Government in all sorts of black holes and misconduct. It will probably even refer to brown paper bags, which is something that certainly precedes most of the members of this House. I even heard it today with somebody's flippant comment. Those days are gone. They are part of history. We will probably see them dragged out with the trowels of the well-oiled machine and its complaint press. However, before that happens I would like to place some facts on

the record. When facts go into Hansard, they have some longevity.

When there is a change of Government, there has always been a tendency for the new team to blame the old one for everything under the sun. However, I want to go beyond that. I want to place on record something that I believe at the start of a new Parliament should be on the public record and recognised as widely as possible in the public domain. I particularly ask the newcomers to this Parliament to take careful note of what I am going to say, because if we are about good government and workable Parliament, we have to start from a foundation. I firmly believe that, in the field of law and order, the coalition Government laid that foundation. It is a message that I wish every Queenslander could and would understand.

In the case of the previous National/Liberal Party coalition Government, it can stand proudly on its record in police and corrective services. Police generally, from the lowly ranked to the commissioner and his senior officers, can stand proud on their record and their achievements. No brand of politics can take that away from them. Of course, in the past couple of years they were helped well along by a very sympathetic Government, which saw morale boosting as one of its highest priorities. God knows the police needed it! Police morale was certainly higher than it was during any term of the previous Labor administration. Police officers could walk down the street with more pride in their steps. Kids started to look up to them again and confidence was certainly building in the community. Across-the-board, there were more police than ever before. The budgets were bigger, the equipment supply was expedited and police were getting on with their job. The public also was paying more respect to the men in the force.

I will not say that every one of them was completely happy, particularly with the Criminal Justice Commission looking over everybody's shoulder and inhibiting rather than helping in lots of cases, but generally there was a good mood within the force and within the community about the job that they were doing. Labor cannot deny that and much of the credit for all of that will go to the Police Service itself, its commissioner and the former Police Minister, Russell Cooper.

Let us look at some straight facts. When the coalition came to power in 1996, it immediately embarked on a campaign to boost police numbers across-the-board. By the end of this year, we would have put 640 extra

police into the community where people wanted to see them. Today, I would like to say to the Minister that if he continues on with those numbers—and I extrapolated some numbers he used today; I think 1,061, which is exactly our figure—if he can make that 1,061, I promise him that I will be the first one to stand in this place and support it and praise him.

Mr Barton: We're going to put even more in.

Mr GRICE: If the Minister does that, I would support him further, but I will be looking. Over the past two years, there have been some remarkable advances in policing and corrections in this State. Nobody can deny that—politicians, the political righteous or the armchair or media critics, who sometimes have great trouble giving credit where credit is due—and let us not forget the plaudits that came to the Police Service for its handling of the difficult maritime dispute.

In the coalition Government's final Budget, this year's policing budget was increased by 8.4%. That was \$698m this financial year. Our three-year \$76m staffing plan to boost strength by 800 police and 400 civilians by August 1999 was well on track, while our 10-year staffing plan was to provide a total of 2,780 extra police by the year 2005, 1,316 above Labor's previous promise. This would have ensured Queensland's best police to population ratio in 25 years.

Labor's plan for 2005 would have resulted in an appalling ratio of one to 529, compared with our plan for a ratio of one to 453. In the 27 months we were in office we delivered an average of 30 extra police a month—more than Labor managed in its entire last term. Our plan for the coalition's second term would have seen Queensland with 7,876 sworn officers.

Mr Barton interjected.

Mr GRICE: These are all official statistics. The honourable member should read the papers. This figure is 732 more than under the Labor staffing plan, which has since changed. I have said that I will support it as it comes up, if it comes up.

Labor cannot deny that the previous coalition Government was responsible for big increases in strength in all eight regions between February 1996 and April last year. In the Far North region there are 54 extra police. In the North Coast region there are 77 extra police. Labor managed a reduction of seven in that region. Metro North has 70 extra police.

Metro South has an extra 86. In Labor's time the number was reduced by 24.

I was particularly pleased with the big increase in strength in my own area, the Gold Coast. I think everybody will agree that we need a strong police presence to satisfy our huge tourist industry. People do not like coming to unsafe places, and the work of the Queensland police force certainly paid off on the Gold Coast in many ways. Despite some isolated problems, our visitors always felt safe. The same principle applies in the other important tourist areas of the State—the Sunshine Coast, Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and the Barrier Reef islands.

No matter how much anybody wants to argue those figures, they represent the real situation. As I often say, if Labor catches up with our projections I will be the first to compliment them—if it happens. Nobody can deny our record; it is in fact on police files. Nobody can deny that all regions will again benefit when 182 first-year constables graduate in August from the Oxley and Townsville campuses of the Queensland Police Academy. Nobody—not the Premier nor the Minister—can deny that we established the police academy in Townsville.

The facts are also there to show that the Queensland Police Service has transformed into the most efficient, most effective and most accountable in Australia. Let us not forget that the former Police Minister, Mr Cooper, acted quickly on the 197 recommendations of the Bingham police review, the majority of which were implemented. The Government not only boosted the numbers but also provided better equipment and better facilities through a massive capital works program. Let us also not forget the level playing field we provided for the Queensland Police Service with the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act, which gives police a better chance to deal with the increasingly sophisticated criminal enemy. That is not rhetoric; that is fact.

Our Government also established the Queensland Crime Commission, headed by respected barrister Tim Carmody. This, if allowed to function, would allow a more focused, dedicated onslaught against organised and major crime and criminal paedophilia. But let us just look at the service itself.

The police became better off in terms of pay, strength and working conditions, and morale was improved dramatically. Project Renaissance was another major milestone of our Government. This was a commitment to

the education, training and development capacity of the Police Service. Key components included the redevelopment of the Oxley campus, the establishment of the Institute Centre of Excellence in Policing Practice and the permanent establishment of the north Queensland campus of the institute.

One of the biggest success stories of the coalition's term in Government is the crime prevention partnerships piloted in eight centres across the State. Under CPPs, communities were encouraged to identify problems at a grassroots level and, with police and State Government, formulate strategies to counter them. Our Government intended extending that program from eight to 25 centres. Then there was the school-based constables program. This year's Budget allowed for the extension of the program from 12 police in 22 schools to 40 police in up to 80 schools.

Let us look at some of the other concrete results of these successful policies. We need only turn to the area of corrective services. The truth is that the Queensland Corrective Services Commission's budget was never higher than it was under our Government—a record \$466m, or a 45% increase. That included \$195m in the capital works infrastructure program, an increase of 113%. That is not rhetoric; that is fact.

Recently I heard the Minister promise 50 extra staff. We promised 642 extra staff over three years—all funded. The Minister promised \$1m for security upgrades and equipment such as flak jackets, handcuffs, batons, etc. We included \$22m in our budget for security upgrades.

Under Labor, criminals flaunted the law and prison was a last resort. In its last four years in Government, Labor locked up 18,045 criminals. In its short term, the coalition Government doubled Labor's rate of imprisonment, keeping serious offenders off the streets and behind bars, where the public wants them. The prisons population has more than doubled since 1993, and the coalition makes no apology for taking criminals off the streets. When Labor came to office in 1989—

Mr Purcell: Give us the numbers that you locked up. You can't. They were getting out the other end, as you very well know.

Mr GRICE: Under the previous Government, not only did you have zebra crossings out the front so that—

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Would the member for Broadwater please address the Chair?

Mr GRICE: Certainly, Mr Speaker. Under the Labor Government, not only were there zebra crossings across the road to protect the prisoners but also there was a rostered bus service to take them into town. In six years Labor provided only 226 extra prison beds, whereas the coalition provided 993 beds, with 800 to come on stream by the end of this year. In the next three years, the coalition would have provided an additional 2,072 cells to fix Labor's legacy of neglect.

Under Labor, prison security was a joke, infrastructure was run down, prison officers received poor training and morale was at an all-time low. The people of Queensland were put at risk, with 116 escapes from secure custody in six years. Under the coalition there were 18 escapes since the start of 1996. Prison security was our No. 1 priority.

The other day the Minister criticised the purchase of the Hummers. They were purchased because of the external firepower used in two break-outs, something that was previously unheard of. They were purchased for the protection of officers and to prevent such a recurrence. The Minister should be glad he has these vehicles. What would he have expected the custodial officers to do? Be targets for pot-shooting by criminals with high-powered weapons and drive around in FJ Holdens!

I repeat what I said earlier: Labor boasted that it would spend \$1m on extra security equipment. The coalition had already spent or committed \$22m for security upgrades and for buying equipment for staff, including protective gear and 13 armoured Hummers—seven for jail perimeter work and six for the transport and escort of prisoners.

Labor's strategy for controlling drugs in prison was to keep the prisoners high and happy. No action was taken to tackle the spiralling use of drugs in prisons, but we implemented the Mengler inquiry into drugs in prisons program to reduce drugs usage through proactive intelligence networks.

Last week the Minister was lauding the public exhibition of drug searches in jails. That show would have been top of the hit parade for crims—an educational tape to show them how to beat the system. That exercise was absolutely ridiculous. Can anyone imagine the police force revealing its investigative secrets? Whom are we concerned for here? The crims or the public? Then again, this Labor Government, and particularly its Premier, does love the cameras. Maybe the Minister had an upcoming series of Blue Heelers in mind, with him in front of the cameras showing the

criminals of Queensland how the searches take place.

Whilst under our Government there was a refocus on security, that was not at the expense of programs and industries for inmates. There were plans to expand programs and activities to better prepare inmates for re-entry into the community. Nobody can deny that much was achieved in the area of law and order in just over two years in Government. Honourable members should remember that that was a time when we did not even have a real majority in the Government. That is quite a change from the luxury of the majority that Labor enjoyed when it was last in Government. We see that it squandered that majority, particularly when we study its record on law and order.

Under Labor, victims of crime were given little consideration. Labor talked about helping the victims of crime but never got around to it. We did. We continually and relentlessly fought for the rights of victims of crime through vastly improved information about offenders, extended compensation payments and increased funding for victims of crime support groups and counselling services.

However, in spite of all of that, let us just ask one simple question, and therein surely lies the real answer. For whom would the police and Corrective Services officers rather be working—the former coalition Government or the present Labor administration? The answer is self-evident. In relation to law and order further, who would the people of Queensland rather have working for them? The answer is the same to both questions—a resounding vote of confidence in the coalition team and the things that it did.

The coalition acted when it was necessary. It acted when the real and legitimate expectations of the community were not being met and it acted when community safety was not being observed as the highest priority. While those opposite bleated, it was the coalition Government that took the tough action on 26 May last year and dismissed the Community Corrections Board. It let a serious offender loose. A convicted rapist was let out on unescorted leave and allegedly raped two other women, and Labor complained when the corrections board responsible for that decision was dismissed. Not only was the board dismissed; tougher guidelines for the new corrections board were introduced.

Foremost in our minds should always be the basic underlying principle that the safety of our community comes first. Our community is sick and tired of the bleatings from the so-

called social justice arm of the Labor Party and its supporters. Only this morning I read in the Courier-Mail an article by former Supreme Court Judge Bill Carter. In his veiled attack on the coalition's plans to introduce truth in sentencing for serious violent offenders, Carter claimed Governments always spoke about getting tough on crime yet never looked at the issue of crime prevention. What arrant nonsense! How appallingly out of touch Mr Carter must have been with the progress and achievements of the coalition Government. In seven areas across this State we trialled community policing partnerships and we introduced the volunteers in policing program.

Mr Swarten: You are not denigrating a Supreme Court judge?

Mr GRICE: He has retired.

Mr Swarten: It does not matter. What a disgraceful thing to do.

Mr GRICE: Anybody can get it wrong, including the honourable member.

It is a well-known fact that the former Labor Government enjoyed trialling all sorts of social engineering programs and embarking on novel so-called prisoner reform agendas. It is also well known that government at all levels and of all political colours must put in place strategies to identify and tackle the causes of crime. But irrespective of the cause of the crime, a criminal must still pay for his or her wrongdoing.

The cornerstone of the coalition's law and order policy was to introduce community policing partnerships. These partnerships were trialled in seven areas across Queensland. Their purpose was to identify and target social problems that feed criminal behaviour. The pilot schemes had already begun to show positive results, and an eighth trial was organised for Woorabinda, the first Aboriginal community to be part of the program. In one area, domestic violence was identified as a predominant cause of crime, because it forced children out of the home and onto the streets.

Time expired.

Mr DAVIDSON (Noosa—LP) (8.03 p.m.): Tonight, in rising to speak in this debate, I congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your elevation to the office of Speaker. I also welcome all the new members in this Chamber who have been elected to represent their respective electorates. I wish them all well in their endeavours. I recognise also all of my constituents in the electorate of Noosa on the Sunshine Coast who supported me at the recent State election.

Tonight, I find it very hard to support this motion, because over the past six months the current Premier has been all over Queensland promoting Today's Labor as if it was all new, yet when we look at the members on the benches opposite we see that they are yesterday's Labor—the same people who were here in the six years of the Goss Government and who brought this State to its knees. They are the same people in respect of whom hordes of people came to my electorate office complaining about the process of Government. Nothing has changed.

Over the past 12 months we have also heard the Premier promising new blood in the ranks of the CEOs, or directors-general, of the departments. He made statements such as, "If we pay peanuts, we'll get monkeys. We have to offer five-year contracts to attract the people with the best ability to administer our departments in this State." When I look at the directors-general and CEOs who have been appointed to those departments, I see that they are the same tired old Labor Party people who were there under the previous Labor Party Government and who administered those departments to the point at which they no longer served the people of this State.

Mr SCHWARTEN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My point of order is that the directors-general acting in both of my departments were appointed into those positions under the previous Government.

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

Mr DAVIDSON: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In this morning's newspaper, I read that the Premier is now proposing to increase the pay levels of CEOs—the same old Labor Party hack CEOs who, as I said, brought this State to its knees and created so much frustration in the hearts and minds of Queenslanders in the period from 1989 to 1996. The Premier said that if we pay peanuts we will get monkeys. The same old monkeys are back.

Let me talk about my portfolio of Tourism, Small Business and Industry. I wish to start with tourism. As I have said so many times in this House before, when I was appointed as the Minister for Tourism in Queensland, the QTTC was gone; there was absolutely no focus at the QTTC and it was a corporation that had lost its way. It had been politicised and left to struggle to find its own direction. There had been no involvement by the former Minister in its day-to-day operation. There were no people on the board of the QTTC who had a new-age view or a vision for tourism in this State. The senior staff at the QTTC—as I have

said before, the director of marketing was paying a consultant to tell her how to market Queensland—had lost their way. The QTTC had no partnerships with the industry and the industry had no confidence in it.

No matter where I travelled across this State during the eight months that I was the shadow Minister, people lined up to complain to me about their frustration in dealing with the QTTC and about its hopeless marketing of Queensland. We immediately set about appointing a new board to the QTTC. We maintained the services of Frank Burnett as the chairman to provide continuity. However, I identified people across this State from the industry who had the skills, ability and know-how to market and promote Queensland, to restructure the QTTC and to give the corporation the skills and people it needed to ensure that Queensland retained its position as the No. 1 tourist destination in the country.

The appointment of Stephen Gregg was a coup. Mr Gregg was overlooked by the previous administration and had gone to the Northern Territory. I do not know whether there was any political interference, but the appointment of the CEO at the time was not appropriate for what was needed. Bringing Stephen Gregg back totally rejuvenated the QTTC. It gave the tourism industry right across this State the confidence that it had so desperately been looking for. Under Mr Gregg's stewardship in the short time that he was there—18 or 19 months—the QTTC was totally refocused. He employed the appropriate people with the skills, knowledge and industry confidence and support to ensure that we could once again market and promote Queensland not just to Australia but to the world.

Some of the appointments made to the QTTC are ones of which I am very proud. I congratulate Mr Gregg. I totally enjoyed the time that I worked with him. He is one of the most professional people with whom I have worked in my life. I hope he has the opportunity to continue the good work that has been done there. Before my appointment, the previous Government had been formulating a tourism strategy. The document was three inches thick, had been worked on for two years and was going nowhere. It was full of rhetoric and Public Service bureaucratic speak that no-one could relate to. We ditched it. We threw it out the window after hundreds of thousands of dollars had been spent on it. In a very short time, we got industry involvement and, together with senior officers at the QTTC, we released Queensland Tourism—A Framework for the Future. That statement was

released about 18 months ago. In it we gave some very clear directions to the industry in Queensland on where the QTTC was heading.

As a result of A Framework for the Future, earlier this year I released the strategy statements on tourism in Queensland. Anyone who wants to know about the work that has been done over the past 18 months by me, the QTTC and the previous coalition Government should obtain a copy of A Framework for the Future and a copy of the progress report on A Framework for the Future. Once again, we have positioned the QTTC in the marketplace as the premier tourism organisation in this country, if not the world.

I noticed that the Minister asked for the resignation of the chairman, Sallyanne Atkinson. I did not say a word or complain. It is the Minister's prerogative. He is the Minister of the day; he has the right to appoint to that chair or to that board whomever he so desires. I was not critical of that removal, but I would be very interested to see whom he appoints as chairman in the future.

I have heard the Minister make statements that he might reduce the board from 10 members to six and the chair. That has been discussed in the past. The bureaucrats would like that; they believe it is more workable. However, one of the challenges I faced was ensuring that we gave all major regions in Queensland a voice on the board of the QTTC. I know that 10 is a large number. It often creates some minor problems for the bureaucrats, but I believe it gives all regions of this State total involvement with the QTTC. It is always difficult if one appoints a person from one region, because then every other region will kick up a fuss because they do not have a representative on the board. It is a very tough task. So I suggest that the Minister consider maintaining the present number of board members of the QTTC.

When I was appointed Minister, the budget of the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation was about \$29.5m. We increased that to \$42m in the last budget. Last year, in 1997-98, the QTTC had expenditure of \$46m and a one-off \$5m special allocation, but the base budget of the QTTC is just over \$42m. I appreciate that in the last few weeks the Minister has provided another \$5m to assist it in further marketing. I believe that we put the runs on the board by increasing that budget from \$29.5m to just over \$42m, with many other special one-off allocations for it to market in both domestic and international marketplaces.

When I was first appointed Minister, the Queensland Events Corporation was rather directionless. It had lost its way. It did not have a budget it could work with. When I was first appointed, the Asia/Pacific Forum, which is a racing forum, was a dream of the previous Minister's and the chairman. It was designed as an international event to add depth to the Queensland Winter Racing Carnival. The event arose out of discussions between the Queensland Events Corporation, the Office of Racing and the Queensland Principal Club during July to September 1995. It was to consist of a conference and a trade show. The event was cancelled in May 1996 by the then board of the QEC when only 67 delegates and six trade exhibitors had registered. At the time the cost to the Queensland Events Corporation and to the Racing Development Fund was \$459,000. The QEC lost \$50,000 and had to provide a further \$9,862 to pay the final accounts. That is one failure.

Another failure was the Great Barrier Reef Dive Festival in 1995 in Cairns. Once again, the QEC invested \$200,000 in that event and only a minimum number of people attended, and there was obviously no international recognition. Only 72 passes to the event were sold and, as I said, media coverage to the event was limited to Queensland, and much of that was in the Cairns region.

I turn now to the International Women's Triathlon in 1995. The Queensland Events Corporation entered into a five-year agreement with Triathlon Australia to stage an international women's triathlon on the Gold Coast. The agreement called for the Queensland Events Corporation to pay \$180,000 over five years, with \$50,000 to be paid in the first year. The agreement was terminated after the first event when the triathlon attracted only 201 competitors of which only 15 came from interstate and two from overseas. The Queensland Events Corporation originally believed that the event would attract at least 150 interstate and 40 international competitors and over 2,000 Queensland entrants. Even though the event failed to achieve the required number of participants, the Queensland Events Corporation was forced to pay the full \$50,000 for the 1995 event in return for the organisers agreeing to terminate the agreement with the QEC. That was the record of the Queensland Events Corporation: three events into which it invested major funds, and all went belly up. Such was the record of the Queensland Events Corporation.

While I am on the subject of the Queensland Events Corporation, I would like

to talk about the achievements of its chairman, John Jamieson. I would like to put on the record of this House that he was one of the most professional people with whom I ever worked. As Chairman of the Queensland Events Corporation, he was the hardest working person in a Government position with whom I have had the pleasure of working. He was totally committed to securing every major event he possibly could for the State of Queensland. Once again, it is the Minister's right to appoint whom he chooses to the position of chair. I was not critical at the time when Mr Jamieson was removed—or his letter of resignation was accepted. I think that that is the Minister's right.

However, I was absolutely disgusted that the Minister chose not to involve Mr Jamieson in the announcement of the Goodwill Games for Queensland. I have spoken to many people in Brisbane and across the State who have known Mr Jamieson and know that he was totally committed to the Queensland Events Corporation. They know his achievements and they are really disgusted that the Minister did not hold on to him for another 10 days, take him to America and involve him in that announcement.

Let me put on the record that Mr Jamieson refused to take the \$20,000 chairman's fee from the Queensland Events Corporation. On the day he agreed to be chair, he said to me that he was happy to put something back into Queensland. He is a businessman and he has done very well. He is very successful, so he was very happy to put something back into this State. He refused to take the \$20,000 fee. He went to America five times. He gave up his own time five times to go to America to secure the Goodwill Games for Queensland. I believe it was a disgraceful act by the Minister to not allow Mr Jamieson to be involved in the announcement of the Goodwill Games.

In my discussions with Mr Jamieson about the Goodwill Games, I directed him a year ago to get this event for Queensland, to do everything he had to do to get this event for Queensland. It is the most important single sporting event in the year 2001 in the world. It is post-Olympics. It will give us an enormous focus in 2001 post-Olympics in this State. Cabinet approved the funding for the Goodwill Games on 12 March. We were very close to making an announcement. We could have forced the announcement as the deal had been done.

I was absolutely disgusted to see Mr Beattie, the Premier, come out in the press

and say that the reason that the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing had to go to America was that the arrangements had been messed up. I think that was a disgraceful statement of the efforts that John Jamieson had put in as Chairman of the Queensland Events Corporation. The deal had been done. I congratulate the Minister for going to New York to sign the agreement. I think it was great and I say to him: well done. I suppose it is one of those little things in politics that, if the election had been a month later, maybe I would have done it. However, he is the Minister of the day so I say: congratulations. But I just cannot believe that he did not allow John Jamieson to be involved in that signing in New York.

I would like to put on record on behalf of the coalition the enormous benefits that the Goodwill Games will provide to Queensland. I know that the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing and the Premier have announced the games and they have released a lot of statements on them. The Goodwill Games are one of the world's most prestigious international multi-sport events featuring the top athletes in individual events and the top six teams in team events in a 12 sports program. When it is held in 2001 in Brisbane, it will be the first time that the event has been held outside the US and Russia. The Goodwill Games far exceed the Commonwealth Games in terms of standard of sports competition and its global television reach. The 2001 Goodwill Games will see 230 hours of television coverage broadcast to over 700 million people across 130 countries throughout Europe, Asia and the United States. The 2001 games will cost approximately \$175m to stage. There are enormous promotional benefits.

The Goodwill Games will contribute some \$A140m in both hard dollar spend—cash—and soft dollar promotions including \$A60m in soft dollar promotion of the games in Queensland through Time Warner division, including CNN, CNNI, TBS, TNT, Sports Illustrated, Time, People, Entertainment Weekly and Sports Illustrated Kids; \$A7.14m hard dollar spend through placement of television commercials, promotions and print media to drive worldwide visibility and exposure for Brisbane and Queensland as the games destination; \$A4.3m in hard dollar spend to assist in acquiring Time Warner entertainment talent, personalities and other entertainment platforms attractive to sponsors, media and spectators; and \$A47.4m in hard dollar spend on administrative, operational and logistical areas of the games.

The 2001 games will offer US\$6m in prize money, making it the largest purse in multi-sport event history. The involvement of the world's leading athletes and entertainers combined with unparalleled media coverage presents Queensland with the opportunity to not only host one of the world's great sporting events, but to leave a lasting legacy for Queensland and Australian youth in the year of the centenary of Federation. With Australia's centenary of Federation in 2001, the games will also provide a unique opportunity for this State to have the world's elite athletes here in Queensland as part of our celebrations and to take those celebrations to a global audience. The games are expected to attract in the vicinity of 1,000 national and international print and electronic media journalists, making the event one of the largest media events in the world.

The games are expected to directly generate approximately 514,360 additional visitor bed nights during and subsequent to the games. This would result in an economic impact of some \$120m to the State. A further \$47.1m in revenue in Queensland is expected to be generated in flow-on effects resulting from global promotion of the State through extensive international television coverage of the games. In total, the 2001 games are expected to generate a total expenditure within the State of \$167m, resulting in the creation and maintenance of some 1,789 jobs throughout Queensland. Again I put on the record for the people of Queensland my thanks and appreciation to John Jamieson for his efforts in securing the Goodwill Games for this State. I know that in the year 2001, the year after the Olympics, it is going to be the biggest sporting event in the world and it is going to mean enormous economic benefit for this State.

The Queensland Events Corporation has also released a strategic business plan. Over the past few years the corporation has negotiated for, and won, some major events. For commercial reasons, I will not mention any of those for which we are negotiating at the moment, but in the time of Mr Jamieson's chairmanship, we hosted the inaugural Telstra Super League Grand Final in Brisbane in 1997, we won the 1999 men's and women's Championship Hockey Trophy, we won the 1999 Golden Oldies Hockey Festival, we have won the 2000 World Figure Skating Championships, we have won the 2000 World Veterans Athletic Championships and in October this year we have won the Asia-Pacific Masters Games for the Gold Coast. We have also won the World Hobie Cat Championships

in the Whitsundays, we have assisted with Easter in the Outback, the Whitsunday Masters Games, the Fourx Rodeo at Mount Isa and the Discovery Eco Challenge in Cairns. The portfolio of the Queensland Events Corporation is second to none in this country.

When I was appointed Minister, the Premier of Victoria, the Victorian Government and the Victorian Events Corporation were beating us hands down for every major event that came to this country. In the two and a bit years of my Ministry, and the 18 months of Mr Jamieson's chairmanship, we beat the Victorians on every bid. We never lost a bid. I proudly say that the Queensland Treasury and the Queensland Cabinet never refused to provide funding for any of those events. We had a magnificent team of people at the QEC. The Minister is taking over a team of professionals and a corporation that is totally focused and which I believe has the best skills in this country to bid for, and win, major events for this State.

In closing, I would like to say this: "Jammo, I know that you were instrumental in winning the Goodwill Games for Queensland. When we return to Government I am sure that you will be the first bloke I will ring to offer you back the job of chairman of the Queensland Events Corporation in recognition of the sacrifices you made in your personal business life, for the time you gave, for not taking the chairman's fee, for the enormous success you achieved as chairman, and for the fantastic economic benefits you provided for the State of Queensland."

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before calling the member for Ipswich West, I inform members that this is the member's first speech in this place and I ask that he be afforded the courtesies of the House.

Mr PAFF (Ipswich West—ONP) (8.23 p.m.): I rise to support the amendment to the motion moved by the member for Caboolture. I would like to commence by thanking the people of the electorate of Ipswich West for putting me here.

Other members have spoken in this Chamber today about different aspects of Shreddergate. I want to cover a couple of those aspects so that the media and members on both sides of this Chamber know why the case is so important. The remarkable thing about this debate is its unreality. It is unreal that any Government—that is the Crown—or law enforcement agency such as the CJC should argue that it is legal to shred public records to prevent their use in imminent court proceedings in which it is known that

they are centrally relevant, while at the same time it is okay to destroy public records which are known to contain evidence of suspected abuse of kids in lawful custody to prevent it becoming public, and then not pursue those who actually shredded the information. It is unreal. What makes it even more unreal is that those who ordered the shredding and engaged in a cover-up for years and years now want to govern our State. This is unreal.

It was always a curious thing to me why the members of the Labor Party opposite could ever argue that it was right to shred public records in order to stop people suing each other for defamation. My understanding of the law is that if a person knew that records in his possession were critically relevant to court proceedings and the person destroyed them to prevent their being used in court, that person broke the law. This is the same principle that saw Matthew Heery face charges arising out of the Carruthers inquiry into the memorandum of understanding. Interestingly, after the jury dismissed the charges, the Chairman of the CJC, Mr Clair, said that it was correct that Mr Heery faced charges because destroying evidence struck at the very heart of our legal system.

It is remarkable that Mr Clair can adjudicate that it is right and proper for Mr Heery to face charges on, in effect, efforts to destroy evidence, but when it comes to the shredding of the Heiner inquiry documents, it is a horse of a different colour. The CJC never asked any of the Heiner inquiry witnesses whether they wanted their evidence destroyed. The CJC and the Goss Government presumed that they knew best. They did not, because there is certainly one youth worker who gave evidence at the inquiry into the John Oxley Youth Detention Centre who did not want his evidence shredded. What did these people have to fear? Unquestionably, they enjoyed qualified privilege, and if any writ were to have been issued, the Crown would have indemnified them if they told the truth. With those assurances, why shred the records?

There is another dimension to the need to shred that appears to have been lost in the dust of the CJC and members opposite trying to defend it. This so-called defamatory evidence was about the performance and management of a public official at a Government facility that was supposed to look after children in lawful custody. This brings into play two elements: duty of care and suspected misconduct. Let me say this: it was defamatory to say of the former Police Commissioner, Terry Lewis, that he was corrupt. Just because comments made about

a public official in the performance of his or her public duty may be defamatory, it does not follow that the records should be destroyed. If it was evidence of suspected official misconduct or criminal conduct, there was every good reason to retain the material and not shred it. No matter which way we look at it, the records should never have been shredded.

Let me make a short comment about the additional payment of \$27,190 to Mr Coyne. The plain fact is that Mr Coyne was not entitled to the money. There is absolutely no doubt about that. I believe that it is sheer nonsense to suggest that those in authority were unaware of their spending limits. Politicians such as Mr Brian Austin, Mr Don Lane, Mr Geoff Muntz and Mrs Leisha Harvey went to jail when they overspent. The amounts involved in those cases were much less than \$27,190. It is beyond belief to suggest that Minister Warner was not aware of her legal spending limits at the time. It does not wash. The payment was a bribe—pure and simple. It was worked out by the department and the union colluding together behind closed doors. They thought that they had it all stitched up when Crown law was prepared to draw up a settlement deed that required Mr Coyne to never speak publicly on this matter. It was a fraud. It was a concoction to defraud Queensland taxpayers and a massive betrayal of public trust. Why could Mr Coyne never speak about what went on at the centre?

Let me deal with another area of massive betrayal of public trust. It is the area of the State Archivist and the CJC's understanding of her role. Firstly, let me deal specifically with the State Archivist, Ms Lee McGregor. She gave her approval to destroy the Heiner inquiry documents on 23 February 1990. She gave it in less than one working day, despite having over 100 hours of material which she had to check for its legal, historical, informational, administrative and data value. She worked with a colleague, but by any measure it was a rushed job. Perhaps the fact that the Cabinet sought her urgent approval may have something to do with the lightning pace of her work on that day.

On that very same day, Mr Lindeberg, who was seeking access to those documents for his union member Mr Coyne, was told by Family Services Director-General, Ms Ruth Matchett, at a meeting that the Heiner documents were secure with Crown law. She deceived him. One of Ms McGregor's staff, Senior Archivist Ms Kate McGuckin, actually destroyed the Heiner inquiry documents together with Ms Matchett's executive officer,

a Mr Trevor Walsh, on 23 March 1990 in secret. It is worth noting that if one senior public servant knew that the Heiner material was required for court and the subject of an access statutory demand, it was Mr Walsh who, instead of protecting the material, helped shred it. Cabinet did not tell the State Archivist on 22 March 1990 that the reason it was ordering the shredding was to prevent it from being used in court proceedings that it knew were imminent. The deception and abuse of office in this affair appear endless.

But the point I want to make is that on 17 May 1990, Ms McGregor was officially told by Mr Coyne what the true status of the Heiner inquiry documents was. And instead of acting impartially and in accordance with her duty under the Libraries and Archives Act 1988, she misled Mr Coyne and followed the orders of Mr Walsh, a conspirator in the shredding, to tell Mr Coyne nothing. This Archivist, who still overlooks the protection of our State's records, must be examined in public about her extraordinary role in Shreddergate.

As for the CJC, its position on the role of the State Archivist is not only sheer archival nonsense but also contradictory in crucial areas. The CJC actually knows what the proper role of the State Archivist is, and it was put forward to EARC in 1991 in its issue paper on Archives legislation. The CJC said that, under the Act, the Archivist had to engage in a wide audit when appraising any public record for retention or destruction. In other words, the CJC has deliberately twisted the Archivist's role to suit its own biased findings in respect of the shredding. It knows that if the Archivist was fully informed, she could never have approved the shredding of those documents. It knows that there is a duty on public officials, including the Cabinet, to give the Archivist all the known facts associated with records undergoing an appraisal to decide their fate, otherwise the Archivist cannot perform her task honestly, impartially and in the public interest. The Goss Cabinet may have followed the process, but it abused the process by actively deceiving the Archivist and withholding relevant facts from her in order to get the urgent decision it wanted. In this case the Cabinet wanted to destroy the evidence. Mr Coyne and others never, ever wanted it shredded.

The Archivist had to take into account all these administrative and legal factors. She was required to err on the side of caution. It was not for her to decide whether access to them should or should not be granted. It was her job to preserve them for that decision to be made by a court or between the warring parties. She was not a court of law, but unless

she preserves public records with those values, our entire system of government and our legal system will be crippled.

Left as it is, the CJC has given our State Archivist greater powers than a court of law to decide the ultimate fact of public records. The office of Crown law in Queensland is also encouraging this dangerous course. Messrs Morris, QC, and Howard said this at page 97 of their report—

"... the fact that a document is the Government's 'own property' certainly affords no defence to a charge under s.132 or s.140 (or, for that matter, s.129) of the Criminal Code; the gravamen of the offence does not consist in a wrongful interference with another person's property rights ... but in the fact that the destruction of property ... may interfere with the due administration of justice.

Nor is the fact that the destruction occurred 'in accordance with a statutory regime which permitted ... destruction' of any relevance. The State archivist's authorization for the disposal of a public record under s.55 of the Libraries and Archives Act 1988 does not over-ride ss.129, 132 or 140 of the Criminal Code; it merely over-rides the general prohibition which s.55 contains against disposing of public records without such authorization. Section 55 does not confer on the State archivist the power to confer a plenary indulgence, authorizing the destruction of any document even if its destruction is prohibited by s.129 of the Criminal Code or would have the effect of obstructing, preventing, perverting or defeating the course of justice within the meaning of ss.132 or 140 of the Criminal Code; it merely empowers the State archivist to exempt a document from the general requirement of s.55 that 'a person shall not dispose of public records other than by depositing them with the Queensland State archives'."

The State Archivist operates under an international code of ethics devised by the International Council on Archives. The relevant section, section 8, states that Archivists should use the special trust given to them in the general interest and avoid using their position to unfairly benefit themselves or others. Archivists must refrain from activities which might prejudice their professional integrity, objectivity and impartiality. They should not benefit financially or otherwise personally to the detriment of institutions, users and colleagues. In this case, the Archivist bowed to

the wishes of Executive Government, and when she was later officially informed about the true status of the Heiner documents, she let that deception stand. She did nothing but consult and take the advice of one of the conspirators. She betrayed her public trust.

If everything is aboveboard, then he or she will find accordingly. But left as it is, we have a CJC out of control, making nonsense findings to suit its political purposes. I ask: if there is nothing to hide, then why hide? We have an Archivist who appears willing to shred everything in sight. We have a police force incapable of attacking allegations of criminality at the highest levels of government, and we potentially have five senior Ministers who are sitting in Cabinet deciding the fate of this great State and who should be facing the full rigour of the law.

Hon. V. P. LESTER (Keppel—NPA) (8.40 p.m.): Mr Speaker, I congratulate you very sincerely on attaining your very high post. I had the pleasure of working with you when I was Chairman of the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee. At all times you offered very wise counsel. In fact, you set an example that was excellent at all times. I was proud to be associated with you. I wish you well.

From the floor of this House, to the people of Keppel and those who assisted me in the last election I say very simply and sincerely: thank you very, very much. The recent campaign for members of the National Party was harder than usual. Party members in my electorate rallied when I told them very early in the piece that they would need to rally. At all times, we had polling booths filled to the brim with lots of helpers. In the end, we had quite a good result considering the circumstances. I thank the party members who helped and the constituents who supported me. As to those who did not support me—hopefully they will next time.

Before I discuss any other matter, I will make one or two comments in relation to my role as Chairman of the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee. We were a committee that did achieve an enormous amount. We brought into the House recommendations for change. Most of those recommendations were taken up and legislated upon. One of the achievements was the appointment of a Parliamentary Commissioner whose role it is to investigate certain matters. I certainly hope that the CJC does not continue to try to step in the way of the role of the Parliamentary Commissioner. That person has a job to do. That person should be left to do that job as that person sees fit. The Parliamentary

Commissioner will have the capacity to investigate fully all aspects of the Criminal Justice Commission. From time to time, the committee received complaints. We would start to investigate those complaints and then the CJC could say that it was not in the public interest to disclose some important information to us. Quite honestly, that was not satisfactory. We believe that we have overcome that.

I am very happy to say that within our term we completed the three-year review. We have left the committee all ready for the next committee to take over. I wish the new chairman, who I understand will be Mr Lucas, all the very best in that important role. At this point, it seems that I will still be a member of that committee and I will be supporting him. I pay tribute to the members of the former committee: Gordon Nuttall, the deputy chairman; Stephen Robertson; Mr Carroll; Mr Baumann; and, of course, Mr Speaker, whom I mentioned earlier. I appreciate deeply all of their work. The reason we achieved as much as we did is that we pulled together very well. Just about everything was done by consensus. That was really good. I am very proud of that achievement.

We had very good support staff. In the early stages, the gentleman who is looking most astute at the table, Mr Laurie, gave us a lot of very wise counsel. He was backed up by Kerry Newton. Then we had—and still have—the assistance of Mr David Groth, who has put a lot of effort into the role. He has always advised us in a most professional manner. The support staff, Veronica, Penny and Maree, also played a very important role.

Another role that I have currently is that of Opposition spokesman on Environment and Heritage and Natural Resources.

Mr Schwarten: What did you do to deserve that at your stage of the game?

Mr LESTER: I am getting better as I get older, and the member for Rockhampton knows that.

If I may, I will make one criticism. I am a little bewildered as to why the Government should place the Environment and the Natural Resources departments together.

Mr Schwarten: They're not together. They're two departments—two DGs.

Mr LESTER: They are two departments, two DGs and under the control of one Minister. That Minister will find himself writing letters in one direction and then answering them back in the other direction. In a nutshell, that is what will happen. Of course, the honourable member for Rockhampton knows very well that

that is true, because at one time he did have a little bit to do with that particular department.

I am concerned that the environmental groups might try to assert their strength. If they do, that could be to the detriment of development within our State. We have to have a very balanced approach to environmental matters and development. If we do not, we could well find that, if the environmental factions get control of this department, we could have a lot of very good employment-generating projects grinding to a halt or put on hold yet again. Obviously, that would result in fewer jobs. That would be quite tragic for our State. We need to use modern technology to ensure that we can deal with the environmental concerns that will arise from time to time. Some of the things that went on in this country in the early days cannot be forgiven. However, we have the advantages of modern technology.

Even in relation to the Nathan dam, which is an issue of contention with various groups—and I seem to get into a bit of trouble in relation to that whichever way I go—modern technology is playing a role. We have learned a lot from the mistakes of the past. That comment is not pertaining to one particular Government. That has been the case over a long, long time. Each irrigation farm now has to have an environmental licence. It has to ensure that it complies with regulations and that water that may be affected by sprays does not wash into streams and rivers. That water has to be used on the farm. If those initiatives are implemented and policed, they can do a very good job.

So some people want the Nathan dam, some people do not. However, some of those people who do not want the dam miss the point a little bit. It is a fact that most of the water that comes into the Fitzroy River actually comes out of the Mackenzie and, indeed, the Isaac Rivers. I am quite sure that, with careful consideration and careful monitoring, that dam can well go ahead. It can produce hundreds of jobs and, in fact, can be——

Mr Swarten: You said hundreds of thousands of jobs the other day.

Mr LESTER: I was quoting what Mr Goss said.

Mr Swarten: I know. I know you were.

Mr LESTER: If Mr Goss made those comments, I am surprised that Mr Swarten would try to make a political ploy out of it. Mr Goss was the Premier and he is now not here to defend himself. Shame on the member! I am sure that he does not intend to criticise the former Premier.

Mr Swarten interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves): Order! The Minister for Public Works and Housing! The member is on his feet.

Mr LESTER: Yesterday at the opening of Parliament I was very surprised to learn from the Governor's Opening Speech that there does not appear to be any provision for any new dams in the State. That is really a tragedy. Under the previous Government, throughout the State provision was made for dams in a way that took into account conservation concerns. Water area management schemes would have been put in place. That would have had the effect of generating jobs twice the capacity of the Snowy River scheme. So we should not pre-empt things and cut out development. The careful provision of dams is a great way of allaying environmental concerns, providing future employment and, indeed, a future for us all.

Another issue that I wish to address is the fact that our Great Barrier Reef appears to be dying. In recent times my comments on that have attracted quite a bit of interest by the press. In fact, representatives of the Greenpeace organisation came along and had a yarn with me about the situation as well. They are certainly of the view that nobody seems to be taking the dying of the reef very seriously. They claimed that I was the first politician who really made any fair dinkum public comment about it. Basically, what has been said by Federal and State Governments is that they are monitoring the situation. They are monitoring the reef's dying! Although there are authorities to look after the Great Barrier Reef, such as the marine park authority, the reef continues to die.

This evening from the floor of this House I again say that the relevant State and Federal Ministers should meet to set up a very quick-fire task force to see what can be done. It would seem that global warming has contributed to the reef's dying, because it is not only our reef that is dying; it is happening to other reefs throughout the world. However, if we consider what is happening to the reef and the effect that will have on tourism and the financial effect of losing hundreds of thousands of tourists, and if we do not try to do something about the reef, it is going to be to our peril. This, of course, is added to what is yet to be a significant Asian crisis. We need our heads read if we do not try to do something about it. So yet again I make that very strong plea to try to see if something can be done.

Recently, the Minister said that people who own land could predetermine what should happen environmentally with that land in the future. I hasten to add a little word of caution. Frankly, I believe that we are not too sure what might happen 10 years down the track. It could be very detrimental to have built into title of certain land certain environmental things that have to be done. It may not be in the national interest. I believe that a small parliamentary committee should be set up to consider that matter. Such a proposal might sound good, it might please some people, but we always have to think 10 years or a bit further down the track as to what it will mean. I know that it sounds good to say it, but I hasten to add a word of caution.

Currently, we have had quite a bit of talk about Briztram. I am quite astounded to think that the State Government has hit it on the head. The Government will give us all of the reasons why it has hit the Briztram proposal on the head, but as far as I can see it is a decision that will mean a major loss to our environment and to our heritage. I believe that the Briztram route to the university, the hospital, the Valley and St Lucia and then the tram cum walk bridge across the Brisbane River to West End would have been magnificent. It would have provided students with the opportunity to live at West End and other southern points. I think that all we are doing is making a proviso for more buses, more ugly car parks, more traffic in the city, more pollution and less heritage. That does not seem to make a lot of sense to me.

I know that it is argued that traffic needs to get into the city. Frankly, I think the least traffic in the middle of the city the better. Under the Briztram proposal, we would have had a tram to take people about. Trams are all the rage in Europe and, in many cities, they are being reintroduced. In Christchurch in New Zealand, an effort has been made to reintroduce trams. That involves only a small track that runs around a few blocks. However, it is extraordinarily popular with tourists. In fact, most people who visit Christchurch do not get on the tram once, they get on it a few times and visit the heritage buildings, the university library—all sorts of places. One of the trams that is used is an old tram from Philadelphia. That is fine. It is heritage. There is nothing wrong with that. I think that another tram is a former Melbourne tram—it may not be, but I think that it is. It is interesting to see children's parties being held on those trams. One of the trams is backed up with a McDonald's tram and one sees all these kids having a McDonald's party on the tram. I do not think

that there would have been anything wrong with doing that in Brisbane; I really do not.

So we have blown \$65m fair out the back door to help pollute Brisbane a little bit more. In addition, we are also going to blow 2,000 jobs. We are also going to blow a considerable amount of TAFE training. Mr Beattie talks about a massive jobs program and more employment. This is an opportunity to employ more people, but he has thrown away 2,000 jobs and \$65m. Mr Beattie has thrown away a number of other opportunities to create employment. Sometimes one has to bite the bullet and do the job in order to create the jobs.

In relation to heritage, I compliment all of those people who are connected with the work being undertaken at St John's Cathedral. They are doing an extraordinary job with the Gothic-type restructure of that cathedral. It is my advice to all members of the Parliament to have a look at it. Those people will willingly take them around the cathedral. The work is quite extraordinary. I think that they have raised about \$5m or \$6m. However, the total cost of the work is \$26m, so let me tell members that those people have a job in front of them. I do not think that they intend to finish the cathedral until about the year 2005.

One does not realise how big the job is. However, it is going to be just great for our City of Brisbane. We certainly should encourage this as best we can in every way and do all that we can to support it. The Goss Government did not give them any money. I think we have given them about \$2m and the City of Brisbane, through Mr Soorley, has given them \$1m. I urge the present Government to continue that commitment to this very important area.

Land valuations continue to be a problem. A gentleman in my electorate has a problem in this area. He paid a rent of \$265 and built a \$2,000 fence to house koalas, to feed them and then let them out into the community. The Natural Resources Department, in its wisdom, has now presented him with a bill for \$1,900. That does not seem to make a lot of sense. Here we have someone doing some good for the community. I call on the Minister to treat this as a special case and investigate the matter to see what can be done.

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (9 p.m.): As the youngest woman ever to have won a seat in the Queensland Parliament, I am honoured by the opportunity to serve as the Opposition's spokesperson on health and women's policy. I am also proud to reiterate

the record of the coalition in its two short years of Government, in which we turned Queensland's hospital waiting times around from being the worst in Australia to the best.

Already the Labor apologists and spin doctors are trying to talk down the coalition's achievements in the quest to create the Labor myth of a responsible socialist Government. There is no such thing as a responsible socialist Government, as we saw when Labor was last in Government. Today the Parliament is being asked to put its trust in another Labor Government, one which has suffered one of its worst results in history. Labor has shown by its rhetoric and its past history that it is a Government more about doing deals with people than about delivering credible and careful management of Queensland's core services. Queensland's most precious free hospital system is one of those core services and it is a service that Queenslanders treasure and defend with a passion.

I will address some of the whoppers that the new Labor Government is telling people in order to justify its upcoming Budget changes. First, I thank the new Health Minister, Wendy Edmond, for releasing the data today which confirms that more people received their surgery on time under the coalition Government than under the previous Labor Government. For the last couple of years the present Minister in her capacity as shadow Minister bagged my colleague the Honourable Mike Horan and ran down the Surgery on Time program. Yet a document that she released today proves what we were saying about the increased number of people receiving surgery and about the dramatic reduction in waiting times.

Mrs Edmond interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves): Order! I remind members that if they are going to interject they must do so from their correct seats.

Miss SIMPSON: I imagine that the Minister is eating more than a bit of humble pie today having released the 1 July 1998 waiting times which show that, compared with Labor's last results, thousands more Queenslanders have had and are having their surgery on time under the coalition's improvements. I am astounded that the Minister is sending out little smoke signals, that she cannot keep up the pace and that she is now looking for excuses as to why these key targets will fail under Labor.

Targets are important. If Labor really had a vision for Queensland it would publish its

targets for waiting times in our public hospital system. It has not done so because, quite simply, it has no targets and it has no vision for the hospital system. It is looking for excuses at a time when it has been handed a \$103m windfall. With the smoke signals that the new Minister is sending out, she is trying to raise doubt about the in-principle agreement that was signed. She will have problems, because millions of dollars from that agreement have already been spent. I wonder whether the Minister is prepared to hand back those additional dollars.

Queensland really scooped the pool when it came to getting the best deal from the Medicare Agreement. Not only did the coalition improve Queensland's position compared with the Goss Labor Government, under which we suffered a loss of something like, from memory, \$140m or \$180m; it also scored something like \$103m out of \$120m nationally in additional incentive funds. It seems that the new Minister is looking for excuses to weasel out of keeping those important targets in Surgery on Time which Queenslanders have come to expect.

Mrs Edmond: Tell us about the funding for Noosa and Robina.

Miss SIMPSON: I will come to that, because it is very important. When Labor comes to Government it tries to create this myth of responsible Government by telling a few whoppers. Certainly a lot of Labor whoppers have been told with regard to the Noosa and Robina projects, which are still under way. We know that, as these hospitals are still being built, the operating funds are not put into this Budget, because otherwise there would be funding for doctors and nurses at a time when the foundations are still being poured. The coalition has a good track record of providing initiative and growth funding for new projects. Hervey Bay is just one example.

Mrs Edmond interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Health!

Miss SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am getting used to these new standards of interaction in the Chamber by the Labor Government. Those opposite do not like the truth. When the coalition came to Government there were something like 130 beds in the Hervey Bay Hospital. We had to fund the improvements out of initiative and growth funding, and we did it. We increased the health funding in three Budgets by about 30%—something like \$900m. That is our track record of delivering on initiative and growth funding.

Queenslanders have a lot more funded health infrastructure today than was delivered under Labor. If we look at the Labor Party's record we find that there was a significant unfunded component to its Capital Works Program. In fact, it was something like \$1.2 billion. I will come back to that a little later.

We have these smoke signals from the new Health Minister, who is trying to weasel out of delivering the very important key targets for Surgery on Time in Queensland. I will read out some figures to give the House an idea of where things were at under the former Labor Government. I will focus on Category 2, because these are some of the most significant figures that have been released recently. Category 2 is semi-urgent surgery; Category 1 is urgent surgery. Category 2 is surgery which is clinically recommended to be delivered within 90 days.

As at 1 July 1996, Cairns Base Hospital, one of the 10 hospitals in the Surgery on Time program, had something like 45% of people waiting longer than clinically recommended for Category 2 surgery. Under the coalition Government, as a result of the progress made with the extra funding, as at 1 July this year the percentage of those waiting longer than 90 days was 0.8.

At the Gold Coast Hospital, as at 1 July 1996 more than 34% of people were waiting longer than they should have for Category 2 surgery. Under the coalition, as at 1 July 18.9% were waiting longer than they should have. The percentage of those waiting at Ipswich Hospital has reduced from nearly 45 as at 1 July 1996 to 9.3. The percentage of those waiting at Nambour Hospital has reduced from about 25 to 0.8.

I know that there are hospital staff who are very upset about being accused of fudging these figures. We know that these are professional people. It is not bureaucrats and it is not politicians who recategorise people and determine whether people should be in Categories 1, 2 or 3. That is something which is purely in the hands of the clinicians. They are the ones who determine whether people rest within Categories 1, 2 or 3. I am particularly proud to see the great job that Nambour Hospital has done. I do know that there are staff who are quite offended by stories in the newspaper suggesting that they have fudged the figures.

We saw another phenomenal improvement with respect to the Rockhampton Base Hospital. As at 1 July 1996, under the system that Labor had set up more than 51% of people were waiting longer than they should

have for Category 2 surgery. Under the coalition system, as at 1 July that figure had come down to 3.1%. That was well within the target. The figure for the Royal Brisbane Hospital was 26%. As at 1 July 1998, it had come down to 4.6%. We have to give credit where it is due. We know that the coalition put in a lot of extra money.

I have talked to some of the staff who have been delivering those services. They are proud of what they have achieved. They know how tough it is, and they have done an outstanding job. We should not try to take away from them what they have achieved. We can go on. The figure for the Townsville General Hospital was 62.25%, which was an absolutely disgraceful waiting time. More than 62% of Category 2 patients were waiting longer than they should have been waiting for their surgery. Under the coalition's system, that figure has fallen to 6.1%.

The coalition had a plan and it went about implementing it. Labor now comes to Government and is awash with Medicare funding, but it is now trying to make excuses as to why it cannot meet that target. This just shows us that this is the same old Labor Party Government. I do not think they feel comfortable about having money that they can spend on the health system. I think they feel comfortable only when they do something similar to what they did with the WorkCover system, in respect of which this Government's new Health Minister presided over a \$400m blow-out. Obviously, they feel comfortable only when they are dealing with debt. We have handed them quite a deal of money with which to successfully manage the health system, but they cannot handle it.

An Opposition member: They'll blow it.

Miss SIMPSON: Of course they will blow it. All socialist Governments blow it.

Let us turn to Mrs Edmond's predecessors as Health Minister. Not only did Beattie and Elder blow it; we are still paying off the debt that Beattie and Elder left for Queensland Health.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member will refer to other members by their correct title.

Miss SIMPSON: The last instalment of that \$24m debt was due to be paid off in this Budget, and I am assuming that the new Government will continue to pay off the debt that the new Minister's predecessors left Queensland.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members who wish to interject will do so from their correct seats.

Miss SIMPSON: I return to the Noosa and Robina hospitals. Clearly, the operational funding of those hospitals was to be funded in future Budgets out of growth and initiative money. We have proved that we could do it. We built Hervey Bay, with 130 beds, out of growth funds. That is very significant. Labor has a history of wanting to downgrade the Maryborough Base Hospital, as our friends in Maryborough know.

Government members interjected.

Miss SIMPSON: They are trying to downgrade it. They have done it before and they are trying to do it again. The reality is that we put in extra funds to maintain and increase the number of services at the Maryborough Base Hospital and also to bring on line the Hervey Bay Hospital. We did that; we brought it on line out of growth funds.

In looking at the track record of the former coalition Government, it is very important to look at some of the other projects that we also brought about through growth and initiative funds. I turn to the QE II Hospital. It was an absolute disgrace that the previous Labor Government allowed the QE II Hospital—that wonderful hospital—to at one stage be reduced to about nine beds. When the coalition came to Government, we were able to increase that number to about 160 beds through growth and initiative funding. That is a greatly appreciated improvement in that local community. Once again, we delivered.

Let us look at some of the other projects that we were able to fund out of growth and initiative funding. We have only to look at the Royal Brisbane Hospital Psychiatric Unit, the Rockhampton Psychiatric Unit and the Nambour Psychiatric Unit, which were also funded——

Mr Schwarten: We built a psychiatric unit in Rockhampton.

Miss SIMPSON: Is the honourable member who interjected wanting to be committed? The reality is that there has been a significant increase in funding, and we delivered on these things. Our track record is there for all to see.

I wish to touch on another coalition initiative. We could say it is flattering, but I think it is a little ungracious for Peter Beattie to take the credit for himself. I refer to the Cancer Research Centre. I noticed that within about five minutes of coming to Government he was claiming that he put that deal together. This

project was birthed under the coalition. It was certainly announced during the coalition's time—in June—by then Premier Borbidge and then Health Minister Horan. The Opposition fully supports this project, because it represents a significant advancement for cancer research and education in this State. As I said, when there is a change of Government it seems that members opposite like to grab the things that other people have spent a lot of time and work on. Something like \$10m worth of State funds are involved in that project and there are also quite significant private industry funds.

I wish to speak about aged care, an issue in respect of which we will be watching the new Government with a great deal of interest. Previously, it signed the aged care agreement that stripped aged care beds out of this State. Under the previous Borbidge coalition Government, we were the only State that did not charge up-front fees for nursing homes. I am very proud of that, because that was the right decision. In addition, we have also spent increased funds on bringing those aged care facilities up to standard, because they are a very important community asset.

We are the only State that also continued to fund the abolished Federal Government national dental program. We funded that program to the tune of \$20m a year. We also distributed a \$24m increase to the \$125m in HACC funding over two years, ensuring that 94,000 elderly Queenslanders received home and aged care services, which is up from the 74,000 who received HACC services in 1995 under Labor.

Mrs Edmond interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Miss SIMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Furthermore, we allocated \$38m in capital works to upgrade State-owned nursing homes and hospital aged care facilities. Under our 1998-99 coalition Budget, we also proposed a \$4m increase to Statewide funding for key medical specialties affecting the elderly, including orthopaedics, ophthalmology and urology, as part of the coalition's Surgery on Time program. We also proposed \$1.4m in funding for the establishment of a school of nursing to specialise in aged care nursing in partnership with the Princess Alexandra Hospital and the Queensland University of Technology's School of Nursing.

In putting on my hat as the women's policy spokesperson, we can look at the very significant targets and funding that went into

the following areas. Public breast screening was expanded by about 25%. Child immunisation rose by some 81%, which is now the highest rate in Australia. Those are very important targets.

This Labor Government has no targets by which we can measure its performance. All it has done is come into Government and criticise the previous one. It has not come up with a plan for how it will make the health system better. We will be watching members opposite and calling for accountability with respect to this minority ALP Government. I remember well the time when we sat in this Chamber and heard the foaming and spewing from the Labor Party when it was tossed into Opposition. We were a Government that came to power with no majority but certainly with the vast support of the voting public of Queensland. The last Parliament was not an easy one. I acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the member for Gladstone. So much was achieved in that very short time.

It is history now that we sit on the Opposition benches once again. However, we will not forget what Labor did to the State of Queensland. We will not forget the fact that it ran down the Police Service. Under Labor, we lost a significant number of police on the Sunshine Coast. The people of the Sunshine Coast will also not forget the fact that Labor promised to take away the tolls on the Sunshine Motorway but, upon its coming to Government, gave us an extra two tolls. We will not forget that it was the coalition that delivered on its promise to remove those tolls.

We will also not forget the terrible mess that happened in the health system. Queensland's free public hospital system is the jewel in the crown of the core services of the Queensland Government. That is something that we must fight to protect when Labor Governments come to power. I certainly will not be supporting a vote of confidence in the new Labor Government, but I certainly will be working with my colleagues to bring about greater scrutiny of this minority Labor Government. We will not be deterred by the Labor Party apologists who would try to have us forget the Labor Party's history in Queensland.

Mr HOBBS (Warrego—NPA) (9.19 p.m.): The Beattie Government is looking for a vote of confidence. Before any such decision is made, all honourable members need to examine the track record of the Labor Government and decide whether the pitfalls of the past will be revisited, or can we see a modern, forward-thinking Government? There

is an old saying that a guide to the future is a past. So let us have a little glimpse, a little walk back through the annals of history—a very short history.

As I examine the record of the Labor Government of two and a half years ago, I remember—and I am sure all Queenslanders remember—the caning that the Labor Government gave the bush.

Mr Schwarten: You got a hell of a caning.

Mr HOBBS: We have got a better margin than the member had.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves): Order! I remind members that, if they are going to interject, they should be in their correct seats.

Mr HOBBS: I remember the closing down of the railways and the loss of jobs. Each time the Labor Minister for Transport came into my electorate and assured the community that no more jobs would go, one could guarantee that, within a week or two, three or four rail employees would be told that their jobs were gone. I remember that 5,000 rail jobs were made redundant.

Mr Johnson: Eight thousand over six years.

Mr HOBBS: Eight thousand over six years, as the member for Gregory says. I remember that 21 stock railway sidings closed in Warrego. I remember the attempted closing down of the Cunnamulla, Quilpie, Glenmorgan and Dirranbandi rail lines. I remember Labor's community service obligation slogan, "Use it or lose it." The coalition fully reinstated those lines and commenced the upgrade. So far the score is: coalition 1; Labor 0.

I remember the closing down of the hospitals boards, the taking away of real community input into managing health in Queensland. I remember the Labor waiting lists for elective surgery—the longest in Australia. I remember the Beattie debt after capital works funding was used for recurrent funding—and the Labor Party could not fund the capital works program. The coalition reduced the waiting lists, funded health adequately and improved local input with district health councils. Score: coalition 2; Labor 0.

I remember the destruction of the DPI. Never before in Queensland's history has rural industry suffered more than it did at the hands of the Labor Government. In 1992, 460 DPI personnel alone were taken out of the

field—most were sacked—and 30 to 40 DPI offices closed down throughout Queensland. Remember what Labor did for water development in Queensland? Absolutely nothing! Australia is the driest continent on earth. In six years one would think that the Labor Government would have had the vision to come up with a plan. All that it did was build the Teemburra Dam. Funds had already been provided by the previous National Party Government to build the Finch Hatton dam; Labor simply moved the site.

Within one and a half years of the coalition attaining Government, I put in place a plan for sustainable water development to an extent never before seen in this State. The plan was to spend \$2 billion and was equivalent in volume to two Snowy Mountain schemes, and that would have generated 10,000 rural jobs here in Queensland. That would have been the largest boost to rural jobs since the wool boom of the 1950s. I note that the new Labor Minister has stated that the water program is on hold until the Government can decide what to do. Therefore, we can expect nothing to happen. This Government has not shown that it has learnt from the mistakes of the past. Score: coalition 3; Labor 0.

In relation to financial management, remember the \$400m black hole in the Workers Compensation Fund? Remember the raiding of the Nominal Defendants Fund? Remember the raiding of the local ambulance fund—the hard-earned money raised from chook raffles? I will give honourable members an example: \$189,000 was taken from Charleville's local community; Dirranbandi, \$4,000; Goondiwindi, \$77,000; and Mitchell, \$11,000. That money has gone. They never saw it again. It was taken away. They never got it back. Remember the raiding of the Auctioneers and Agents Fund? Most of all, I remember the killer interest rates that were imposed by this Government's Federal counterparts. More damage was done to rural Australia than ever before, resulting in huge debts, people walking off the family farm and rural poverty. Score: coalition 4; Labor 0.

I remember the closures of courthouses across Queensland. I see the honourable former Attorney-General smiling. He should, because he certainly did put a lot of programs in place to improve that disastrous situation. The coalition reinstated many of the courthouses and placed Government agents into other towns to provide assistance to those communities. The members opposite have not learnt the lessons of the past. Within one month of being in Government, it has cut the

legal aid service to the community of Mitchell, which is one community in which the Government closed the courthouse down and the coalition reopened it. I have here a letter from the Booringa Shire Council, which I will table. I also have letters from concerned citizens of the Mitchell area in which they state quite clearly that the duty solicitor will now not be available for Magistrates Court sittings. I seek leave to table that document.

Leave granted.

Mr HOBBS: The score: coalition 5; Labor 0. Remember when Labor increased land rentals by 3,000%? The coalition did an independent review and reduced them to an appropriate level. Score: coalition 6; Labor 0. Remember the national park acquisition of up to 4% of Queensland? Pat Comben was the one running around doing that. Families who survived the drought and financial crisis were then forced off the land by compulsory acquisition. There was no proportional increase in staff to manage those parks. Minister Welford said last week that the national park acquisition would go to 5%. Score: coalition 7; Labor 0.

Mr Hayward: What happened to 6?

Mr HOBBS: The honourable member missed it. Remember Labor's green tax? Within the Warrego electorate Labor's green tax would have had the following impact: Waggamba, \$120,000; Balonne, \$98,000; Waroo, \$62,000; Tambo, my own shire, \$28,000; Tara, \$64,000; Paroo, \$38,000; and Booringa, \$51,000. Thank heavens the coalition came along and put the green tax beast down!

I was dismayed to hear that the new Labor Government was introducing the Environmental Protection Agency. It is actually an enforcement group. People out in the general community might not realise that at this stage, but it is an enforcement group. This agency's emphasis will be on compliance—the green police. I understand that a large bureaucracy with a director-general will also be involved. Score: coalition 8; Labor 0.

I remember the unemployment figures that went up 65% under the previous State Labor Government. The Premier talked of a target of 5% in one to five years. Of course, the Deputy Leader of the National Party, Mr Horan, pointed out that Mr Beattie had said that after one year it would be 5% and then realised that that was a bit difficult so he extended it to five years. I suspect that that figure is what one could call political speak which will once again damage the image of politicians. We have heard it before. An

example would be Prime Minister Hawke when he said, "No child will live in poverty by the year 1990", I think it was. Mr Keating also said in the middle of a recession, "What a lovely set of figures." We knew he was fibbing.

The Premier is touring the State, acting like the pope with his open palms saying, "Believe me." That might work on some of the new members and some members of the public, but those of us who have been here a bit longer can shake our heads and smile, and look again at another reborn politician. If he really wants to create some jobs, he could crank up the water program, which is one that I was particularly involved with. There are 10,000 rural jobs there. Let us see how dedicated and keen the Premier is to get unemployment down in Queensland. That is one way of doing it. Score: coalition 9; Labor, 0. I remember the attitude of Labor to rural communities.

A Government member interjected.

Mr HOBBS: The member will be impressed with this. This is his old boss, Tom Burns. He was dubbed "Labor Minister for the bush". He said to the people of Mitchell, "Pack up and leave because the town will not be there in 10 years," Nothing has been said that convinces us that Labor is going to change its attitude to rural industry. Nothing has shown us that Labor is genuine about trying to fix up the problem. Score: coalition 10; Labor 0. Looking at my unbiased scoring, it is quite clear that I am not confident that the Beattie Government will be good for Queensland.

Mr Hayward: There are only two rounds to go.

Mr HOBBS: We will see. In the recent election campaign the coalition was prepared to support local government to the tune of \$200m on the waste management strategy. The cost to local government is something like \$600m. I have not heard anything from the Labor Government to indicate that it is going to assist local authorities with this program. Enormous cost is involved, and mayors and councillors from the various local authorities will know the importance of a good waste management program. We had a program. What is Labor's program? So far we have heard nothing. We are listening; we are all ears. What will this Government do with the new Integrated Planning Act? Will the subsequent amendments proposed by the previous Minister, and supported by the Local Government Association, be progressed? What will happen with vegetation controls under the Integrated Planning Act?

After all, it was a Labor Government which brought in restrictive timber control on freehold and leasehold land. We heard about riparian corridors. Mention that word to people on the north coast and a shiver goes up their spines. It is still there. Maybe it is going to come back. I do not have confidence that land-holders are going to be dealt a fair hand. How will this Government deal with the projects for development under the new EPA? How long will it take to get projects up and running? How long will it take to get those projects finished? What other issues are likely to come out of the woodwork when the projects are almost completed?

I look at the amendments that have been moved in the House today. I strongly support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. It talks about recognising the commitments given by the Premier to the member for Nicklin. Anyone worth his salt would realise that these commitments are very important, not just for the Labor Government but also for the people of Queensland. For the integrity of that agreement to be put in place and kept in place, we believe that we need nothing less than an assurance from this Government, through this amendment, that it is fair dinkum. If the Government is not fair dinkum we should be told. Has a deal been done of which we are not aware? Is there something different? Why can the Government not support what it has said previously? Is there not some way in which the Government can explain to the community, "Yes, that is the deal. We have no problem with that"?

It is really a matter of looking at the facts. The letter was published in the Courier-Mail, so it has had fair coverage. Is something going to be recorded in Hansard for posterity to support the view that Labor is going to honour that contract and thus ensure that it is able to govern in this State?

It has been my pleasure tonight to cover a lot of issues. I have genuine difficulty in coming to a decision to support the Labor Government. Obviously, from our side of the House it would be difficult. There has not been any great signal to any of us in the rural areas particularly, which I represent, that there is going to be any great change. It is the same team, the same actions, the same motions, and the same types of signals. I do not believe that this Government deserves the confidence of the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves): Order! Before I call the member for Lockyer, I remind honourable members that this is the

member's first speech. I ask that the member be accorded the courtesy of the House.

Dr PRENZLER (Lockyer—ONP) (9.36 p.m.): Mr Deputy Speaker, please pass on my congratulations to the Speaker on his election to the most important position in the House. I am proud to represent the electorate of Lockyer and I thank the electors for their support. I hope that my relationship with the voters in my electorate will be strong, responsive, responsible, accountable and long term.

But my speech today cannot be the normal maiden speech. The gravity of the matter facing this Parliament does not allow me that luxury after thoroughly examining the available evidence on the affair now named Shreddergate. I can only support the vote of confidence in the Beattie Government with an amendment that makes available all relevant Cabinet documents. The alleged corruption associated with the shredding of the Heiner inquiry documents contaminates Mr Beattie's Government, Queensland's public administration and the criminal justice system. More importantly, the victims of these hideous crimes have not been heard. I want, we want and expect, their cries to be heard and justice to be done.

The Heiner issue is really about public trust and the betrayal of that public trust. Innocent victims have been caught up in a web of deceit. This deceit appears to involve public officials, both elected and appointed, who have been given—and some still hold—positions of trust.

In speaking on this matter, I am very aware that the honourable member for Nicklin, who has the casting vote in this Parliament, was a police officer, along with being a solicitor and a local government councillor. Every critical ingredient of Shreddergate should be of particular interest and concern to the honourable member for Nicklin.

Together with most members of this Chamber I read with horror and alarm the Courier-Mail report by journalist Michael Ware in which he told of the experiences of children, some as young as 10, being handcuffed to grates overnight and children being handcuffed to bars in painful positions for extended periods of time. We read of children being administered sedatives to quieten them down. Often these sedatives were administered by non-medical personnel.

I read with great sadness about a young child of 10 who was handcuffed to the stormwater grate for 11 hours—I repeat: 11 hours—overnight. This child stuffed his

blanket down a grate rather than keep himself warm because he was frightened by his carers into believing that poisonous snakes came out of the grate at night time. This child was not guilty of any serious crime; he was hyperactive. The State was given the care of this child, not permission to abuse this child through intimidation and fear.

I want to congratulate the Courier-Mail on its coverage of this matter. I noted that its editorial on 4 June last called on whoever won office to hold an inquiry into it. One Nation will take up the challenge to investigate the allegations and to ensure that the dark clouds of mistrust hanging over this Government can be removed by seeking access to these Cabinet documents. This must be done, and it must be done before we can even consider any vote of confidence in this new minority Government. We, like all Queenslanders, must feel that our trust and faith in this Parliament are returned only through the delivery of these Cabinet documents for scrutiny. This action will cost the people of Queensland nothing, but it will show to the public the new integrity that this Government has promised.

I believe that the reason why Mr Beattie does not want to release these documents is that five—and I repeat: five—of his senior Ministers are deeply involved. They were involved in the decision to shred Cabinet evidence that was required for imminent legal proceedings. They ordered it so that what was contained in this evidence would never see the light of day. It was a deliberate act, and they are in it up to their necks.

One does not shred public records. Public records are the very lifeblood of democratic Governments. They keep Governments accountable. One does not shred them just because Executive Government wants to save public or elected officials from embarrassment or scrutiny. One does not do it. And it is an absurdity for any Government to argue in support of destroying public records to prevent accountability. The shredding plainly aided and abetted this misconduct. The Government of Queensland, with the fatal five sitting around the table, assisted in the obstruction of justice.

The Premier ought to be ashamed if the reported comments in the Courier-Mail from his adviser are proven to be correct. The parents of the 10-year-old boy who was handcuffed to the stormwater drain—the very boy who undoubtedly cringed in fear all night about the possibility of poisonous snakes attacking him from the drain; the boy who could have died from an asthma attack—were

allegedly told to "get f'd" by the Premier's adviser when they tried to talk to him about the shredding of the evidence. What an outrageous, insensitive action to adopt when worried parents are suddenly informed that their child suffered such treatment while in the care of the Crown!

The Premier is a solicitor, and he must know the principle of Cabinet confidentiality. Our Westminster system provides for Cabinet confidentiality, allowing the deliberations to remain secret until 30 years later. Crown privilege is predicated on the principle that Cabinet operates lawfully and does not conspire to deliberately obstruct justice or to destroy public records for treacherous reasons, unless one accepts the premise that there is one law for ordinary Queenslanders and another for members of Parliament, especially Cabinet members. If the Premier is a man of integrity and he truly wants honest and accountable Government returned to this Parliament, he must support our call for the release of the necessary Cabinet documents. This action will cost the public nothing, but it will assist greatly in returning trust to Parliament and its members.

One Nation cannot have confidence in the Beattie Government, because it has shown no inclination to date to seek out the truth of this affair. It is a disgrace to our public administration. It will not go away until the doubt is removed. There are many aspects of Shreddergate where Queensland's public administration has failed and failed dismally, and none more so than the role of the State Archivist at the time of Shreddergate. What makes this matter so serious is that the former Attorney-General, the current Minister for Education, Mr Wells, the current Attorney-General, the Honourable Mr Foley, the current Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, the Honourable Mr Braddy, and the former Premier, Mr Goss, all have legal training and are qualified in the law. They really have no excuse.

One does not destroy material when one knows that it could contain necessary evidence for impending court proceedings. If the possibility of this is there, one safeguards this evidence. One does not deliberately destroy it for the express reason of preventing it from being used in those proceedings. The ordinary person in the street knows that. I dare say that even a child at school would know that. One certainly does not have to go to university to know that. But in this case we have Ministers—some qualified in the law and sworn in as solicitors and officers of the courts—sitting around the Cabinet table

deliberately and secretly deciding to destroy evidence to prevent its use in impending court proceedings and to prevent exposure of suspected child abuse in a State detention facility. It is a total affront to the rule of law and the due process of law. These Ministers now ask us to give them a vote of confidence to govern this fine State. If these Ministers are prepared to practise honest and accountable government, let them release these documents for scrutiny. If the Government does not take this action, then the integrity as referred to by the new Premier will be questionable. It happened once; it can happen again.

I have taken the time to read the material associated with Shreddergate. I am at a loss to understand why the former Government never acted to expose the truth after the Morris/Howard report. The Australian Society of Archivists strongly asserts that Archivists should not be treated as rubber stamps by Governments wishing to rid themselves of potentially embarrassing records. Record creators must make available to the Archivists all pertinent information relating to ongoing legal and administrative significance of records subject to disposal determinations. The Australian Society of Archivists calls upon the Queensland Government to enact legislation that guarantees the future independence of the State Archivists, including protection from political interference, in order to ensure the integrity of the public record in this State.

This alleged corruption has remained unaddressed for far too long. I call upon this House to act and to act quickly and purposefully. I say to members: please remember the plight of the innocent abused child victims and act in accordance with your conscience when you vote.

Mr HEALY (Toowoomba North—NPA) (9.49 p.m.): In rising to oppose the confidence motion before the Parliament today, I firstly wish to thank the people of the electorate of Toowoomba North for their confidence in me as their elected member for a third time. As I have done twice before in this place at the beginning of the Parliament, I pledge my total commitment to represent them.

I place on record my thanks and tribute to several of my former parliamentary colleagues who were not returned after the 13 June election. In particular, I pay tribute to a gentleman who became a very good friend of mine, of many members in this place on both sides of the Chamber and of officers of the Parliament. I refer to the former member for Lockyer, Mr Tony FitzGerald. I think it was the

member for South Brisbane who, on the night of the election in the tally room, said that it would be a little strange not having Tony FitzGerald around the Parliament any more. Given the fact that it was the member for South Brisbane who said that, that was a fitting tribute to the bipartisan support that Tony received as a member in this place.

Of course, she was absolutely right. Tony absolutely loved the Parliament. He loved good-spirited debate. He loved being involved in the tactics, strategies, mysteries and intrigues of this place. When we were in Opposition, he was perfect in the role of Leader of Opposition Business and later, when we were Government, in the role of Leader of the House. I am sure that there is many a former Minister from the coalition who will privately agree that Tony was a great help to them as he sat beside them during the carriage of fairly difficult and intricate legislation in this place. Tony loved that sort of thing and revelled in it. He served this Parliament very, very well. A former Minister, a former Government Whip and a fervent supporter of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, he served on various committees in this place as well as in many other roles that he played to ensure that this Parliament worked as well as it possibly could.

Mr Quinn interjected.

Mr HEALY: The member for Merrimac hit it on the head when he said that the former member for Lockyer was an outstanding parliamentarian.

I wish both him and his lovely wife, Bernadette, all the very best for the future. Who knows, perhaps somewhere down the track we may see that little carrot top back in here some time. I certainly hope so. I wish him well.

In common with many others in this place since the commencement of the 49th Parliament, I express my appreciation to the former Speaker of this place, Speaker Turner. When a young member comes in here for the first time after being elected, normally on this side of politics—and I am sure it happens on the other side as well—an older member from the political party is usually assigned to keep an eye on him or her, not let him or her go astray and perhaps offer a little friendly, fatherly advice from time to time. I believe that Neil Turner had been assigned to look after me, or so it seemed at the time. Before too long, I knew the famous horse poem off by heart. That must have meant that he did his job. I thank him publicly for his friendship and

his wise counsel. I pay tribute to him for the way in which he conducted himself as Speaker of this Parliament. He leaves enormous shoes to fill and will be fondly remembered in the precincts of this place for many years to come.

I congratulate Mr Speaker on his election. I am sure that he realises the enormous responsibility of the position. I was quite pleased to hear some of the comments that he made in his opening address as Speaker of this Parliament.

In just two and a quarter years, the Borbidge/Sheldon Government took this State to a state of renewed economic vigour and confidence with sound policies and respected economic management. I am afraid that that is something for which Labor will never be remembered. I congratulate the three former Ministers whose portfolios I now have the responsibility of shadowing in this place, namely, the member for Noosa in Tourism, the member for Southport in Sport, and the member for Crows Nest in Racing. After they were appointed in early 1996, all three of those men played a major role in the success of the previous coalition Government and provided this State with some wonderful initiatives that helped to create jobs and continue prosperity in Queensland.

Despite all the rhetoric of the Labor party, the tourism industry in Queensland is in a state of uncertainty, not just because of the Asian economic downturn and the collapse of the economies in places such as Japan and elsewhere but also because it is in fear of a return to the bad old days of a Labor administration when political interference caused bodies such as the Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation to be restricted in what they could do to enhance tourism in this State. One of the first things that the Labor Government did only weeks after it assumed power was to force the resignation of successful Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation Chair, Mrs Sallyanne Atkinson. I suppose that to some extent that move was not totally unexpected given the political climate at the time. The point that I want to make is that Mrs Atkinson was doing a very, very good job in the role of chairman of the QTTC.

Not long after that, just as the Minister was jumping aboard the plane to take him to New York to sign up the Goodwill Games, I understand that another little gem of a story appeared in quite a few regional newspapers around the State. The story stated that the Minister had plans to gut the QTTC and to reduce its membership. Naturally, that sent a

shiver down the spines of particularly those current board representatives who represent important tourism areas in regional Queensland. It was interesting that one newspaper journalist rang me to say that he had rung the Minister's office for a further comment and was told by a ministerial staffer that the Minister had denied saying that he was going to do that to the QTTC. I thought that that was quite strange. Here we are several weeks later and still no announcement has been made of an appointment in relation to the chairman of the QTTC and no further announcement in relation to the make-up of the board. We have heard all sorts of rumours about who will become the QTTC chairman. There are all sorts of rumours about certain sporting personalities and about the appointment of former Federal or State Ministers. That issue is creating uncertainty within the industry. Who is going to miss out in terms of the make-up of the board for the regions? Which regions will not have a representative on Queensland's peak tourism body?

I urge the Minister to bring an end to all the uncertainty and announce exactly what he is going to do and whom he is going to appoint. Only that will end all the speculation and innuendo that have prevailed over the past few weeks in an industry that does not need uncertainty at this time. We in the Opposition will be watching very, very closely indeed to see who is appointed to that important position on that board. It would be very foolish were the Minister to go down the same path as his colleague the Minister for Employment and Training, who bowed to the pressure of his union and party mates when he made changes to the WorkCover board. Because of all the factors that are affecting the industry currently, the position of the QTTC chairman and the make-up of that board is important to Queensland in this time of uncertainty within the industry. We need people on that board who will represent their regions. We need a person who will take the helm of the QTTC with vigour and somebody who will be respected within the industry.

The coalition Government had secured the tourism industry as a top priority with policies that would ensure major employment growth and foreign exchange earnings. Under a coalition Government, the tourism industry received record support. As my colleague the member for Noosa mentioned earlier, the coalition increased the budget for the QTTC from only \$29m under Labor to what was going to be a record \$42m in our Budget. Funding for the Queensland Events

Corporation had increased. The Gold Coast Events Company funding for Indy had been maintained. No Government, especially Labor, had ever delivered the level of financial support to tourism that the Borbidge/Sheldon Government was able to deliver over the two and a bit years that it was in office. Commitments had been given to marketing and promotion and major events, regional tourism, inbound tour operations, growth initiatives, taxation, industrial relations, infrastructure, transport, education and training, the year 2000 Olympics, special interest markets and ecotourism. The coalition recognised that tourism was essentially driven by private sector enterprise and that one of the key roles of Government was to provide an environment that stimulated and value added to the efforts of the industry.

During the term of the coalition Government there were thousands more hospitality jobs created in Queensland than there ever were under Labor. In fact, ABS figures showed that at the end of the March quarter 1996, there were 73,300 jobs in the hospitality sector in Queensland. At the end of the March quarter this year, the total was 85,600. Queensland was the first State in Australia to respond to the Asian economic crisis with urgent industry summits in Brisbane earlier this year and a special \$5m marketing grant to the QTTC. Of course, that has been matched already by Labor but, as I understand it, is short of the pre-election commitment that was touted by Labor prior to the election.

Let me say that, from talking to tourism industry leaders as I did at the Queensland Tourism Awards on the Gold Coast last Friday night, the tourism summit that the Government conducted last week left a lot to be desired compared to the initiative-driven exercises that were conducted by the coalition Government earlier this year. At this point, I congratulate all of those award winners in the Queensland Tourism Awards last Friday night. I think that it bears special mention. It was a wonderful occasion at which some of Queensland's most prolific tourist destinations were awarded the accolades that they certainly deserved. It was a great message that was sent out to the tourism industry around Australia and across South East Asia as to what sort of quality and calibre of tourist destinations we have in Queensland.

The last time Labor held Government in Queensland, it allowed the tourism marketing budget to fall way behind that of most other States, even South Australia. Labor's old ways of promoting and handling tourism will simply

not cut the mustard in these difficult times. Although the Government may promise budget increases and fast-tracking of special funding for marketing and promotion, its paltry record in the past simply suggests a return to the bad old days. In the past under Labor, Queensland's hard-won position as the dominant tourism State was sacrificed because the industry did not fit the Labor mould. Of course, who could forget the infamous Yo! Way to go! campaign, which was a national embarrassment and which left morale in the industry at an all-time low.

The previous Minister, the member for Noosa, would often tell me that when he took over the portfolio he was appalled at the poor relationship between the industry and the Government. There was no trust, there was no team spirit and there was no cohesion. It was in absolute disarray. The coalition Government fostered strong relationships with the industry, both at a domestic and international level, to maximise the profitability of Queensland. It completed marketing strategies for all 14 tourism regions in association with industry and regional tourist associations. Those strategies are vital for the continued economic prosperity of those regions.

The Borbidge/Sheldon Government had put in place the initiatives that reflected a clear understanding of the strength and future potential of the tourism industry. Those initiatives paid off in a big way. With the coalition's continued support for the meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions sector throughout the State, only last week we saw Cairns making the top 100 best convention venues in the world list. That is a great achievement for Cairns because it had never made that list before.

Of course, that leads me to the issue of the Cairns Convention Centre and the commitment by the coalition to allocate in its Budget \$21m in 1998-99 and 1999-2000 for the expansion of the Cairns Convention Centre to host the National Basketball League franchise team. I ask: is Labor going to waltz on that deal when it brings down its Budget on 15 September? I urge the Labor Government not to waltz on that deal. It is vitally important for Cairns, it is vitally important now that the Cairns national basketball franchise team has been included in the national competition but, more importantly, the commitment should be given now so that the people of Cairns know what the commitment is.

It was the coalition Government that funded Queensland Events, the State's major event organisation, to enable it to be the most

successful major events body in Australia over the past two years, winning every single bid it had entered for new events for this State. That is a terrific record. In just over two years, more than 27 events had been added to Queensland Events' portfolio, delivering an estimated \$400m in direct economic benefit to the State and another \$200,000 in promotional value.

The coalition Government was able to secure the Magic Millions yearling sales and Magic Millions two-year-old classic for the Gold Coast for five years as well as provide for the establishment and promotion of a \$500,000 three-year-old Magic Millions race during the summer racing carnival.

One thing that was forgotten under the previous Labor Government was the importance of domestic tourism. That is why, as I mentioned before, in April this year the coalition Government announced Queensland's biggest ever domestic tourism push, worth \$8.2m and aimed specifically at interstate markets. The domestic tourism market represents around 80% of all visitors. It is of even greater significance to Queensland this year, as competition for the Australian holiday dollar is more fierce than ever before. In addition, the year to September 1997 results from the Queensland visitors survey showed that interstate visitor numbers jumped to 2.6 million, a 17% increase on the previous year, and awareness of the State's holiday destinations was at 47%, the highest rate in Australia and two and a half times that of our closest rival, New South Wales. The coalition Government had armed the tourism industry with the funding and support necessary to face the challenges of the immediate future as it continued to appreciate the vital contribution that tourism makes to the State's economy. The coalition believes that that should continue.

In the time remaining to me during this debate, I want to make a few comments about the racing industry. I think that it is important to highlight not only some of the initiatives that the previous coalition Government instigated for the industry but also, if time permits, to comment on the proposed TAB privatisation that the coalition Government had begun to initiate. In just over two years, the previous Minister, the member for Crows Nest, achieved marvellous reforms in the industry. The industry will remember some of those reforms that he was able to instigate. We saw the provision for the very first time of \$2m for a training track subsidy scheme to assist in maintaining vital infrastructure to eligible clubs throughout the State. It was the

first time in 10 years that consolidated revenue money had been used as an injection of funds for the racing industry. We saw the Kennedy review of the Queensland Racing Industry Incentive Scheme implemented—a total commitment of \$3.5m, including an additional \$500,000 for an unplaced starter subsidy. We saw \$750,000 given to the Greyhound Racing Authority for administration and capital works and \$2.5m to the Queensland harness racing industry. We saw a record intake of overseas students at the Queensland Racing Industry Training Centre, with a \$5m flow-on effect for the State economy. I will have more to say about the Queensland Racing Industry Training Centre in the next couple of days, because that is also another interesting scenario that has taken place since this Government came to power in Queensland.

I say that the Minister for Racing is one of only very few members opposite who fully understands why the TAB must go through the process that the coalition Government instigated. I feel for him because he has to try to convince some of his colleagues opposite why there is the need for Queensland's TAB to compete. If we do not, we will fall so far behind the other States such as New South Wales and Victoria that it does not matter. Queensland's mighty racing industry must compete. I am prepared to sit with the Minister and talk about this in a bipartisan way because he understands the industry and he understands the problems that Queensland's TAB has faced in relation to low growth and the competition that is coming from other States. I think that we need to drive this as a Parliament, as a Government. I say one thing: it was the industry that started the drive for TAB privatisation and the coalition Government responded to that and implemented the first process.

Time expired.

Mr SLACK (Burnett—NPA) (10.09 p.m.): Earlier, the member for Southport mentioned that the recent election had been his fifth. I inform the House that, obviously, it was also my fifth election. I take this opportunity to congratulate those who have been returned after being elected for the first time.

This, my fifth election, was one of the most unusual elections I have been involved in. Of course, it was also one of the most interesting because the outcome was not predicted. That outcome is the reason we are here tonight debating this motion.

The previous speaker mentioned the contributions made by many of the members who are no longer here. I wish to support and

endorse those remarks. There are many members from both sides of the House who genuinely made a contribution to the welfare of Queensland and who worked very hard as members of the Parliament. In many instances they did not deserve not to be here. That is not taking anything away from the congratulations I gave to the 25 new members, but the fact remains that this was one of the most unpredictable elections that we have faced, with outcomes across-the-board that were not predicted.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I take this opportunity to ask you to pass on to the Speaker my congratulations on his election to the office he now holds. Obviously it will be a challenging position for him, with the Parliament being made up the way it is.

One of the things that struck me during the last election—and the member for Nicklin referred to it earlier—was the crystallisation of the lack of appreciation of members of Parliament. I deliberately say "members of Parliament" and not "politicians". It is disturbing. I felt that, of any election I have been through, that was the lowest esteem in which we had been held. Out of that there is a responsibility on all of us to attempt to reverse that perception that the public in general has of us. It is sad, because we are the law-making body of the State and it is imperative that we are held in better public esteem than we are.

I want to refer to the speech made this morning by the mover of this motion, the Premier. He and the Deputy Premier spoke of the confidence in them and the confidence in this Government. The reality is, of course, that the outcome of the election was not clear. There were two options—either a Government formed by members from this side of the House or a Government formed by Labor members. The member for Nicklin made his decision, and we respect that decision, but it is not in order for the Premier or the Deputy Premier to claim that business necessarily supports the policies of the Labor Party or the performance of the previous Labor Government. I did not read that into the support that Labor received.

What the electorate in general, and business in particular, was looking for out of this election was a clear decision, which did not eventuate. Despite the fact that a clear decision was not arrived at, the Premier and Deputy Premier claimed that the fact that the Labor Party had attained the greater number of members, although they were short of the one member necessary to form a

Government, meant that this was the best way of getting stability. I assure members of the Government that they will have to earn the confidence and respect of business, and that is not going to happen overnight.

It is a retrograde step to come in here claiming credit for many of the things that have occurred in the past month, which were really the result of policies that had been implemented or work that had been done by the coalition when in Government. As honourable members can appreciate, there is a lead time involved when business makes a decision to locate in Queensland or overseas powers make a decision to hold a games here. Quite often, decisions are made well before the announcements are made. So much of what has been done and much of what the Labor Government will benefit from has been at the instigation of and is a result of the hard work and commitment of the coalition when in Government.

I believe that I, the Leader of the Opposition and the members of the previous Cabinet have every reason to be proud of what was achieved when the coalition was in Government, in that short two and a quarter years. I felt, as many people do, that our term in Government was cut short. Many of those policies and much of that work we had done did not come to fruition and we were not given the recognition that we deserved.

It concerns me that the new Minister for State Development has been quick to criticise the contribution made by us when we were in Government, particularly in relation to trade and investment. There is no doubt that the future for jobs and prosperity in this State is very much linked to trade and investment—the trade out of this State and the investment from not only the people of Australia and the people of Queensland in their own State but also from overseas investors. We were able to achieve much in that particular area during our term of office.

It disturbs me that this Government is now seeking to review and shake up the trade and investment strategies that were introduced by this Government and which have shown results that have been to the benefit of all Queenslanders and have resulted in jobs for Queenslanders. I refer to a Courier-Mail article of 28 July 1998. The headline reads "Labor plans major shakeup for trade and business strategies". I also refer to the comments made by the Deputy Premier this morning. I find them amazing when I compare the outcomes from Labor's previous term in office with the

outcomes from just two and a quarter years of coalition administration.

I remind the Minister that it was the coalition Government that recognised the importance of and placed the emphasis on investment in trade when it established the stand-alone department and the regional offices. It was the coalition Government that established the regional international trade support branch of the Department of Economic Development and Trade. Many of the things the Minister is talking about are what the coalition has done, what we put in place, and he is not prepared to recognise them.

I remind the Minister that when Labor went out of office Queensland's trade performance was declining. Under the coalition, our exports as a percentage of overall Australian exports was improving. When Labor left Government two and a quarter years ago, Queensland's percentage of Australian exports was actually declining. It had fallen from just over 20% to around 19%—approximately 2%. In other words, we were declining in terms of overall exports. That continued for a period but then in the past 10 months, due to our policies that were coming to fruition, that trend was reversed and the overall trade from this State was increasing as a percentage of Australian trade figures. It is on record that the figure for every month of that past 10 months exceeds that for the corresponding month of the previous year. The figures for March were up 20.6% and the overall figures for the 10 months were up by 18.6%.

I also remind the Deputy Premier that when Labor went out of office our economic growth was 2.2%—honourable members should remember that figure—and there was no Asian crisis being talked about. In just two and a quarter years of coalition administration our economic growth had improved to 4.5% in round figures—double what Labor achieved. It is with a little bit of scepticism that I listen to the Deputy Premier when he talks about Labor's plans, because it is rhetoric. The facts are not there to support his argument.

I should remind the Deputy Premier that a quarter of all major projects in Australia—some \$15 billion worth in the Department of Economic Development and Trade—are in Queensland, and that last year 40% of Australia's job growth occurred in Queensland. Talk about jobs! Unemployment was declining under the coalition administration. It is now much lower than when Labor was in Government. I should also remind the Deputy

Premier of the number of major companies that have decided to re-establish their Australian headquarters in Queensland. Of course, there has been a lead time. I mentioned Boeing, and there are many others. Those decisions to establish here are not made overnight. Often, as I said, they are made well in advance of the announcement.

That the coalition Government achieved all of this in just two and a quarter years illustrates that it was a proactive Government, not a reactive one. It was the coalition Government that introduced a diversified trade and investment strategy. It was the coalition Government that reopened the offices in Los Angeles, Shanghai, Jakarta and Semarang. Whilst on the subject of overseas relationships, I suggest that the Premier, the Deputy Premier or both visit Indonesia as quickly as they possibly can. Indonesia has been a close friend of ours and we should appreciate that it would be feeling a little lost and lonely at this time. As we have a very close link with Central Java in a Sister State relationship, it is imperative that a high priority be placed on a senior representative from this State undertaking a visit.

It was the coalition Government that established the Bilateral Trade Assistance Scheme, formed the Education Advisory Council and coordinated the marketing of education overseas. Education brings over \$500m into Queensland a year. It was the coalition Government that brought together departments to coordinate our international marketing for education, not a Labor Government. That occurred over the past two and a quarter years. We did that for the benefit of Queenslanders. This Government speaks about the potential for exporting education. However, it was in Government for over six years. It had the opportunity to do something, but it did nothing.

We formed the Education Advisory Council. We encouraged and supported business missions overseas, many of which were led by me. I took a limited number of bureaucrats and staff and published my full itinerary. I must mention that I did not travel first class, and on occasions I travelled economy class. The results are there for all to see. Under Labor's previous six-year administration, visits were conducted overseas, but on most occasions business people were not taken and the benefits of that overseas travel were not realised. In addition, it did not publish any of its itineraries. My itineraries were available for all to see—every day, every meal, the whole lot.

It was a coalition Government that revamped the Trade Assistance Scheme and established a close working relationship with Austrade. It was the coalition Government's proactive approach that led to Mack Trucks establishing its right-hand drive international manufacturing headquarters here. I have previously mentioned Boeing and the many other companies that have shifted to Queensland.

It was the coalition Government's proactive approach that led to the proposed Surat/Dawson Basin development being at the stage it is at today. I am very concerned about the Minister's statements of late in relation to the future of that extremely important development for Queensland. We are talking about a \$3 billion development that has the potential to create thousands of flow-on jobs and lead to major exports of 20 million tonnes of coal a year. That coal would be environmentally friendly, which is what the market wants at this time and which is so important to the environmentalists—something for which we are not given credit. I point out to the Minister that it is a very finely tuned exercise that will potentially bring many benefits, as the member for Callide mentioned so eloquently in his maiden speech, not only for his area but also for the whole of the State of Queensland and Australia.

We have heard for years about the 4.1 billion tonnes of steaming thermal coal. It was this Government that, in only two and a quarter years, got it off the ground and got it to the stage it is at today. Twenty major consortia were involved in the selection process. At the end of the day, after the successful consortium was selected, none of the other companies involved found fault with the selection process for the preferred developer.

There is no doubt that if it gets off the ground it will help to reverse the drift away from country areas. In the Courier-Mail the Deputy Premier questioned the seriousness of the companies involved and the viability of the whole exercise. Is the Deputy Premier setting himself above the senior people in those companies who are prepared to spend millions of dollars to enter into the process? Would SUDAW Developments, which got the nod at the end of the day, be prepared to spend \$10m on investigations if it did not think that the coal would be marketable by about 2001, when there would be some orders?

SUDAW is made up of the Raytheon Group, which has overseas contacts for the sale of the coal. There is no question about its

viability. However, at the end of the day it is up to SUDAW to make that judgment. Everybody knows that. I am saying to this House quite openly that there is no way that it would be spending \$10m on its assessment process unless it thought, with all of its international connections, that it would be a goer. So it is not for the Minister to say that he does not think the coal market will be there. Surely the company would know what it was talking about if it is prepared to enter into this project.

The Deputy Premier has also mentioned Chevron and Comalco. We have been dealing with Comalco and Chevron for some time. There is no doubt that they are very tough and skilled negotiators. This Government has signed off with Comalco. In relation to the Chevron deal, it knew the rules. It knew that Tarong was out there and that it could be expanded. It knew that the Surat/Dawson Basin project was under way. It knew that we had an open electricity market and that we wanted the cheapest power for industry in this State. To have industry and jobs in this State we have to have cheap power. That is the No. 1 requirement. For example, if we were to talk to industry at Pinkenba, Ipswich or Townsville about their future and jobs, they would mention cheap power.

If Chevron is so worried about the Tarong power, it and this Government have to bear in mind that there is a load loss between Tarong and Wandoan, if it comes on stream—and that is back to open policy. They have to bear in mind that there is load loss and an economic cost in getting the power from there to Townsville. Chevron knew that under our administration. It knew that and it was prepared to go ahead with it. In those circumstances, it put out to tender the construction of the pipeline.

The Deputy Premier has obviously been lobbied by those companies. Of course they will lobby, as they all will. At the end of the day, we have to look after the taxpayer's dollar. Surely the Government is not proposing to rush in and accept what some company will put forward to it as being viable? Companies will put forward projects and will look for a financial benefit. If members opposite are soft and silly enough—because these companies play Governments against Governments and industry against industry—to say, "Yes, we'll go along with what you are doing", they are doing the taxpayers of Queensland a major disservice. I suggest that the Deputy Premier reassess where he is coming from in respect of those issues.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to the overhaul of the bureaucracy. The Department of Economic Development and Trade was absolutely apolitical. I did not care what the politics of any individual in that department were, as long as everyone did their job. The people appointed there were appointed on merit by a selection panel. They had my full support. It is a disrespect to them to suggest in any way that they have not been doing their job properly; that they are political. In relation to any changes in personnel or reappointments of DGs, I suggest that that would be political.

Time expired.

Mr LITTLEPROUD (Western Downs—NPA) (10.29 p.m.): I stand once again in this House representing the people of Western Downs. I am aware of the make-up of this House. I welcome all those people who are new to it and I remind all members that, in fact, democracy has had its chance. It put us into the Parliament in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. We all now have the responsibility to try to give some stability to Queensland. Hence, today we are debating this motion of confidence which was moved by the Premier, to which three amendments have been moved. I oppose the motion of confidence and I will speak on matters relevant to Western Downs.

First of all, I think it is important that we recap the strategy of the Borbidge Government. We worked out the things that were needed for Queensland. We needed to reduce the impact of Government on business right across Queensland. We needed to return all the services such as the DPI, the courthouses and whatever else had been run down, especially in rural Queensland. If we were going to make the State grow, there was a desperate need to develop infrastructure: water, ports and coal. We needed to attract large business, and the previous speaker, the member for Burnett, touched on all the things we did to achieve that. As he pointed out, the results were quite tremendous. We were at the threshold of good things. Big things were happening in Queensland. Added to that, of course, was the tight financial management of the coalition; we had rescued the various State accounts from some pretty perilous situations.

So I was interested today to listen to the Premier during the debate on this motion of confidence—and I took note—when he said that he had met with business leaders soon after coming to Government, I think within two days. He said, "There will be no freeze on

public works." I thought immediately of the inquiries I have made since the election into matters relating to Western Downs. I made inquiries into the building of the Institute of TAFE on the Darling Downs. An annex to the Chinchilla State High School associated with the Toowoomba TAFE was to be opened in January 1999. The last word I had about 10 days ago was that nothing can happen until the State Budget is brought down. I do not think it is possible now to go ahead with that project and have it operational by January 1999. The people of Chinchilla had this proposal put to them in 1989 when we were in Government; it was in the planning stages. We have been waiting for 10 years, and now I find that it is at risk.

Similarly, in 1989 we were promised a TAFE college in Dalby, which was to open in 1991. It was not proceeded with. Only in the last two years, under the Borbidge Government, was a specially designed TAFE building granted to become operational later in 1999. The same inquiries I have made show that the capital works program associated with it is at risk. Two weirs in the electorate of Western Downs put together by the previous Minister for Natural Resources, the member for Warrego—the Nangram weir and the Condamine weir—are going to bring surety to those people who could use the water and bring new inputs in terms of horticulture and agriculture into the area as well as added cash flow through the communities of Chinchilla and Miles. The replies to inquiries that I have made at the department's Toowoomba office recently are to the effect that nothing is assured until such time as the new Beattie Government considers these matters in its Budget. I certainly hope that it sees the worth of these projects.

The Premier also made promises today about employment—jobs. It is interesting because, on the very first day of the State campaign, he said, "We will get unemployment down to 5%." I immediately thought of Bob Hawke when he said, "No child will live in poverty by the year 2000", or whenever it was. It rated about the same. So this morning I once again took note of the Governor's Speech. There was not one mention of 5% unemployment; that has been dropped. I listened to the Premier today. He was talking about getting unemployment down and about jobs; he has dropped any mention of the 5%. It has all gone out the door.

A moment ago my colleague the member for Burnett was talking about what we inherited when we came to Government. The ALP inherited from the Ahern and Cooper

Governments a very prosperous State with low unemployment. By the time Labor members had finished with it in six years, the growth was 2.2% and unemployment had jumped by 60%—from something like 8% up to about 12%, I believe.

Mr Slack: Yes.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: The member for Burnett pointed out that, in just two short years we had cranked up State growth to in excess of 4%—we almost doubled the rate of growth in Queensland. I ask honourable members: with those sorts of projects at risk, bearing in mind the sort of performances we saw under the Goss Government only two years ago and also bearing in mind how it stifled growth, how can I as the member for Western Downs express confidence on behalf of the people in Western Downs? I cannot possibly support a motion of confidence in the Beattie Government.

I turn now to the Deputy Premier, who has been talking up all the things he is going to do in terms of State development. I looked at the Courier-Mail on Tuesday this week. I noticed that he was speaking about the Chevron gas pipeline. He has commented that it is going to be the highest priority in terms of State development for this Government. He said—

"It's not just a gas pipeline"—

this is Chevron—

"It is probably the lifeblood for all those communities that have been struggling with very high unemployment rates between the far north and Gladstone."

That is pretty honourable sort of stuff, I suppose, but I am thinking in terms of Western Downs. I am thinking in terms of what we are going to do for our people.

Further on in the article he went on to say that he was reluctant to give total support to the scheme—that is the Surat Basin in my electorate—until the companies involved complete their feasibility studies. That is fair enough. So we will wait until the feasibility studies are over, but it is quite clear that in his own mind, as the member for Burnett said a minute ago, the No. 1 thing for this Government is Chevron without regard for those people who have put in all the money, without regard for all the studies that have been done and without regard for the needs of my people. He talks about it being "probably the lifeblood of those communities that have been struggling". By hell, they are struggling out my way.

I remind honourable members of the contribution made by the new member for

Callide, which was an excellent speech. He pointed out exactly the needs of people in rural Queensland. My constituents face exactly the same problems. For generations we have had hundreds of millions of tonnes of coal lying idle. Only something like 4% or 5% of the water capacity of the Condamine Basin within my electorate is used. The rest of it is going to waste. All at once in a couple of years we get all those things bundled together—all those things can happen—yet I find comments such as these coming from the Deputy Premier. How can I be expected to support a motion of confidence in the Government when it comes up with this sort of performance and it talks down the sorts of things for which we have been crying out for years?

Mr Lucas: You were elected on our preferences.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: About 6%. That is about a 4,000 vote margin. That is all right.

Mr Lucas: You wouldn't be here without our preferences.

Mr LITTLEPROUD: But I am still here.

Mr Lucas interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Mickel): Order! The member for Lytton!

Mr LITTLEPROUD: I turn now to another Minister, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services. Mention was made before by the member for Crows Nest about the initiative of the previous Government with regard to the new correctional facilities that are going to be needed in Queensland. As a Cabinet, we accepted a proposal put forward by the member for Crows Nest. We thought that it was best for regional Queensland—an area of Queensland, especially south-east Queensland desperately in need of some sort of new cash flow—to consider injecting some State Government money not in one place, but possibly three places in south-east Queensland to try to overcome some of that population drift.

I was listening quite intently when the Minister for Police and Corrective Services was interviewed on the radio. He had been talking to the councillors of the Roma Town Council. Other people were ringing in on talkback radio and they were asking him, "What are you going to do?" He said, "I can assure the people of Queensland that I will be giving the taxpayers the best value for their dollars." Honourable members can read into that, of course, that he is going to go for one 600-bed prison rather than three 200-bed prisons. He can go out and defend his assertion that that is the best value for the dollar for the people of

Queensland, but it is not. Other things have to be taken into consideration.

I can understand that the Minister is worried about his own departmental budget and how he is going to do it all and get the best value he can for the department, but the decision is bigger than that. We have a rural area that is suffering a population drift. We need new cash flow to get away from the dependence on agricultural products that the Deputy Premier spoke about earlier today. The Beattie Government should have put a stop to it and said, "These people had foresight; they had wisdom. They realised what needed to be done. Bring some new industry out there. Bring some new Government services out there. Inject some new money into the place."

But the Minister for Police and Correctives Services said he is going to review all those plans. I certainly hope that he listens to the comments that have been made in the Chamber today because we believe that there is a desperate need to take some of this Government money out into those areas that are starving. If we do not put that sort of money into those areas, we are going to be spending money on the relocation of people from those parts of Queensland back into the cities where infrastructure is so much harder and more expensive to put in place. So how can I, as the member for Western Downs, which under the Borbidge Government had the possibility of getting a prison facility at Roma, ever support a motion of confidence in this Government? How can I be expected to go back to the people of Western Downs and say that I stood up and backed the Beattie Government because it looked like it was going to give us some sort of stability—the stability of going backwards.

The next Minister whom I want to talk about is the new Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Natural Resources. I have had a fair bit of experience of fixing up messes over the past couple of years. About two or three days after I became the Minister for the Environment, the new licensing and compliance provisions of the Environmental Protection Act were going to be proclaimed. They would have meant licences for 15,000 individual businesses across Queensland. Local government was in uproar and business was in uproar. In two years I have been able to wind that back so that something like 2,500 businesses will not be paying an annual licence fee. I was congratulated by the Metal Trades Industry Association of Australia and various other industry groups who said, "At least there is some sense, some sanity, coming into it. You are being responsible and

you are being sane." Now that we have the correct policy we find that the Labor Government is going to set up an Environmental Protection Agency. We have to substitute the word "agency" for "authority". I want to ask this question—a question which will be asked when the Budget is brought down: how are we going to get the funds for this Environmental Protection Agency? What part of the Budget that goes to the Department of Environment is going to be transferred to fund a new bureaucracy? Is it going to be at the expense of the clean air strategy for south-east Queensland? Is it going to be at the expense of the endangered species unit? All new administration costs money.

One of the things I have noticed in my 15 years in this House, which covers one six-year term of a Labor Government, is that Labor is great on plans and ideologies, but when it comes to administration and making things work we find that Labor does not work. It is a bit like the Whitlam days. There were all sorts of big ideas but they did not work. I will bet that the people in industry are going to find that, whereas we were reducing the impact of Government on business, they will now be up for new licence fees. If money is not taken from the budget for the Department of Environment we will find that Labor will increase the licence fees. During the election campaign the new Minister also announced that there is going to be a Commissioner for Sustainability. It sounds good. Everyone has been using the word "sustainability" for the past couple of years. We know what it is all about. If a Government is worth its salt it does not need a commissioner to go around and tap people on the shoulder and come back with the ticks and the crosses on a check list. If a Government is good enough it will have been out communicating with the public and taking advice from professionals in its own departments. A responsible Government would know what is sustainable.

Oh no, it is not good enough for the Beattie Government. This Government is going to have a new commissioner. How can I, the person who represents the struggling small businessmen on the Western Downs, support a motion of confidence in a Government that is going to restore the very things I spent two years getting rid of? I was trying to get some relief for small business. How can I be expected to support such a vote of confidence?

The next thing coming forth from the same portfolio is a promise that the area of Queensland held under national parks will

increase from 4% to 5%. The former Minister, Pat Comben, made a big name for himself. He is a hero across Queensland because he took the area of national parks from 2% to 4%. He stands up there like a one-liner. He looks pretty good. I will tell honourable members what I inherited. The Labor Government spent millions of dollars acquiring land but it did not match it with management funds. There was no budget for management. We had feral animals and noxious weeds all over the place. There were places that could not be managed and places where there were no plans. I had just started to overcome what happened when not too much money was spent on the management of national parks. Most of the money went on acquisition. We found that 80% of the budget was going on wages and only 20% on equipment. We had fellows walking around pushing wheelbarrows and driving around in Land Cruisers, but they had no fencing material and no money to conduct surveys. These people were employed to do nothing.

I cranked it back to something like 55% of the total budget was spent on labour and the rest on equipment. Now I find that the Government is going to increase the area of national park in Queensland from 4% to 5%. That represents a 25% increase in acquisitions for national parks in Queensland. I do not think that is very wise at all. Firstly, it is going to cost a hell of a lot of money for the acquisitions. Secondly, do we know that we really need these areas or should we be more selective and pick out only those pieces of biodiversity that are not currently represented in our national parks system? I do not think those opposite have thought about it. It is just a good line. If Pat Comben can go from 2% to 4%, why cannot the new Minister go from 4% to 5%?

I will tell honourable members who has influenced this Government. The Government has been influenced by the Queensland Conservation Council and the conservation lobby. It has been reliably reported to me that, in the days of the Goss Government, the Queensland Conservation Council and a lady called Dr Aila Keto lived in the back of the Minister's office. Those people wrote all the policies and convinced the previous Minister, Molly Robson, that if she put certain things in the people would love her. The Labor Government was not too popular and that Minister did not survive. We have been trying to crank it back ever since. Miss Imogen Zethoven of the Queensland Conservation Council was good enough to say that I was easy to talk to but that I did not seem to take

too much notice of her. She was dead right. I listened to her and dismissed what she said because it was a lot of ratbagery. Now she is back in the door again and she has convinced the new Minister that the area of national park has to be cranked up from 4% to 5%.

The people of Western Downs would reckon I am mad if I give a vote of confidence to the Beattie Government only to see this happen. If it is going to need more money to acquire this extra area, where is the money going to come from in the national parks budget? What will the Government do? Will it let the noxious weeds get out of control? The member for Warrego, the former Minister for Natural Resources, was supplying money to get rid of things such as mother of millions and wild pigs. Those programs will be all gone.

Judging from the performance of the Goss Government of two years ago, and bearing in mind the strategies that Queensland needs and what we put in place over the past couple of years, it is a great tragedy that the people of Queensland made the choice they did and that we find ourselves in this predicament. I totally support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, an amendment to the motion put forward by the Premier. I am so concerned about some of the announcements which have already been made with regard to water infrastructure and the coal potential that we have in the Surat Basin that I believe I can go back with confidence and say to the people of Western Downs that we are being sold a pup. We had the dawning of a new age where we could realise our potential, but it has all gone down the tube. What a pity! The One Nation people sitting at the back of the Chamber did not take that into consideration. They did not think about what is going to happen to Queensland. They came in with a small agenda that completely overlooked the reality of where we are going. Now we are faced with a situation where we are expected to give a vote of confidence in the Beattie Government, and I oppose that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Reeves): Order! Before I call the member for Mulgrave, I remind the House that this is the member's first speech to the House. I therefore ask that everyone affords him the courtesies of the House.

Mr RAPPOLT (Mulgrave—ONP) (10.46 p.m.): Firstly, may I congratulate Mr Speaker on his elevation to the office he now holds. I would like to thank the electors of Mulgrave for giving me the opportunity to voice their concerns in this Parliament. I would

also like to say that the previous incumbent, the former Minister for Family Services, Naomi Wilson, worked very hard for Mulgrave. However, Mulgrave electors were sick of the childish behaviour of the leaders of both major parties. The contempt that the electorate of Mulgrave felt towards professional and recycled politicians is surely obvious. That is why I am here with my One Nation colleagues to clean up the mess.

The electors have sent a strong message to all members of this House to wake up and listen. As I travel throughout the electorate I find that State issues, such as the completion of the Cairns Base Hospital, hospital waiting times, health issues, cane fungus, white fly, public housing, education and especially unemployment are important. But one thing that the voters of Mulgrave are really angry about is the loss of their State rights. They are also angry about Federal issues.

This Parliament now carries a heavy burden of bad government, irresponsible government, insensitive government and distant government—a Government which, by a single and sinister act of misjudgment, has turned law-abiding, honest and patriotic Queenslanders into criminals. They have been turned into criminals without achieving one blow against crime, criminals and corruption. They have been turned into criminals because some distant and devious person in another House and another place decided in his arrogance to reach into this place and deprive honest Queenslanders of their rights, their State's rights and their long-held liberties and freedoms under the great charters of liberty wisely and proudly inherited from Westminster. They created one horrible mess.

One Nation, believing in one nation, united one Australia.

One Nation is here today to clean up that mess—to throw the vilification of the vilifiers back into the faces of the vilifiers and to clean up the horrible mess that they have created. What is more incredible is that those then in this House allowed this man to dictate his unresearched, knee-jerk hysteria, and under sundry threats forced them to surrender and give him his every want.

From the published records, the previous Parliament was united behind the party men and, as such, that entire Parliament stands condemned as vilifiers and engineers of discord and hatred against Queenslanders. This Parliament was not our Parliament but their Parliament—not the Parliament of the people. We are here today to make their Parliament our Parliament—the people's

Parliament—and most certainly they will not like it at all.

Yes, that person in another place turned upwards of one third of all Queenslanders into criminals. And if this is so, how did he in his fondest dreams ever expect to win anything by going to the people on such an issue? It was a Federal issue. The recent Queensland State election was fought on Federal issues. And now that person in another House washes his guilty hands of the entire sordid affair and claims that the recent election was fought on State issues. If they were State issues, then they were State issues that he himself made.

The State Government kowtowed to political blackmail—veiled or not-so-veiled threats to remove subsidies. That was scandalous. One Nation, dedicated to the principle of one nation, comes into this House where we find our cherished States' rights lying in the gutter. That is where we found them. One Nation will pick up the once-proud banner and fly it again proudly to wash away former humiliation, to recover our lost honour, to recover our freedom under a torn and battered Constitution and to put life back into that Constitution by loyalty to Queenslanders—always to Queenslanders—our voters. One Nation is here to clean up the mess. Either we do that now, working together as Queenslanders, or One Nation will do it alone in the not-too-distant future. This is not a threat, it is a solemn promise.

Throughout Queensland today people are criminals—fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, veterans and their sons and daughters, sportsmen and their sons, sons and daughters of soldiers who died for this State—simply because they want to own firearms. Talk about shades of the monster Karl Marx. They all feel betrayed. They feel betrayed by their leaders and vilified unjustly by these same leaders and by a sometimes insensitive and arrogant element within the media, many of whom are simply pushing their own sinister and corrupt agendas. Voters long expected that members here would be their servants. That is not so. They have become their masters. Surely, never in the history of Australia have so many Queenslanders and other Australians been punished and insulted by the Government of the day because of the cowardly act of one depraved man in Tasmania.

In short, One Nation is here today in this House to clean up the mess left by the last Parliament. Our wish is that the integrity and goodwill of Queenslanders will be given back to them. We have a solemn duty to

decriminalise Queenslanders who have been made into criminals for the sin of wanting the right to own a firearm. A great number of Queenslanders have thumbed their noses at the last Parliament, and they voted the way their thumbs were directed. Anybody who denies that really does live with Mr Howard, and that is on another planet. Many have refused to be licensed or registered. Many have buried their firearms for better times. Some, believe it or not, especially in the indigenous community, do not even know that they have to register or be licensed. They are high profile to become the innocent victims of a corrupt and contemptible legislative weapon. We, as responsible legislators, cannot continue to risk the contempt and hatred of Queenslanders by allowing them to remain as legislated criminals just because some headstrong party leader in Canberra had a rush of blood to his head and just wants to push people around. So what do we do?

One of the reasons I came into politics was to make way for the decriminalisation of Queenslanders wrongly criminalised by uncaring and unreasonable laws. I am here to change the law. I am here to reform. I am here because my electors of Mulgrave want change, and they want it quickly. Only One Nation has a reasonable policy on firearms which could be hailed as really Australian—a policy which is in accord with our historic freedoms. The policies adopted by Canberra and forced upon the States are right out of the Godless archives of Nazi Germany and communist Russia. That is what upsets Queenslanders. That is why so many Queenslanders have deliberately ignored the unreasonable laws of the previous Parliament. Yet members of this House passed this incredible piece of injustice so that bureaucrats could profit and the ideologists could pat themselves on their collective back at someone else's expense.

It must be the duty of this Parliament to get the firearms out of the ground and back onto the walls, to remove the incredible penalties for being in possession of antique firearms and to reform with justice so that Queenslanders can again hold up their heads in public and shout, "I'm proud to be a militiaman or reservist in the patriotic sense. I am proud to carry a firearm in defence of my Australia. As was done by soldiers through two world wars, I'm proud of my rights as a free citizen." I believe that it is time that we got back to the essence of being Australian—to give back the fair go and to put aside the garbage that has been forced upon us by distant politicians.

Members of the previous Parliament, controlled by the parties that have not only failed the people but have been seen to have failed the people, have received the shock of their lives. They have suffered the worst fear of all time. They are confronted by One Nation—Queenslanders who are not afraid to call a spade a spade. We are here today because those before us have failed Queensland. We are here to clean up the mess.

We are also here to clean up the mining mess left by the previous Parliament. Government policy over the years has been dramatic. It has gone from the encouragement of mining to the discouragement of mining, and all the old parties are equally responsible. Constituents who live in the Mulgrave electorate and who used to work in the mining industry but are now unemployed have been betrayed by the past Government's attitude towards mining. Everybody has suffered. Today one has to be super wealthy to even think of getting wealth out of the ground.

What an impact mining has had on our society. I ask members to look about them. The majority of material in buildings ultimately come back to mining. The same applies to household assets, clothing, metals and coal. The ground gives up untold wealth, but people in Government today are striving mightily to destroy this wealth. I am old enough and sufficiently involved in mining to identify the forces that are trying to destroy mining in Queensland. That is a topic for another day and another time. We must be aware of the trends or we cannot adopt solutions to reverse those disastrous trends.

The prosperity of mining has flowed into all walks of life—into employment, transport and industry, and even to the local corner store. I ask members to consider what has happened. In the 1930s, the Government paid people to dig holes to prospect for minerals. All a miner had to do was go to a mining warden's office and draw a map, using a scarfed tree as a datum peg. It was simple, easy and efficient. The delay was just one day between discovery and the start of mining. Mining became more difficult in the fifties, and approvals had to be obtained for certain things. But the Government supplied equipment at no cost to assist mining—little things, such as drills, compressors and tractors.

Queensland was born from the mining industry in the latter part of the 1800s and early this century. I recall all of this because I have had some 50 years' experience in

Queensland mining. I made a man's wages panning for gold when I was eight years old. My experience has been at the workface, in the grassroots of mining, and I am proud to say that I have located profitable mines in my life. I have been closely associated with many mines in Australia and have conducted mining ventures in Indonesia, Malaya, the Philippines and New Zealand, where I have successfully located mines.

I have come to this Parliament to clean up the mess. I know that, to 1981, the time between discovery and mining had been extended from three months to six months. Today, one needs to be a surveyor, engineer, accountant, solicitor, environmental auditor and a millionaire to boot just to prospect for minerals. The Parliament has dedicated itself to creating obstacles—native title, restrictive mining regulations, property restrictions, stacks of red tape, charges upon charges and significant delays, sometimes amounting to years—for approvals to mine. There is a total police attitude towards mining, and politicians of the past are directly to blame.

What has been the result? The good prospectors are no longer in Queensland; they have fled overseas. Politicians have worked overtime to export the very people who matter in finding minerals and creating jobs for Queenslanders. The mineral finders have fled to Indonesia, Spain, Nevada, South America, the Pacific Rim, South Africa and, yes, even to Lapland. Shame Queensland, shame! This is the real story that the papers will not print: the flight of brains, wealth makers, industries and jobs all because a gaggle of politicians, both Liberal and Labor, are captive to an economic absurdity that benefits only international monopolists and super-rich bond holders in faraway New York. Again I say: shame.

This Parliament must encourage mining, not destroy it. That tells only some of the story. The cosy club that Labor now leads has lost the war of ideals, issues and policy. They are left with only one policy: the policy of vilification to prevent issues such as corruption, excessive immigration, multiculturalism, failure in Aboriginal funding and land grabs based on race being discussed. Of course, this has all been said in the Sydney Morning Herald when journalist Paul Sheehan dumped a bucket on Labor and exposed its organised vilification network, its strategy of dirty tricks, its strategy to cover up corruption and its organised squandering of taxpayers' money. Shame, shame, shame!

I thank the people of Mulgrave for electing me to this Parliament as their

representative. I pledge to represent them faithfully and fearlessly. I support the amendment moved by the member for Caboolture. Members of this House and residents of Queensland—I come to this House with the realisation that most of us have a very important task to perform. The electors of Mulgrave want to see honesty back in Government. There has been a stench in the air of Queensland of cover-ups and corruption going back at least nine years. The stench has permeated all the way to this House and the Executive arm of Government.

After the Fitzgerald inquiry in 1989, we had high expectations of our Governments, especially the Executive, yet it took only a few months for serious criminality to occur in the Executive arm of Government of this great State. The matter to which I refer is, of course, the premature closure of the Heiner inquiry and the illegal shredding of the inquiry records. Those unthinkable acts were the decision of the February and March 1990 Goss ALP Cabinet. This matter has gone on unresolved for too long. It must be fully investigated and all appropriate charges laid irrespective of the fact that the illegal acts may have been committed by Ministers of the Executive Government of the day. Considering that part of the records related to the severe abuse of children under the direct control of the Executive Government, the destruction of the Heiner documents was an unthinkable act of criminality. The members involved must be held accountable for their deliberate criminal act and they should hang their heads in shame.

How can the Premier, Mr Beattie, rely on the five remaining members of the Goss 1990 Cabinet for support as part of this Government when he, a lawyer, is aware of the implications of the decision to destroy potential court evidence and Government records? My constituents want answers as they have lost confidence in the integrity of Governments that avoid their responsibility to them. The cover-up was possible only through the use of compliant Government officials and legal officers to assist in the deceit that was Shreddergate. Those people must also be held accountable and meet the full force of the laws of Queensland. This issue is not going to go away. Let our justice system prevail and not hinder or restrict access to vital documents to resolve finally this issue. Otherwise Queenslanders will react and react they will in a manner that will only embarrass the Westminster system of government that we cherish. We are here to clean up the mess.

Mr MITCHELL (Charters Towers—NPA) (11.04 p.m.): I rise before this House to speak against the motion of confidence in this Labor Government. I support the amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Surfers Paradise. Before outlining my reasons for opposing the motion, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Speaker on his election to the high and responsible office of Speaker and wish him every success for his time in the chair. I do not envy his task over the coming term of Government. I am sure that Mr Hollis, the honourable member for Redcliffe, will do the job to the best of his ability.

I make special mention of the previous Speaker, Mr Neil Turner. Neil Turner was not only a great mate to all members of the House who spent time with him but also known for his very fair controlling of parliamentary sessions. Former Premiers commended him, saying that he was the fairest Speaker that the House had had in their period, which covered about 10 or 12 years. I express my thanks to him for his support. As mentioned by previous members, Neil Turner seemed to take some of the new members under his wing and teach them a little bit about the parliamentary procedures in order to make them more comfortable and feel at home. That was Neil Turner's way and he was great at it. All of us who had met him could never really forget his vice-like grip.

Mr Palaszczuk: Don't remind us.

Mr MITCHELL: If one did not get a good grip on his hand when one met him, one could not write for a week, so one would not be doing too many speeches.

He will also be remembered for overseeing the refurbishment of the facilities in the complex. They were not brought up to the five-star standards that some certain media outlets have been advocating over the past 12 months or so, but I believe this is a more pleasurable place. As some of the new members will discover, one does spend a lot of time down here. When I first became a member, it was rather drab. Over the past two and a half years, many improvements have been made. I put that down to Neil Turner who got things moving. This is now a much more pleasurable place in which to be. That has all been Neil Turner's work.

Mr Lucas: He did a good job.

Mr MITCHELL: Yes, he did. In speaking against the motion, I do not do so flippantly but out of genuine concern for the State of Queensland, the people of Queensland and particularly my electorate of Charters Towers.

Mr McGrady: Get on to your speech.

Mr MITCHELL: The honourable member will hear it all in a moment. I am concerned because I know what damage Labor did to the State during its last term in office. I fear the damage it will do during this term in office. I know the disregard it held for the sound and responsible financial management of the Queensland finances. I know also the scant regard in which it held the provision of services for rural and regional Queenslanders. It has been mentioned many times tonight—and that is necessary, because it happened during Labor's six years of governance—that courthouses, police stations, railways and schools were shut down in rural and regional towns all over Queensland. That occurred not only in the remote north and the west in electorates such as Gregory, Charters Towers, Mount Isa and Warrego but also in electorates such as Cunningham, Warwick, Mirani, Callide, Fitzroy, Burdekin, Tablelands and others that escaped Labor's city-focused attention. I agree totally with the constituents who said continually that all the money was spent in the south-east corner. That carried on until such times as we changed that around and started looking after all Queenslanders.

Despite the Premier's rhetoric on jobs, jobs, jobs, Labor actually stood for fewer jobs, fewer jobs, fewer jobs. It presided over continuing unemployment levels of over 10%. In fact, Labor contributed actively to the unemployment level by sacking some 6,000 railway workers in the six years.

Mr Johnson: Eight thousand.

Mr MITCHELL: I thank the member for Gregory. The figure is 8,000, which is worse than I originally thought.

Stock inspectors were not seen in our areas. They sacked court officials in areas they did not care about. I know Labor's disregard for providing infrastructure such as roads, rail and water to Queenslanders who live outside the south-east corner. I know the arrogant style of Labor in Government. Its disregard for real consultation was shown during the handling of Eastlink and the introduction of the tree-clearing guidelines. I know the disregard it held for our primary industries, one of our major wealth-generating industries, in its slash and burn management of the Department of Primary Industries. Nearly 700 jobs went from that department in Labor's six years.

I know of the maladministration of Government departments under Labor, as evidenced by the Department of Mines and Energy, which the coalition Government inherited from Minister McGrady. Clearly, the

department had inadequate base funding and each year had to beg for special funding to underwrite its essential core activities. I know the neglect that people in distant and remote areas, such as my own electorate of Charters Towers, suffered under Labor. I know that nothing will change under this Labor Government.

It is clear also that Queenslanders know Labor's record and know that nothing will change this time because, as has been said previously in this House by many speakers, at the 13 June poll fewer than 40% of Queenslanders actually voted for Labor. It is also clear that over 60% of Queenslanders voted for members who sit on this side of the House—a clear rejection of Labor and its failed policies. However, where Labor failed, the Borbidge/Sheldon coalition Government succeeded. The Borbidge/Sheldon Government restored Queensland's financial position with sound and responsible management. Queensland regained its reputation as Australia's low-tax State and the State for business. Numerous major projects and major businesses were secured and facilitated, providing thousands of jobs and flow-on opportunities for Queensland—Century Zinc, the Stuart oil shale project and the Western Mining fertiliser project, to name just a few.

Between 1989 and 1996 under Labor, the unemployment rate shot up to 11%. In the short period of two years, the coalition slashed 3% from that rate and, in the last 12 months of its term in Government, led the way nationally, creating more than one in every two jobs created in Australia. Services were returned throughout Queensland, including the courthouses, schools and police stations that were closed down by the previous Labor Government. The Borbidge/Sheldon coalition Government set about providing major infrastructure throughout Queensland, including much-needed major road projects throughout the State, refurbishing hospitals and building new hospitals. My electorate of Charters Towers benefited greatly from those infrastructure projects, which were well and truly needed. The coalition Government introduced real community and industry consultation at all levels and in all portfolios. It restored the Department of Primary Industries by appointing 600 staff on the ground where they were needed throughout Queensland. In my electorate alone, a clearing dip was established in Charters Towers to service the live cattle export trade instead of farmers having to take their cattle miles away into Townsville to get them cleared. Also, funding

was allocated for the new Primary Industries office and research building at Charters Towers. I certainly hope that that allocation is forthcoming when the Labor Government delivers its Budget, because it is well and truly needed. For about the past 10 years, those officers have worked out of dongas.

The Borbidge/Sheldon Government recognised the needs of all Queenslanders, including those living in remote areas. I would like to list some of the initiatives that came to fruition under the coalition Government: maintaining and strengthening social, cultural and economic infrastructure in regional and rural communities by redirecting services and resources; providing relevant and accurate data to support decision making about regional and rural development; providing better access to markets, particularly in the Asian and Pacific regions, and upgrading the progression of alternative sustainable economic options such as tourism, communications and transport infrastructure; encouraging the use of modern technology to improve communication across the State; providing cost-effective energy sources and infrastructure to make water supplies available; encouraging decentralisation to some industries to provide closer links between primary industries and other sectors of the State's economy, including the processing of rural commodities and natural resources; supporting rural and regional Queenslanders to identify opportunities and constraints to develop community-based solutions to rural and regional problems; and, one of the main ones, focusing on education as a key element in empowering rural and regional communities to bring about sustainable development by providing options for the young to stay and succeed in their own communities, strengthening TAFE centres to expand education options and opening local schools for use by the community for educational purposes.

I turn now to my shadow portfolio of Mines and Energy. I look forward to that challenge and also to my involvement in these two industries, because I believe that they are two of the most important industries in Queensland, maybe in Australia. In this respect, the Borbidge/Sheldon coalition Government also succeeded in delivering for all Queenslanders. It cancelled the ill-placed, irrationally justified Eastlink and replaced it with a properly researched and justified interconnector to be built in a suitable corridor. It also concluded a formal agreement for Queensland to become a member of the national electricity market.

The Borbidge/Sheldon Government developed a blueprint for the future of the Queensland electricity industry. It guaranteed no increases in costs in real terms for domestic consumers; delivered significant savings for industry through the retention of the State's seven existing distributing boards; split the State's major generator, AUSTA Electric, into at least three independent and competing Government owned generators; created three new trading corporations to buy and sell electricity; and reaffirmed the interconnection with New South Wales. The coalition fully implemented all the recommendations arising from the official inquiry into the Moura mine disaster. It also increased the number of mines inspectors from 33 to 44 across the State. The coalition Government finalised details that will result in legislative changes to the Petroleum and Mineral Resources Acts to resolve coal seam methane rights and extraction issues. The Borbidge/Sheldon Government facilitated new mining developments at Ernest Henry, Cannington and Osborne and the expansion of existing activities elsewhere in Queensland.

The agreement to pipe gas to the north west is an economic milestone for the State. It will help to facilitate investment of up to about \$4 billion and export income of up to \$2 billion a year. Supply of natural gas to Mount Isa will enable the conversion of Mount Isa Mine's Mica Creek power station from coal to gas-fired operation and for the expansion of that facility to supply the existing proposed projects at Ernest Henry, Century, Osborne and Cannington mines up in the North West Shelf. Construction of the \$52m north-west Queensland water pipeline project from Lake Julius to the Ernest Henry mine will cater for increased water demand from potential mineral developments in the Mount Isa and Cloncurry regions.

The coalition Government also joined with Ernest Henry Mining and ATSIC to ensure that Aborigines in the north west can participate in the region's major new mining developments. Also, there was the completion of the Epic gas pipeline linking Ballera with an existing pipeline to Wallumbilla, giving security of supply to south-east Queensland. Additionally, connection of the gas reserves in south-west Queensland to the east coast markets has stimulated growth in those markets, with new gas franchises being granted for the Sunshine Coast and Gympie. Franchises were also awarded to the Gas Corporation of Queensland for Maryborough, Hervey Bay and Bundaberg, with gas being supplied by the pipeline to be constructed from Gladstone

South. The Chalumbin-Woree power transmission line near Cairns was constructed. The coalition Government also completed the sale of the State gas pipeline from Wallumbilla to Gladstone to a private operator.

The Borbidge/Sheldon Government fully supported the \$1 billion Century Zinc project and approved the \$30m infrastructure package for gulf communities for the Century mine negotiations. It ordered the Department of Mines and Energy to ensure an enhanced focus on its core functions and responsibilities.

As a Government, the coalition made substantial progress towards the national deregulation of the gas industry and the development of a gas code. The completion of the \$1.65 billion power station at Stanwell provides more power to Queenslanders.

An amount of \$3m has been committed over three years to identify and cap the old abandoned mine shafts in the historic goldmining centre of Charters Towers.

Mr McGrady: Who started the scheme?

Mr MITCHELL: The coalition Government also commenced the \$250m Stage 1 of the Stuart oil shale project. The coalition Government further enhanced the mine capping project. The previous Labor Government may have started the program, but the money was not forthcoming for the next year. The coalition Government put up the \$3m that actually got the project running. I certainly hope the funding is there for next year because the Minister would know the value in capping all of these mines.

Mr McGrady: We are going to start on Charters Towers, too.

Mr MITCHELL: That is what I was saying, but towards the last year of the previous Labor Government, the money drifted away. The coalition Government had to prop up the program with \$3m to actually see it come to fruition.

In principle approval has been given for the extension of mains power to freehold properties north of the Daintree River with an environmental impact study to be carried out. In conjunction with the Department of Environment, a discussion paper was issued and a steering and consultative committee was formed to develop an environmental protection policy for the mining and petroleum industries. The coalition Government also oversaw the significant development of coal seam gas in the Bowen Basin. The Borbidge coalition Government made major gains in resolution of the land management issues between property owners and the coal seam

developers. We also have conducted a health study in the mining industries.

All of these things were implemented in just two and a half years whereas in the preceding six years very little was accomplished by the previous Labor Government. There was a lot of rhetoric and a lot of talk, but there were no bricks and mortar and these things did not get up and running. It was not until we came to power that things started moving. I certainly hope that, now that we have given this Government a start, it might consider—

Mr Johnson: \$6m for a new transmission line between Barcaldine and Longreach.

Mr MITCHELL: That is another one I did not mention. I thank the member for Gregory. I believe, as do a lot of people in the north west, that water and tourism are the future of rural Queensland, especially in my area. I urge this Government to take on board—the Minister is not in the House—the Water Infrastructure Task Force that was set up under our Government about two and a half years ago. I urge the Government to note the categories that it outlined for water projects to develop north and north-west Queensland.

I hear Mr Beattie talking about jobs, jobs, jobs. The feasibility study for Hells Gate dam is actually being carried out now. The site for that project is about 200 kilometres north of Charters Towers. We believe that the employment base that can be generated from this water storage in the areas of horticulture, agriculture or other industry could be anywhere between 3,000 and 10,000 over a period of time. That is just one of the projects.

The feasibility study has already been done on the Richmond dam project, which is a \$128m project. For an area just the size of Richmond we are looking at the potential employment of somewhere between 1,000 and 3,000 people. When and if the money is made available, these projects could be put in place. I urge this Government not to let these projects go, because I think they offer a future for Queensland for many reasons. The produce that would be grown as a result of these projects would benefit Queensland's export industry. They would also be useful for drought proofing on a local level. These are the sorts of projects that we would put in place.

Many checks have been made by all departments of the area, and many things can be grown, even sugar. Whether that would be one I do not know, but it is also suitable for cotton, peanuts and potatoes. You name it; everything can be grown. It is ideal. I think

these sorts of projects have to be kept rolling along, because if they are dropped as a result of any Government strategy or Government mismanagement along the way, they lose track and it could take another six or seven years even to get to the stage we are at now. I urge the Government, the Premier and the Minister to take some of these initiatives on board. This Government has to govern for all of Queensland, and my area really needs this sort of boost.

Tourism in remote areas is definitely growing. The Minister for Mines and Energy, Mr McGrady, will mention a lot of the developments that have taken place over the past, say, six years in Mount Isa. Tourists are now starting to leave the coastal areas and travel along our northern highway and our central highways.

Mr McGrady: Good camel races in Boulia.

Mr MITCHELL: The honourable member did not get a place, but I heard that the member for Gregory got third. I congratulate both members on having a go. I have been to a camel race, but I was not game to get on one.

I know that a lot of money has been spent on promoting tourism in country areas. As I said before, this is the future for a lot of the areas in the north, north west and central west. The roads have improved a great deal and more traffic is actually travelling on those highways these days. We just need a hand to promote what we have to offer tourists, and there is certainly a lot to offer them. There are the fossil fields and the cattle stations where the tourists can stay. There is so much out there to see that I believe it would be of interest to the people of Brisbane, too. However, we tend to target people from places such as Melbourne who may come up to Queensland in the winter months. We have to get our tourism message across to those people.

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—LP) (11.24 p.m.): Firstly, I congratulate all new members of this House. It is eight years ago on Tuesday since I came into the House. A lot seems to have happened in that period of time. I remember my feeling of excitement and awe when I came in here having been elected to represent the people of my electorate of Caloundra, which was then the electorate of Landsborough. It is a great privilege and a great opportunity. I am sure that all the new members realise this.

I also congratulate the new members on their maiden speeches. The first speech is a

very important one. I do not know about their maiden speeches, but mine has been revisited a million times. It was so good that it has been quoted by various members of the Labor Party. I am pleased to see that they read it word for word.

I have now faced four elections. I have been re-elected three times. It is still a great honour and privilege to represent my people—for them to think sufficiently of me to elect me in the beginning and then to re-elect me. I think our fundamental responsibility, regardless of the position that we hold in our State, is to represent our constituents and see that their needs are met and fulfilled. I have certainly endeavoured to do that.

I have been listening to a lot of the speeches tonight, and it seems that what we are really debating is confidence or lack of confidence in this Government. Certainly, if confidence is based on budgetary performance and on costings, then one would have to vote no. I will not go into great detail, but I think it is very important that election promises that were made and funded should be fulfilled and those commitments met, even though a new Government is in place. I would like to think that very much-needed capital works reforms that were put in place in my electorate, and which had certainly been absolutely ignored by the Labor Government when it was in power for six years, will be fulfilled, because they were needs of the people and they were being equitably delivered to that electorate. I am talking about equity in the form of an upgraded hospital, which I had been after for a long time, fully budgeted for \$14.8m; equity in the form of a police station that was being built; and equity in the form of a fire station. The funds are there, regardless of what the current Minister may say, and I intend forwarding her a letter to show just that.

I refer to funding and costing for recreation. The \$3.3m for the Currimundi Recreation Centre was actually in the previous Budget as well as being mentioned in this Budget, so it is totally and fully funded. I also refer to planning money for the upgrade of the highway further from Pierce Avenue out to the Bruce Highway. These are all things that the people justifiably needed but which had not been delivered, and I would not like to think that because there has been a change of Government my electorate would be victimised and these things would not be delivered. Needless to say, I will be following it very clearly and in detail, if necessary in the media. I hope that the incoming Government has

enough sense to deliver on things that are very important for our people.

I would like to concentrate on a few issues that came up in relation to costing, and the facts speak for themselves. The Government is now relying on Treasury. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the officers in Treasury. It is an excellent department. It was very well run under Dr Doug McTaggart. I thank him for the work he did. I cannot imagine the foolishness of this incoming Government to get rid of his services. He could have and would have helped the Government in every possible manner. He is now CEO of the QIC and will do a very good job there for the people of Queensland. I congratulate him on achieving that position against competition. I say to the Treasury officers that without their very good advice it would be impossible to carry out the very important role of Treasurer of our great State of Queensland.

Treasury costed Labor's election promises at \$1.7 billion. This is the Treasury that this Government is now relying on for its information. So if it is going to say that Treasury was wrong in that, is it going to say that they are wrong in the information they are giving it?

It is Queensland Treasury, not KPMG, that is in charge of providing the funding for the Labor promises made during the election campaign and which, I would imagine, Labor will endeavour to try to fulfil. It will not be able to fulfil them, as it knows, because the money is not there. So it is now looking to carve an imaginary black hole in our Budget to say, "That money wasn't there, so we cannot deliver." Of course, the next step is putting up taxes and charges. I say to the people of Queensland, "Be afraid. Be very afraid", because I think that is exactly what is on the agenda.

I wish also to quote from a letter from the Queensland Treasury to the then Premier, which states—

"Dear Premier,

For the purposes of ongoing budget management"—

and Treasury must do this—

"Treasury has been undertaking its own internal costings of Government and Opposition election commitments"—

we were then in election mode—

"over and above those included in the 1998-99 Budget tabled in the Parliament on May 14 1998. These costings have been undertaken with a view to providing

appropriate advice to an incoming Government. This exercise has been based primarily on publicly available or announced sources of information, and it has not always been possible to test the assumptions underlying some commitments."

As I said, those costings came in at \$1.7 billion. We have independent reports to substantiate those costings. Ernst and Young is a very reputable and well-known international firm. Its report also highlighted the deceit that Labor was perpetuating when it came to its election promises, because more than 80 promises uncoded by Labor were not even put into the melting pot for KPMG. Hence they were unable to be coded by the Queensland Treasury or Ernst and Young. That is something that Ernst and Young picked up on. So there are another 80 promises floating around that even Labor did not cost, and those were in addition to the \$1.7 billion in promises that were coded.

In addition—and it will be interesting to see what is in its Budget—Mr Hamill is on record as saying that the Government will not go ahead with our proposed land tax concession. The Government obviously realises that it will need all of that money and it has decided that it will not give land tax concessions to the people of Queensland. There is no way that Labor can fund its massive list of election promises without new taxes, without increasing debt or without raiding the superannuation funds. It will be interesting to see which, if not all, of those tactics it employs. The Government is being very unfair in not delivering on the land tax concessions. Land tax is not a tax on the wealthy, although many members opposite claim that it is. Land tax affects many people who own a piece of land other than that associated with their home. That will impact on small businesses. Even though land tax cannot be put in a lease—

Mr Davidson: Small businesses pay the land tax.

Mrs SHELDON: Exactly. Small businesses pay land tax, as Mr Davidson, the former Minister, knows. That is in the oncosts that are included in the leasing charges. It is an absolute nonsense to say that it does not affect small business; of course it does. That cost then flows on as an oncost to the consumer of whatever consumables are produced by a business.

It should be noted that the property industry collapsed under the previous Labor Government. Labor is targeting it again. One

might think that it had learnt its lesson, but evidently it has not. There has been a lot of talk about jobs and the 5% unemployment target that Mr Beattie seemed to pull out of the sky. If the property industry collapses, as a spin-off a lot of Queenslanders will lose their jobs. It is certainly the thin end of the wedge. It will be interesting to see how long it takes for Mr Beattie to introduce his promised tax on fuel.

I now wish to read into Hansard the Ernst and Young letter supporting what it said about Labor's costings. It states—

"We have completed our review of Queensland Treasury's report on its costings of Australian Labor Party election commitments. Our report is attached.

Our findings can be summarised as follows:

The methodology applied by Queensland Treasury in the costings of ALP election commitments appears reasonable.

The Queensland Treasury costings total \$1.73 billion over the next three year parliamentary term based on the assumed implementation dates.

The ALP will have access, as the Coalition parties will, to the additional funding sources of \$190 million."

Those were the additional funding sources with which we funded our election commitments and which totalled about \$182m. The letter continues—

"There is an amount of \$1.54 billion in respect of Australian Labor Party commitments costed by Queensland Treasury which will not be met by identified additional fundings."

Subsequent to that letter, we found that there was an extra amount of money, which brought it up to \$1.7 billion. I am very happy to table that letter—and I do so—so that members can see the reality.

The fact is that we had an honest Budget. It had a cash surplus of only \$3m. Undoubtedly, the election spree that we saw from Labor puts that Budget at risk. It will be very interesting to see what is cut. I understand that capital works will be cut. I have also heard that capital money will be used for recurrent expenditure. We know who did that before. That was done by the Premier, Mr Beattie, in respect of the Health budget. That has all been done before. We will have to see what happens this time around.

Much mention was made of the GFS surplus. An Ernst and Young review highlighted the dangers of Labor's plan to utilise the Government finance statistic surplus of \$476m to fund its election promises. That is one of the things that it put into the pot. The Ernst and Young review states that the GFS surplus, together with one-off funds from equity transactions, is committed to the payment of Government debt obligations and the funding of Government superannuation liabilities. It states that any further use of these funds would therefore increase State debt or create an unfunded superannuation liability. That would affect the security of every public servant in this State. That cannot and must not be done. Labor did that in the southern States and Federally. We must not allow it to raid that fund here.

These are also job-killing alternatives, and yet we still hear the Premier talking about job creation. He cannot have his cake and eat it too. He cannot create jobs but slash the initiatives that are creating jobs in the community. I reiterate that the table tells us that the additional funding sources that the Treasury found amounted to \$190m and that our total spending for our election initiatives was \$182.6m, which was much more realistic than the \$1.7 billion in commitments by Labor.

Much has been said about the KPMG report on Labor's costings. I certainly hope that the member for Nicklin has read that report, because he would not have a briefing from Treasury on our costings, even though one of the major reasons he cited for his confidence in this Labor Government was that it could deliver on its commitments. He did not really want to find out whether it could deliver fully. He needed to have both sides of the question in order to come to that conclusion. Unfortunately, he had only one side.

Interestingly, today there was much ranting from the Labor side about a black hole left in our Budget. However, KPMG documentation states—

"We also note that their projections are prepared on a no change policy basis and that the programs of the current Government are fully funded."

Our Budget—a fully funded Budget—got a tick from the people who verified the Labor Party's sources.

I now wish to draw attention to what has been said today by Mr Bredhauer about the Pacific Highway project and the so-called shortfall of \$120m. There is no shortfall, as he knows. This is again part of the build-up in relation to the black hole that we are hearing

about from the other side. There was much talk about a \$120m shortfall on the Pacific Highway project on the basis of a so-called Treasury briefing note, which I note is unsigned, undated and, to quote Peter Morley from the Courier-Mail, "quite bewildering and contradictory".

If there is a budget shortfall, the Transport Minister, Steve Bredhauer, and his department obviously do not know about it. He has contradicted himself today—and I have his media release here—in quoting a \$750m Pacific Motorway project. That \$750m includes the \$120m. If we turn to the capital outlays in the area of transport, which he obviously has not done at this stage, and if we look at what the program statement originally said, we see mention of the impact management plans for the \$630m Pacific Motorway upgrade. If we then look in the capital outlays we see the Brisbane-Logan Motorway listed as costing \$300,000, and the Moreton-Logan Motorway construction—six to eight lanes—as costing \$450,000. The details are there. That comes to \$750,000. The \$120m is there. In fact, it is listed as \$119.875m. The \$120m is there, so I suggest that members opposite try to find another black hole because that one will not stack up. Although Steve Bredhauer is not in the Chamber at the moment, I suggest that Government members pass on that gleeful information to him.

I am absolutely astounded that the Labor Government is going to scrap Briztram on the trumped-up assumption that we were going to use old trams. It knows that that is a fundamental untruth, and I am amazed that the Premier would go on the ABC radio this morning and actually articulate that. But may I add that Mr Beattie supported this project when he was in Opposition. This was a \$220m project which we, the coalition Government, had developed specifically to obtain the \$65m in Federal funding from the Centenary of Federation Fund. The Prime Minister had said that so much money would be allocated to Queensland. One of the projects needed to be a central project that would benefit the majority of the population and the other must be for regional Queensland. So Briztram qualified for the first and the Heritage Trail funding qualified for the second.

It was a well thought out plan; it was not rushed together. It had to compete with many other initiatives that were put forward by other Governments, other Federal members and members of Parliament. It was a project which would have required only \$35m of State funding, yet would have brought in over \$100m of private enterprise funding and \$65m

of Federal moneys. Private enterprise was very interested. I just wonder what it now thinks about doing anything with this incoming Labor Government, which has totally undermined private sector confidence in putting in bids for public sector infrastructure.

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mrs SHELDON: Why would they bother? When we came in last time, they said to us, "There is no point in dealing with Government because we come here with the ideas and the funding, and nothing happens." Under us it did happen, and this was a classic example of that. The air/train/city link was another. I wonder what the Government is going to do with that. That project is totally privately funded; there is no risk to the Government.

Here again we have a project which would benefit a great number of people with most of its funding being either Federal money or private money. It is \$35m in the extreme, and \$32m is actually in the Budget. So that is another \$32m that the Government has to play around with and that it is not going to give to the people of this State and the people of Brisbane. I do not know how the Labor members in Brisbane are going to face up to this fact. I suggest that they seriously look at it.

For this small investment of \$35m, this project could have revitalised Brisbane. It would have created 3,000 jobs during the construction phase alone and many more after that. Despite the fact that over 3,000 jobs are at stake and to appease the member for South Brisbane, which is why this has been done, who was worried about a bridge linking South Brisbane with the university, and to appease the Brisbane City Council—Government members are now all matey with Jim, I see; I do not know how long that will last—this Government destroyed the proposal. It threw away 3,000 jobs and forfeited \$65m in Federal funding. That is quite the most stupid thing that I have ever heard for a long time.

As for the city council, it is clear that the spotlight of public scrutiny will have to shine very brightly on Lord Mayor Soorley and his colleagues. The extent to which he was determined to destroy Briztram has, I suspect, very much to do with his short-sighted desire to prevent any competition with the existing Brisbane bus service. There is a clear conflict of interest which should be further explored in the coming months. The Premier in this House in November and as late as May this year announced his support for Briztram, so what total hypocrisy! When we were in Government we called him "Backflip Beattie", and here it is in reality.

Mr MALONE (Mirani—NPA) (11.44 p.m.): Before speaking to the motion of confidence, I would like to congratulate all the new members who have graced this House on its sitting and congratulate them on gaining a seat in this Parliament. I would just like to reassure them that the privilege they have of joining this Parliament is great. It is something that they need to take into consideration when they work around their electorate and understand that the position of a parliamentarian is not all that it seems sometimes.

As Russell Cooper has said, quite often it takes a very heavy toll on our families, our children and our loved ones. Often the role of a parliamentarian is not as clear cut as we would all like to see. Sometimes the decisions we have to make as we move into this role are not those we would like to make. I can assure the new politicians in this House that I am aware that they will have to make those decisions, and I hope that they are able to do that with the good grace of being a politician. I can recollect the time that I made my maiden speech, and I can assure honourable members that it was a difficult time, and I was very proud to do that. I am sure that most of the new members here tonight who have made their maiden speeches and those who will make them later are also very proud to be able to do that.

It was towards the end of May in 1994 that I joined the esteemed members in the House. In actual fact, I faced three elections in four years, so I would assume I am well equipped to handle an election. I have to say that this last election was one of the most difficult elections that I have seen simply because almost all of the issues that were raised around the electorate were not of the State's doing. Indeed, just about every issue that came before me in my electorate was to do with a Federal issue. It was a very difficult election to actually get a grip on because we were not really equipped to handle the questions relating to the Federal Government.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would ask that you pass on my best regards to Speaker Hollis. He is certainly going to have a different and difficult role in this new Parliament. I would like respectfully to offer my best wishes to Neil Turner for the great role that he played in this House over a long period of time. In my younger days I can recollect Neil Turner as the Primary Industries Minister who travelled extensively throughout Queensland, trying to get some answers in regard to the sugar industry. I remember Neil pulling his hair out quite frequently in trying to understand the

sugar industry. Those members who deal with the sugar industry would understand that its members have differing views according to where they come from. Quite often the views of the northern canegrowers are quite different from those of the southern canegrowers. When one is trying to deal with that as a State issue, it becomes very difficult.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr MALONE: As I say, growers are different and the sugar industry is one of those industries that also has a manufacturing component, which makes it even more difficult. I have to say that Neil held that position with great esteem and he was well regarded. Even though he had some difficulties in handling it, he was held in high regard by the industry. I had travelled in recent times with Neil. He is always a very gracious and great man to travel with. He is a great bloke. The work that he has done in this Parliament over the past couple of years surely would invoke in honourable members a great respect for him. This Parliament should certainly be very appreciative of the work that Neil Turner has put into this House.

It gives me no joy to speak to this confidence motion tonight that is before the House. I served as a proud member of the coalition Government for two and a quarter years. I believe we achieved so much for the State of Queensland in that period of time and I believe we are ready to do it again or to continue doing it. In just two and a quarter years, the State of Queensland moved forward productively and innovatively in a mode in which enormous inroads were made into many areas that I would like to detail.

I believe that many of the achievements that we gained in Government were of great benefit to my electorate and the central Queensland region which I represent. We had tremendous infrastructure development—roads, bridges, highways and, in particular, the start of the small boat harbour in Mackay, which had probably been on the books for 30 years or more. We had water conservation projects such as dams, weirs and innovative work in regard to grey water use and such things. These were coming on line. We had hospital and health related services that were coming on stream. We had transport infrastructure development.

In the area of law and order we introduced tougher legislation. In the short time during which we were in Government we dealt with the four large Acts which handle law and order, and I refer to the Criminal Code, the Juvenile Justice Act, the Police Powers

and Responsibilities Act and the Penalties and Sentences Act. These were the four cornerstones of the Coalition Government's law and order platform.

Russell Cooper was exclusively responsible for supplying increased police numbers. Police numbers were massively increased right throughout Queensland. The establishment of the Police Academy at Townsville had a great bearing on this increase. It was a great step in the right direction. We needed to get those police officers out on the street as quickly as possible.

In the area of education, the coalition Government supplied additional teachers, new schools and increased resources. This all augured well for the young in our community. We had funding to rural communities for water supplies and sewerage works. In my electorate, we had halls and sporting infrastructure to communities with fewer than 10,000 people. In Emergency Services we saw a massive increase in the number of units and the amount of equipment supplied to rural fire brigades. This was due to the hard work of my colleague former Minister Veivers. This was combined with additional equipment and manpower in both the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority and the Queensland Ambulance Service. The list goes on, but I will not continue because it has been outlined by previous speakers.

Before a Government can have the confidence of this Parliament it must show integrity. It must have the ability to listen and deliver to all Queenslanders. The key word is "all". For six long years—from 1990 to 1996—regional communities, such as those in the Mirani electorate, played second fiddle to the major metropolitan areas. As has been mentioned, we suffered loss of services with the closure of railway stations, courthouses and rail services and the loss of railway jobs.

In 1995 Queenslanders lost faith in the Goss Government and they showed that loss of faith overwhelmingly. Again in 1998 the voters showed that they had no faith in the Labor side of politics with less than 39% voting for Labor. In the 1995 election the coalition held Government with 54% of the vote.

Some of the significant achievements of the coalition Government occurred in the area of primary industries. Under the Labor Government the Department of Primary Industries was gutted. Research and extension staff were slashed by almost 700 full-time positions in six years. What an abhorrent disregard for an industry that is the

economic backbone of this State. Billions of dollars of income are attributable to primary industries right throughout Queensland. In just over two years, the Borbidge coalition was able to redress the situation in the Department of Primary Industries by employing almost 600 full-time staff, with more to come. This occurred because we recognised the importance of primary producers and the need to look after their livelihood and their families. The Government was able to create jobs in areas where quite often there were no jobs.

Three successive Budgets increased the DPI budget. That action has increased morale no end. A rural industries export development unit was established to help existing and new primary industries maximise our enormous export potential. Just some of those included the development of aquaculture and small crops. We set up industry-based institutes for forestry, food and technology, horticulture, farming systems, beef, sheep and wool, pigs, dairying and poultry.

One of the major achievements of the coalition was handing back the bulk sugar terminals to the sugar industry. This was something that Labor was not able to do in six years, even though Labor made the commitment in 1990 under the changes to the Sugar Industry Act. Ed Casey, as Minister for Primary Industries, was never able to do that. It was very fortunate that the coalition was able to pull all that together and make it happen. It is one of the cornerstones of the sugar industry that the industry now has full access to the wharves.

With an eye to being world leaders in climate research, the coalition set up the Centre for Climate Applications, which will study the most advanced forecasting methods with a view to assisting primary producers. The implementation of export parity pricing for the sugar industry was also a great step. The guarantee of single desk selling for Queensland sugar was something that went against the competition policy with which we are now faced, but the sugar industry has done it. This is a cornerstone in ensuring that the sugar industry will continue to play a major part in Queensland's economy.

The coalition introduced new planning legislation which ensured the existing rights of farmers against potential urban encroachment were preserved. The Integrated Planning Act put in place sensible development plans which are critical for the future of our rural and urban development.

The coalition understood the absolute need for water if our primary producers are to

succeed and grow. During the worst drought ever in Queensland, the Goss Labor Government spent a record low on developing future water infrastructure to minimise the effect of drought. The coalition responded quickly and implemented a \$1 billion 12-year water infrastructure program. This was matched by a further \$1 billion in private investment.

In the Mirani electorate these benefits had already started to flow through with the raising of the Dumbleton Weir near Mackay. The storage of the weir was increased by 4,000 megalitres. We had in place the development of feasibility studies for the Finch Hatton dam. Sadly, this has been axed by Labor already, even before the studies were completed. We also had further studies into the St Helens dam site and the raising of the Kinchant Dam. I hope the Labor Government is able to progress those through to completion.

The coalition helped farmers with the establishment of the water development incentive program, which provided a 22% subsidy for on-farm irrigation storage costing \$200,000 or more. We had an election commitment to reduce this threshold to \$75,000 to make access for cane farmers and smaller operators much easier. This was well received right throughout Queensland and it would have been a great achievement. It would have enabled smaller sized farms to develop their own irrigation supplies. Most farmers throughout Queensland were excited about this initiative. I hope that the new Government will follow it through.

If ever there was a case of inheriting a rotting carcass, it was when the coalition took over the Health portfolio in 1996. The Health budget was increased from \$2.7 billion in Labor's last term to \$3.6 billion in the coalition's 1998-99 Budget. This included an \$85m boost to mental health funding. In 1996, the State Government embarked on a massive \$2.4 billion capital works program to redevelop the State's 125 public hospitals and community health centres. Within the Mirani electorate alone this included a \$26m redevelopment of the Mackay Base Hospital and a \$600,000 upgrade at the Sarina Hospital. The upgrade at the Sarina Hospital included a rehabilitation unit which was one of the very few places in Queensland where accident and stroke victims could get back on their feet and return to a decent style of living. This project is almost complete and, hopefully, it will continue. In 1995, Queensland had the worst Category 1 waiting times of anywhere in

Australia. Now we have the best. The coalition delivered more than 1,400 extra doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and other health worker positions throughout Queensland.

In Education, our Leading Schools program is about performance, not mythical elitism, as the new Minister suggests. It is about encouraging schools to strive for achievement. Leading Schools was about community input and about local school communities having a say. The Walkerston State School was one of the first Leading Schools in my electorate. It gained many benefits through that program.

Mr Fenlon: Tell us about the schools that missed out.

Mr MALONE: All schools are now going to get this program, and they will all be mediocre schools. Instead of trying to strive, they will all be the same. That is great!

The coalition approved 28 new schools right across the State, including Marian and Beaconsfield in my Mirani electorate. We have two new schools that will be ready to commence in the 1999 school year. They will be state-of-the-art schools with all the latest technology. The coalition increased the Education budget by 15%, representing \$440m and an extra 1,022 teachers. It introduced postgraduate teacher scholarships to encourage the very best people to become specialist teachers in many needy areas. It assisted up to 900 teachers across the State by extending the Remote Area Incentive Scheme to teachers. That scheme was aimed at attracting and keeping quality teachers in non-metropolitan areas.

As to Emergency Services—I am pleased to be the Opposition shadow spokesman for Emergency Services. I recognise the work of the previous Minister for Emergency Services. He certainly made an outstanding effort—in contrast to Labor's bad management of that portfolio. One of Labor's first election promises was free ambulance services to pensioners. All the election hype has suddenly come home to haunt the Premier and his new Minister. The first action in this portfolio has been to delay that promise and put it back to 1 January 1999. It is quite disappointing from my perspective that the elderly in our community have been deceived in this manner. It is a real pity. Many elderly people in my community voted Labor simply because they knew that they were going to get free ambulance services.

Mr Briskey: And they'll get it.

Mr MALONE: That is fine. But this Government has broken its promise. That is the most important part.

It is a pity that Labor has chosen to target this portfolio as a pretext for why it will not be able to fund its election promises. Barely is the seat warm and the Minister and the Premier are claiming that there would be a \$6m hole in this budget. The new Minister has brought pure politics into the debate. It is a tragic pity that the previous Minister put the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority board in place to stop this political bias. This is a very convenient excuse to try to brush off an election debt—a debt which the Treasury itself had predicted Labor's promises would create.

Already the games are being played by the Premier and this Minister through distorting and questioning the integrity of management, which has resulted in a declining morale within the department. This is a tragedy, as the coalition Government worked hard to restore the waning morale and the shattered public image of emergency services that existed under the Goss Government for many years. Instead of making insinuations, instead of whingeing and whining, the coalition got on with the job. We were a Government that exceeded expectations. We exceeded our own promises, and we delivered.

Time expired.

Mr ELLIOTT (Cunningham—NPA) (12.04 a.m.): Firstly, Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your elevation to that position. I have worked with you on the Public Accounts Committee, and I believe that you will be able to do the job pretty well. We all look forward to seeing how that goes.

I agree with some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition. I accept with some grace—although it might be a bit difficult at times—the numbers that we have been dealt in this House. I believe that we all have to learn something from it. I have taken on board the message, and I believe that anyone who does not take that message on board is a fool. Quite frankly, the public have had enough, particularly in regard to political correctness and the level playing field, which does not exist. No-one would like to operate on a level playing field in respect of farming more than I would, if there were such a thing. It would be a great thing worldwide if it were to exist. But it does not exist. We all have to accept that that is the reality.

If anyone has any doubts that the National Party is alive and well and is keen to represent rural electorates, then I suggest that

they read the speech of the new member for Callide. I thought that it was the outstanding contribution here tonight. What I liked about it was that it came from the heart. The member delivered it with conviction. He believed what he was saying. I believe that, when they read his speech or hear about it, the electors within the electorate of Callide will realise that he is keen to get out there and represent them.

I have looked with interest through some old records and press cuttings, and I read an article about a lot of farmers who actually blocked a train. I thought that was rather an interesting operation.

Mr Littleproud: You would have recognised their names.

Mr ELLIOTT: I recognised a few of their names; that is right. It was a little bit like what the French farmers did. Quite frankly, I think that we are all too tame.

Mr Purcell: You want to go on strike, brother, and get a bit of guts.

Mr ELLIOTT: I believe that we could learn from old "Cement Boots" over there. We need to liven up the whole show, because it is a bit tame. They all play us off a break and say, "We will do this for you and we will do that for you". However, at the end of the day, they do not do much for us at all. If we were a hell of a lot more militant and we stood up for ourselves and were prepared to fight a little bit harder, then perhaps we might get somewhere.

I know what the question is that members are discussing here tonight. It is whether or not we agree with this vote of confidence in this, the latest ALP Government to come along. Of course, this one is propped up slightly. Over a long period I have watched a large number of Labor Governments come and go—both Federal and State. I will give members a rough scenario of what one Federal Labor Government achieved, particularly for its own supporters. I hope that this Government will be better than that.

The first thing that Government did was to say, "We will float the dollar." We all thought that that would be all right; we would have a free dollar, and we would have some real private enterprise. That is what we were all about. But that Government did not float the dollar. Instead, it nurtured it, played around with it, poked it and prodded it and, in the end, interest rates rose to around 24%. I was paying penalties of 24.5%. So effectively I had to just about buy my property again every four years. That was particularly helpful! It pushed my overdraft up like members would not believe. I was not a great proponent of that

Government's fiscal abilities. I thought it was pretty ordinary.

The people who thought that Government was more ordinary still were the battlers in my electorate, particularly in places such as Kingsthorpe and Gowrie Junction, where there were many young married couples living in their own houses. Interest rates went up so high that, in the end, they were all tipped out of those houses. They took their keys back and put them on the table of the real estate agent, the bank or whoever they borrowed the money from and said, "You can have the house because we cannot afford to make the payments." What was the next scenario after that? Because the start-ups for housing and units were so slow and there were so few of them, we immediately had a housing crisis. There was not enough housing for people to rent. Therefore, because there was not enough rental housing—surprise, surprise—the rents increased, and the people who had been tipped out of their houses finished up in caravan parks. Members opposite are the supporters of the battlers. They are supposed to look after the battlers. They work for the battlers.

Mr Littleproud: What about Tom Burns and the Home Ownership Made Easy Scheme?

Mr ELLIOTT: I will come to him. I have his name in my notes. Do not worry about him.

Over the years, I have found that, unfortunately, Labor is a Trojan Horse in relation to looking after the people whom they are supposed to support. I have to say that the Federal guys have been worse—even the new blokes. This is an amazing issue.

Let us consider the State Goss Labor Government, the last Queensland Labor Government. We had a fair degree of ability to watch and take in what it was doing. What did it do for us? It absolutely gutted the bush—rural and regional Queensland. It took the courthouses away. It took 690-odd DPI staff away. Just about every service in the electorate of Cunningham disappeared off the face of the earth. It took the former member for Barambah, followed by the member for Hinchinbrook, to gradually restore the DPI staff.

Mr Palaszczuk: And what's John Anderson done to you?

Mr ELLIOTT: I will come to him. Do not worry about him. I will suggest what the Minister can do to fix a few of his problems. I do not think he is much more popular than members opposite were.

It will be interesting to see what goes on. I will touch also on some of the other Goss Labor Government initiatives in relation to the railways. We had a very good example in my area of their wonderful economic ideas. They decided to close the railway line. It was obviously uneconomic to spend \$1m to fix the railway line between Toowoomba and Cecil Plains. A lot of grain is grown there and a hell of a lot of grain used to be freighted by rail to the port. They decided to close that railway line. That seemed like a smart idea; it was obviously inefficient! What did they then do? They loaded up thousands of trucks onto the road.

For 10 years Peter Taylor, the Shire Chairman of the Jondaryan Shire Council, members in adjoining electorates and I had battled to obtain the money to fix the Cecil Plains Road from Toowoomba. It was two lanes. That is not two lanes as other members would think of two lanes. When I talk about two lanes, I mean a dual carriageway, not like the three and four lanes down to the Gold Coast. We were very pleased with the good road to Cecil Plains. Labor whacked all those trucks on that road. As a result, three things happened. The trucks wrecked the road. The trucks that used to cart to Cecil Plains, Norwin and the silos in between decided that it would be easier to go over to Brookstead. The roads there had been improved also. Whereas it used to take about a quarter of an hour to get a truck through at Brookstead, as a result of the increased truck traffic it then took about five hours to get a truck through. At Malu, where I mostly used to deliver my grain, it took about four times as long to deliver one's grain.

All of those trucks were going on roads that were unsuited to the size of the loads and the trucks that were travelling on them. Labor's supposed economic decision to close the railway line, in effect, wrecked the roads. Those are the sorts of decisions that members opposite are so good at making. I ask: why should I support Labor tonight? Is it different from the Goss Labor Government? Will we see a whole new ball game? Will we perhaps see some courage from the members opposite?

The member for Inala mentioned John Anderson. I was with John Anderson on Monday. I did not make myself tremendously popular with John Anderson because I asked him a question in relation to Coles, Woolworths and Franklins and the pig industry. I am sure some of the gentlemen behind me on the backbenches know about the pig industry. What is going on in the pig industry today is an abject disaster. I will not stand up

and support my Federal counterparts in that regard. The beef industry says that the Government should not help the pork industry, because if it fiddles with the tariffs or reduces the quota of pork from Canada, Canada will reduce the beef quota. The beef quota has not been filled in an age anyway. One cannot compare apples with eggs. The pork producers cannot turn the pigs out into the back paddock to see whether they will survive until the end of the drought as some people in the far west do with their sheep and cattle. It does not work like that. Perhaps the blokes who grow their own grain have some chance. Their costs may be as low as \$1.60 a kilogram to \$1.74 a kilogram. Those who do not produce their own grain and have to buy in feed would probably be paying \$2 a kilogram or more. If they are paid \$1.50 a kilogram for their pork, how long will it take them to go broke? One does not need to be a wizard in the economic stakes—one does not even have to be as good as Paul Keating—to work out that that is not going to be a very good exercise.

Will members opposite show some courage and stand up and do something about the National Competition Policy? We have had it fed down our necks for five years. We have had it held as a gun to our heads. It has been said, "If you do not do this, you will lose your \$800m." Quite frankly, I think we should tell them to put the \$800m where the traditional monkey did.

Mr Palaszczuk: What did you do in Government?

Mr ELLIOTT: Labor members have the opportunity to do something and demonstrate that they will show some courage. They have never showed any courage before. I hope that this time they will show some courage. It will be very interesting to see whether they do. If they do not, there will be no pig industry. There will be three, four or five big players in the whole show. If one considers the industry now, one will see that 84% of the pork that is going onto the shop floor is going through Coles, Woolworths and Franklins. That would not be allowed in America in a fit. The antitrust laws would block that straightaway. They would not allow one operator to have more than 30-odd per cent.

On Monday, I told John Anderson that those people are colluding. They may not be actually getting in a room and saying, "This is what we will pay." However, they say to the pig producers, "If you don't take this price, the bottom line is that we will buy in the Canadian pork. Never mind that it is more expensive

than we can buy your pork now; we will buy some more of that pork." That is what they did. None has come in since November. However, all they have to do is hold that sword over the heads of the pork producers and say, "If you do not accept our price, we will buy that other pork." That is totally un-Australian. Never mind what party we are in, collectively we should all be fighting together to stop those people doing that sort of thing. It is unreasonable. It is not a fair go for anyone. It is up to the members opposite to show some intestinal fortitude and do something about it. Labor has not shown a lot of intestinal fortitude in the past. It will be interesting to see what we are going to be up against.

Perhaps I did not read the Governor's Speech correctly. I took notes throughout the speech and I have read it again. It appears to me that Labor intends to knock off some of our water programs. Hell's bells! How long did it take us to get them up and running? The Minister is indicating that he does not think that is the case. I hope he is right. I would not like to think that we have traded all those potential jobs that would get this State up and rolling for an integrity commissioner. That is the sort of stuff that members opposite are really good at. They will run off the back of good old Fitzgerald again.

We will have another lot of committees and people to tell us how to suck eggs and how we should or should not do things. By this time the members opposite should have worked out how to run a Cabinet with some integrity. They have either got it or they have not got it. Members opposite cannot legislate for morality and they cannot legislate for ethics. They have either got it or they have not got it. Believe me, an integrity commissioner will make no difference whatsoever to how the members opposite behave. They will either behave well or they will not. So we will watch with great interest to see just how the members opposite run things.

At this stage, I am afraid that I am of the opinion that the members opposite have not changed a lot. They appear to be much the same as the previous Labor Government. I hope that I am going to be proven wrong and that they are going to stand up and be counted. In particular, I hope that they are going to do something for rural and regional Queensland. If ever there was a need for some assistance and for some real courage to be demonstrated by members of a Labor Government, it is right now. They have the opportunity to stand up and be counted and do something about the problems in rural

areas. If they do not, then we will not have a handful of farmers left.

The indebtedness of rural Queensland and other parts of rural Australia has to be seen to be believed. Members should look at what has happened below the border and now along the border with the floods. I can take members to meet people who have just lost \$1m worth of wheat. They have overdrafts that they cannot jump over. One does not have to be terribly smart to know what the outcome of all of that is going to be. We are going to see another disaster. There is flood after flood. Down around that Walgett/Come By Chance area, three lots of floodwater have come one after the other. Those crops have been totally under water for weeks. As members know, no crop can withstand that. So I urge members opposite to give some support to the rural and regional areas of this State and to stand up to the Federal people and be counted.

Mr Purcell: Stand up to Howard.

Mr ELLIOTT: Too right! Stand up to Howard on this National Competition Policy because it is a load of rubbish.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the member for Burdekin, I advise that this is the member's first speech. I ask that members afford him the courtesies of the House.

Mr KNUTH (Burdekin—ONP) (12.23 a.m.): The politics of trouble got me into politics in Queensland, but I never really expected to be here so soon. It would be remiss of me not to thank the politicians of the last Parliament for making such a mess of things that the people of my electorate gave them a big kick in the pants and put me in Parliament instead. I thank my electors for their endorsement. I also thank them for their perception and wisdom in giving me the opportunity to represent them in this House. I pledge to put them first in all things: to listen to their wants and to represent them faithfully in this Parliament. If John Howard threatens me—threatens me with hardship and penalties to get his own way, threatens to put my electors last, I will tell him to take a long walk off a short pier. I will tell him that I put my electors first, that I put Queensland first.

Queensland is under siege. It is beset with conflict and disharmony. It was this rising tide of trouble that attracted me into politics in the Burdekin. As a teen, I was like most teenagers. I could not care less about politics, largely because the politicians I knew were politicians who I could trust to do the right thing by me. But by the time I turned 20, things had changed dramatically. The country was in turmoil, as was the State and, most

importantly, our communities were being savaged by insurmountable problems. Things were changing for the worse. Morally, conditions were in a dive. There were fractious laws—petty laws. Laws to control people and limit freedom were emerging everywhere—restricting fishing, frustrating shooting, making life miserable for everyone except for the mushrooming bureaucrats.

I do not recall being asked at any time if I wanted all of these restrictions. Nobody else was asked either. Politicians just imposed restrictions on freedom. They knew what was best. Increasingly, people have found that if they did anything, they were breaking the law. For me, the firearm laws were the last straw.

I took a keen interest in Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Joh listened to the people while others, especially those who followed him, only regulated the people. Some people begrudged Sir Joh's success. They were lesser men, greedy men and ambitious men who were frustrated that Sir Joh really represented truth. When the Queensland Nationals sacked Sir Joh, they destroyed an entire generation's trust in that party. Let us be blunt about Sir Joh: Labor never defeated Sir Joh; it could not and never did. It was the Nationals themselves who defeated Sir Joh. They plunged the knife into Caesar and as a direct consequence they began the long slide into the hole that they now find themselves in. They have a long way to go before they hit the dark, deep bottom of the pit they dug for themselves.

My constituents were really upset about the firearms hysteria and the ridiculous laws that followed. Arguments for such laws verged on the crazy, ridiculous and absurd. Many voters began to question the motives of the parties in power. The parties seemed more interested in the opinions of foreigners or members of other parties than they were in the wants of their own members—of Australians. They fawned on foreign policy, globalisation, multinationals, Asia and the United Nations. They were more concerned with the world outside Australia than the Australia that we knew.

They gave open slather to the multinationals and provided extended trading opportunities to the international big boys such as K mart, Woolworths and Target. They did not want to know small business, especially Australian-owned small business. Queensland's economic demise is a direct result of the collapse of small business. Small business has stayed loyal to Australia and pays its share of tax. Most of the foreign-owned multinationals, which the big parties

have crawled into bed with, take their money out of Australia and pay little or no tax at all. Now, to make up for their failures, the parties want Australians to pay a GST. They must think that Australians are asleep at the wheel! Really, how can the modern political parties look Australians in the eye and claim to represent them when their every action underlines the truth that they do not want to represent their own voters.

Another real source of trouble is the Federal Government's extension of its powers into the realm of State power. Each year the Federal Government, assisted by its mates in the States, worms away to weaken the States and our Constitution. The Borbidge Government became a doormat for Canberra. It is time that this Parliament stood up to Canberra and said, "This far and no further."

Everybody knows that this country is in trouble. Rents are up; taxes, too. Registrations are up. Even rates are rising. And politicians in Canberra claim that we have no inflation. What they have done is fiddle the books to fool themselves into believing we have no inflation. Nobody else is fooled, but how would they know? They never ask us. The Premier is more interested in communist Vietnam. The Prime Minister is more interested in building palaces in Africa.

The great doublecross of them all was Prime Minister Howard's knee-jerk reaction on the firearm laws, allegedly because of Port Arthur. We now know that Port Arthur had nothing to do with it. That was only the excuse to slug Australians with extremist laws long hidden away in the files, laws hidden away in the dark bogholes of Canberra, awaiting the day when Australian law makers could be scared into passing laws hatched in a far away foreign capital to better fit Australians into their glorified international mould. Howard and his mates condemned hundreds of thousands of Australians as potential murderers. That would be laughable in itself if it were not so serious. It was an Australian version of Stalin's condemnation of land-owning farmers as enemies of the state and, as such, potential murderers who had to be rooted up and destroyed.

Taken in perspective, alcohol and cigarettes kill more Australians every year and cause more social problems than firearms cause in half a century, yet Howard squandered millions of dollars on his petty little whim. Domestic violence and drugs cause more harm than firearms ever did, but Howard is spending peanuts on the essentials and big bucks on peanut issues. Millions of Australians

have been victimised to swell Howard's ego and to make jobs for police bureaucrats. The question to be answered is: why? Could there be a more sinister reason?

I seem to remember that Winston Churchill was called everything from a vicious warmonger to a dangerous extremist because he wanted Great Britain to rearm to defend the homeland. They used the same vicious techniques, swear words, against Churchill as are now being used to intimidate and smear One Nation. After much blood, toil, tears and sweat, the time came to put national interest first and Churchill equipped Great Britain for the Nazi onslaught, which killed millions. Many of our boys died because the firearm grabbers held sway for so many years before the war. Our own boys had to train with broomsticks.

How many more Australians will die some time in the future because of the stupidity of John Howard in destroying a major defence capacity for Australia? Could it be that those who want Australia disarmed are just repeating the events of those dangerous pre-war years? They really do not want Australia sufficiently armed to defend itself because their loyalties lie elsewhere, outside Australia. Right now those questions are being answered in countless homes across Australia, and the answers being given will spell doom for the firearm grabbers and disarmament freaks. A famous man once said, "If you want peace, you must prepare for war."

The ALP's Kaiser says that he has declared war on One Nation. He should take note that the expert on war, Clausewitz, defined war as politics conducted by other means. What means do Kaiser and his mates intend to use? The answer is obvious. We already know. They will use vilification, smear, guilt by association, perversion by their mates in some media, false witness, cursing and swearing, character assassination, innuendo and a call to violence. We know this and the world knows this because we read all about it in the Sydney Morning Herald. Labor's dirty little genie is out of the bottle.

A few weeks ago News Weekly carried a detailed exposure of the tactics mounted by Labor to protect its policies to attack and hurt Australia and Australians. Why, even the Courier-Mail has carried a few rather tame articles about Labor's scam to fool Australians into not talking about issues that Labor wants to promote but cannot defend because such policies are anti-Australian.

The Labor Party, or sections of it, have mounted a major smear campaign against Australia and everything Australian while

pretending to be Australian. One Nation has taken a stand for Australia. Labor has mounted a smear campaign against One Nation because we dare to put Australia first, but as every day passes more Australians are awakening to the Labor scam, awakening to the unusual situation that often times when you scratch a Laborite a Liberal bleeds.

My electorate, like so many other electorates, is facing crippling unemployment. While Howard and Beattie suck up to their mates in the corporate cartels, go on junkets around Asia and shadow box amongst themselves, for the first time in my 26 years in the Burdekin I am seeing business premises closed, shops vacant, independent businessmen frustrated and feeling betrayed, careers destroyed and young people without hope for the future. This augurs big trouble for those who have caused this economic devastation. There is big trouble in the Burdekin, and it is no different from anywhere else in Australia. The situation is the direct result of economic rationalism, globalisation, the non-existent level playing field, the politics of "get big or get out" and the Federal and State Governments' sell-out of Australian and Queensland interests to the cartels, robber barons, monopolies and absentee landlords. These cartels now hope to force upon Australia the notorious and sovereignty destroying Multilateral Agreement on Investment, which our Federal Government supports sight unseen. Shame, Howard, shame! They have been selling out Australia ever since the Liberal axis agreed to the Lima Accord—just another insider's dream to export Australian jobs and internationalise our financial institutions.

Today gives me the opportunity to ask present and past Governments to come clean on their new-age fantasies. If their new-age policies are supposed to work, then why do we have so many unemployed, why is our collective living standard falling and why, too, do they have to fiddle the figures to disguise the real level of unemployment? Why are businesses going broke? Why can employers no longer put on apprentices? Why is this happening in a country that we are continually told is the land of opportunity?

A private business would quickly go broke if it were run the way the politicians have run both Australia and Queensland during the past two decades. Unlike productive business, the Government has been ripping money off private people to cover up its own incompetence. When will it stop? The answer is an easy one: when the guilty men, the failed men, the men and women who no longer care

for Australia and Queensland, are kicked for a six at the next election. That is when. One Nation has started this process rolling. Only then can we stop the bungles and blunders. Only then can we wipe away the tears of a long-suffering people. Only then will we have the courage to bring this State and nation back to the levels of prosperity we experienced under that great statesman Sir Robert Menzies and that equally great Queenslander Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Only then can we put behind us the man-made troubles of today.

We can only put our troubles behind us by putting behind us the failed politics of the failed men of the failed political parties opposite. Only then will we end our troubles and march ahead as one Australia, a united Australia—as one nation united for the good of all. The hope of Queensland is bound up in just two momentous words—fresh words, clean words, words that spell salvation for all. Those words are "One Nation". I support the amendment moved by the member for Caboolture.

Mrs GAMIN (Burleigh—NPA)
(12.39 a.m.): Mr Speaker, may I add my congratulations to those of other members to you on your elevation to your position. I wish you good fortune in your appointment.

I cannot support this motion of confidence, because I am not confident that a Labor minority Government is best for this State. I am not confident that structures put in place by the former coalition Government will not be dismantled. I am not confident that many of the fine achievements of the former coalition Government will not be destroyed. I am not confident that a Labor minority Government is capable of managing the State's finances as well as the former coalition Government did. Labor Governments have a reputation for being big spenders but poor managers. I am not confident that we will not see big spending on social welfare programs to the detriment of major infrastructure for our State that would provide more jobs for Queenslanders.

Let me just run through a few of the achievements of the coalition in just two short years before the events of 13 June 1998. The former coalition Government undertook a \$59m redevelopment of the Gold Coast Hospital; pressed ahead with building the \$48m Robina Hospital, which was opposed by Labor's medical lobby group; in two State Budgets provided almost 2,000 new teachers, 640 more police and an extra 1,000 Queensland Health doctors, nurses and allied health staff; almost completed construction of

the \$4.8m Palm Beach Community Health Centre; established a Crime Commission to battle major and organised crime; built the Palm Beach Police Station, despite Labor's Opposition to the station; and created 91,000 new jobs—40% of all new jobs in Australia—despite Queensland having only 18% of the national population.

The former coalition Government also boosted expenditure on State schooling above the national average for the first time in history; financed record spending on health, law and order, education and the environment; boosted spending on the needs of the disabled from \$242m in Labor's 1995–96 Budget to \$558m in 1998–99; reduced Category 1 surgery waiting lists at the Gold Coast Hospital to an all-time low and made significant cuts in other waiting lists; reduced payroll tax, land tax, betting taxes and stamp duties; established Queensland as Australia's lowest tax State and restored business confidence in Queensland's future as the growth State; attracted major companies to relocate in Queensland, including Boeing, Comalco, Shell's global coal interests, et cetera; and facilitated projects worth \$25 billion under way or on the starting block in the north-west minerals province alone.

That is not meant to be a comprehensive or exhaustive list. There are hundreds and hundreds of other fine achievements over the whole range of ministerial portfolios and Government departments. That is why Queensland would have benefited much more from a coalition Government and that is why I am not confident that a Labor minority Government can come anywhere near matching the coalition's achievements.

The two terms of Labor in the early 1990s saw years of neglect of power stations in this State. Queensland needs to increase its electricity supply every year to keep pace with the demand created by the State's unprecedented population and industrial growth. In six years of Government, Labor imperilled Queensland's power supply by cancelling the coalition's Tully/Millstream hydro-electric project and then by failing to build any new stations, despite warnings as early as 1990 that its neglect could lead to problems by 1997. Labor's only attempt to increase supply was to negotiate to buy electricity from New South Wales, but at double the price at which Queensland produces its own electricity.

Despite Labor's claims, this extra power via the Eastlink connection would not have been available during the load shedding

emergency earlier this year. The only addition to Queensland's generating capacity during Labor's two terms of office was a small privately owned station at Barcaldine. When returned to office two years ago, the coalition moved quickly to remedy Labor's neglect by refurbishing and recommissioning, at a cost of \$200m, the Collinsville and Callide A stations, which had been dormant for a decade. Callide C was to be built alongside the A and B stations to be fully operational by the year 2001. Two stations at Townsville and another at Oakey on the Darling Downs were in our pipeline to be operating next year and the year after respectively. We had plans for a \$1.7 billion power station and coalmine at Wandoan in the Surat Basin in a joint venture with Mount Isa Mines and to include expansion of the Tarong station in the South Burnett.

The coalition would have assured Queenslanders of cheaper power for many years to come and to selling power to interstate customers on the national electricity grid, with further reductions in industrial and domestic charges. If corporatisation was to blame for the industry's woes earlier this year, then Labor has only itself to blame. The power industry was corporatised in 1995 by the then Goss Labor Government. I am not confident that a Labor minority Government has the capability to complete the coalition's excellent program for the power industry.

The coalition has done a great job in terms of roadworks, especially in southern Queensland. The Pacific Motorway project is forging ahead. On the Gold Coast, major works will bring major improvements to the Pacific Highway at Nerang. The Pacific Highway has been duplicated between Reedy Creek and Tugun. Bermuda Street has been extended to the Pacific Highway. The further upgrade of Bermuda Street has already commenced and is on track for completion by December this year. The total cost of the project will be \$16m. It will provide a vital infrastructure development for the Gold Coast. The project will involve the construction of an additional two lanes parallel to the existing lanes from Rudd Street to Christine Avenue. This means that the current lanes will be used during construction and disruptions will be minimised. As well as this, noise minimisation measures will be implemented to dramatically reduce tyre noise.

Major works on Reedy Creek Road have been of enormous benefit, as well as bus lanes and set-down areas outside Marymount College, which was a jointly funded effort between the Department of Main Roads and

the Gold Coast City Council. Reedy Creek Road was a huge undertaking, as massive stormwater drainage had to be included. That road used to be a nightmare. It is now a pleasure to use. Work has started on the duplication of West Burleigh Road—another very big job also involving stormwater drainage.

I mentioned the construction of the new police station at Palm Beach, which was purely a coalition project. During its previous term, Labor actively opposed a police station at Palm Beach, and I am proud to have achieved this ambition once the coalition came to power, together with a 100% increase in police numbers for the southern Gold Coast. The station is a 24-hour operational station and has two cars on patrol targeting crime black spots in Burleigh Heads and Palm Beach. In addition to these cars, lap-over cars are rostered to roam the district to assist other cars. Previously, there was only one car on patrol in the Palm Beach/Burleigh area.

Uniformed police from the Palm Beach Police Station are also rostered to perform beat patrols within the Burleigh Heads CBD, Burleigh Town Marketplace, Treetops Shopping Centre, the Pines Shopping Centre and the Palm Beach CBD. From time to time, plain-clothes officers based at the Burleigh Heads Police Station also patrol these areas. Both of these types of patrols have proved to be very successful.

The Palm Beach Community Health Centre is nearing completion. After Labor completely messed up this project, the coalition stepped in and the \$4.8m project will now provide an extended range of health services. The centre will contain a community and child health service with a day-stay centre to educate and support parents experiencing difficulties, a baby clinic, a hearing and development screening program for older children and a day therapy centre offering rehabilitation and transitional care for the chronic disabled and frail aged. The health services also include adolescent and youth health, health promotion, home care and visiting specialists, community nursing and allied health services, social workers, community psychologists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. The three storey building in Fifth Avenue will house the Mental Health Service to be relocated from rented premises at Miami, and there will be no methadone program or needle exchange. The dental clinic will have four chairs and will provide standard public dental health services. When fully operational, the dental service will see approximately 250 patients a week. The

Palm Beach Community Health Centre will also have semi-basement parking for 34 vehicles, most of which, of course, will be Queensland Health vehicles.

With mental health services moving from Miami to Palm Beach, a very good support group called Living Skills looked as if it was going to be homeless. At Miami, Living Skills offers clients a large day care room in which to meet and chat and make themselves a cup of tea or coffee. The organisation has provided a tutor in computer skills for more than two years. This program has been a great success in helping clients, especially those who are keen to return to the work force. There is also an art group which not only encourages clients to express themselves but also favours those who wish to escape from the isolation so often experienced by mental patients. I am pleased that the district health council has listened to my representations on behalf of Living Skills. Space will be found for them at the old leased premises adjacent to the new centre.

The extension of the Brisbane-Beenleigh rail link from Beenleigh to Robina was an initiative of the Ahern National Party Government. I remember it well because I announced it myself in August 1988 during the 1988 by-election for the seat of South Coast. Coomera was opened first, then Helensvale, then Nerang, and the final link of the Gold Coast railway extension to Robina was opened on 1 June and is already proving popular with local residents.

The proposed extension of the railway to Coolangatta and the Tugun bypass road have already been announced and welcomed by southern Gold Coast residents. After months of worry about possible residential disruption, the route chosen is a much more satisfactory solution than some of the options that were put forward. The rail link will follow the eastern side of the Pacific Highway from Robina to just north of the West Burleigh Tavern where it will cross to the western side of the highway. It will continue on the western side to Tugun Heights where a tunnel is proposed, then west of Coolangatta Airport together with the Tugun bypass road. I hope that the minority Labor Government does not mess around with these priorities. Too much work has gone into identifying the most satisfactory route—the route which will cause the least disruption to residential areas.

During recent months and under a coalition Government, additional capital works have been provided for schools in the Burleigh electorate: Palm Beach, Burleigh Heads and Caningeraba State Schools and Miami State

High School. All schools wanted both big and small painting jobs to be carried out as well as other minor works. I am pleased with the success of my representations on their behalf.

We have not yet seen Labor's Budget. We are asked to support this motion of confidence and take the Labor Budget on trust. The coalition brought down a great Budget in May of this year and, if the coalition had been allowed to govern, this Budget added to our campaign commitments would have been of great benefit to Queenslanders. Time will not permit me to go through the coalition Budget item by item, so I will just touch on a few points.

We had planned to boost funds for women's services by more than \$14.5m over the next four years. The extra money was to be used to upgrade cancer screening, domestic violence and family support services, sexual assault services, counselling, training, employment and the care of children outside school hours. These were identified as priorities during a six-month survey of 5,000 women. We would have extended concessions for Seniors Card holders, including car and boat registration charges. I hope that the new Government will honour these commitments.

A couple of weeks ago, I launched Palliative Care Week on the Gold Coast. Funding for palliative care is a matter in which I am keenly interested and of which I am supportive. The coalition's recent State Budget Ministerial Program Statements showed that \$5.4m of palliative care funding was provided to non-Government organisations and district health services for community-based activities in 1997-98. Further funding had been planned to enhance aged care facilities by a huge refurbishment and rehabilitation of Government owned nursing homes as well as other programs for aged care and the care of the terminally ill, including palliative care.

Key elements in our election campaign platform were a \$13m program over two years to improve Queensland's palliative care services with concentration on a range of patient choice settings, including hospitals, residential organisations in the community and hospices. We announced provision of palliative care services in all Queensland hospitals, refurbishment of existing public hospitals in rural and remote areas to provide for in-patient and/or respite facilities, encouragement of community involvement in planning and development of new palliative care facilities or services, for example,

hospices, and provision of three-year service agreements for existing community hospices.

I cannot stress strongly enough to the new Government the importance of palliative care services—the care of those patients with illnesses that cannot be cured and where survival is limited and death is inevitable. Not only do the sufferers need the skill of those doctors, nurses and health professionals who are dedicated to palliative care, so do their families and loved ones, who need to come to terms with the inevitability of death, bereavement and grief.

Continued funding to mental health services on the Gold Coast and continued funding to drug and alcohol rehabilitation services are also of great concern to me. I hope that the new Minister for Health will take the time to visit the Gold Coast Drug Council's excellent facility at Mirikai in my electorate to examine the work of this remarkable non-Government agency and to look at its success rate in achieving a turnaround in the lives of persons with ruinous drug dependencies.

I have spent some time browsing through many matters of interest to my electorate or of concern to me as we face this motion of confidence. Before I close, I want to mention two issues that are causing anxiety which I did not have time to get finalised before that fateful day, 13 June. The first is the matter of noise abatement fencing along the Pacific Highway at Palm Beach. Constituents of mine whose properties back onto the Pacific Highway suffer considerable nuisance from noise and vibration caused by traffic on the Pacific Highway, especially from heavy trucks. Noise barrier fencing was at first welcomed. However, there is no doubt that the existing fencing is quite useless and might as well not be there. Despite public consultation, the type of material used is far from satisfactory, and placing fencing about one metre from property boundaries is also far from satisfactory.

The former Minister for Transport and Main Roads had given me a commitment that this matter would be seriously addressed if the coalition Government was returned. More public consultation was promised and the department would carefully examine proposals for high earth mounding between the Pacific Highway and property boundaries, plus heavy vegetation with better fencing on top of the mounding. I noted that the Labor candidate who opposed me tried to turn this into an election issue. He made the extraordinary statement to local residents that, if he was elected to represent the seat of Burleigh, Mr Peter Beattie had promised him \$1m for road

resurfacing to reduce tyre noise from trucks using the Pacific Highway. I need to know whether Mr Beattie will keep this commitment. I need to know whether the people of Palm Beach will still be assisted in the matter of reducing noise and vibration from the Pacific Highway. Better noise alleviation at Palm Beach is a problem that I will have to take up with the new Government.

The second ongoing matter in my electorate is the closure of the popular Ocean View track at the Burleigh Heads National Park. This has been closed for a year now as a result of substantial boulder falls. Large boulders ranging in weight from hundreds of kilograms to several tonnes have fallen onto the track, causing serious damage and threatening the safety of park visitors and staff. Obviously, rock falls in the park have been occurring for centuries, but the whole hillside is now very unstable. Investigations have so far not thrown any light on how stability can be re-established and how the track can be reopened without danger to the many thousands of people who enjoy using it.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service, a division of the Department of Environment, has constructed a link path to join up with the upper track, but the steps are rather steep and cause problems for elderly visitors and they cannot be used by disabled visitors at all. The coalition allocated \$35,000 in our recent State Budget for further professional and engineering advice on how to solve this really serious problem, and I urge the new Minister for Environment to continue with the efforts to stabilise the boulder falls and to get the track opened as soon as possible.

I cannot deny that the Burleigh electorate has done very well out of the coalition Government. Many of our big ticket items have either been completed or are too far advanced to stop. I do not apologise for being a very parochial member. My first and major interest is the welfare of my constituents and the welfare of my electorate. I do not support this motion of confidence because I do not believe that the Burleigh electorate will benefit from the new Government and, on the wider scene, I do not believe that Queensland will benefit from a minority Labor Government.

Mr HEGARTY (Redlands—NPA) (1 a.m.): Mr Speaker, in rising tonight I would firstly like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment to the high office of Speaker. I am confident that you will carry out your duties with impartiality and distinction. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new members on both sides to

the House. It is an honour to be a representative in this House. I am sure they will be welcomed and will enjoy their time here, even though it may be as a oncer.

In addition, I would also like to acknowledge the electors of Redlands who have placed their confidence in me and have allowed me to represent them for another term. Their interests will be of paramount importance to me during this session.

In joining in the debate tonight, I oppose the motion of confidence moved by the Premier. I would also challenge the assertion made by the Premier this morning that anyone who speaks against this motion would lose credibility. I contend that testing if the House has confidence in the Government of the day is a fundamental responsibility of any Opposition, particularly when the Government is only in power conditional on certain commitments it made to enjoy that privilege. Quite a lot has been said following the State election by different interest groups as to who should form government. "Stability" was the catch-cry, but no consideration was given to the people of Queensland, of whom less than 40% voted for a Labor Government. One has to ask why then did the majority of Queenslanders not want a Labor Government and, therefore, why should this House have confidence in it.

Unlike when Labor came to office in 1989 and had no recent track record, the present Labor Government is open to scrutiny, having last been in office just over two years ago and therefore offering a clear comparison with the coalition which followed it, and a clear picture of what is likely to come based on Labor's past performance.

Labor Governments throughout Australia have never had a good record in economic management and the situation was not much different here in Queensland. Over the period between 1989 and 1996 we saw numerous instances of that. We witnessed Budget overruns, large amounts of money expended for little or no public benefit and public funds in crisis through mismanagement. Labor's answer to many of these problems was to transfer funds from one area to prop up another. This was not for one-off capital works projects but in many instances for overruns in recurrent funding. Already we see the potential for this pattern to recur with the commitments made by the Premier in the lead-up to the State election. I refer to unfunded commitments such as extending the tilt train to Townsville and the provision of free ambulance services to pensioners, to mention

just two. Such projects have to be funded either by transferring funds from other areas of recurrent or capital works commitments or alternatively raising more money by increasing taxes and charges.

I note that the Premier said this morning that he would not be reversing decisions made by his predecessors. This suggests strongly that increased taxes and charges are on the agenda for the Budget coming up in September. The Premier has made job creation the major focus for his Government. Yet his party's past record is one of losing job opportunities, compared with the coalition's record in just over two years of creating nearly 100,000 jobs. Labor, on coming to office in 1989, inherited an employment rate of 6.9%. When it left office in 1996 it had presided over an 11% unemployment rate. In addition, Labor would need to vastly improve its economic growth record from when it last tried to stimulate the economy. Labor's benchmark is measured against the Tasmanian economy—a low population State whose Budget is smaller than that of the Brisbane City Council. Yet the Goss Government just managed to out-perform Tasmania in State growth. By comparison, under the coalition State Government, growth was 4.7% when we left office, outstripping the national figure of 3.3% per annum. In fact, we outstripped first world economies such as the USA and the UK.

Job creation can be as simple as providing the public services that Queenslanders need. We need extra police, teachers, doctors and nurses, emergency service personnel, public servants, etc. Yet again in these areas Labor failed to deliver in spite of outlaying huge budgets. What was the effect on Queenslanders of this economic mismanagement? Police numbers declined, leading to higher numbers of unsolved crimes. Officers were overworked and experienced low morale through frustration in not being able to do their job properly.

In my electorate, the responsible police division had the lowest police to people ratio in the State under Labor. In just two years, however, that has changed through the hundreds of extra police who have been sworn in, together with the extra civilians who have been employed, and we are now on track to meet the targets set when we offered ourselves to Queenslanders as an alternative Government in 1995. A further 86 officers will be sworn in in August, and some of those are being allocated to the Wynnum police district. I am hopeful that the Cleveland and Redland

Bay stations will receive some of those officers.

In deciding whether to support a confidence motion in this Government, we have to concern ourselves with whether this trend will continue. That is the big question mark. Will it continue, or will it go back to police intakes being cancelled, as happened in 1995?

Another matter of concern is the abolition of the Leading Schools program. That was one of the first things that Labor did when it came to office a few weeks ago. This is another example of irresponsibility and mismanagement and has left the education sector in Queensland up in the air. After two years of planning and establishing the framework to give most of Queensland's State schools some autonomy and self-direction, this new Labor Government has replaced it with uncertainty. Despite the funding largesse outlined by the Minister, those schools that were going into the second round of the Leading Schools program this year are now having to rethink the financial commitments made in the belief that more funds were to follow given the commitment that Education Queensland made to those schools going into the respective rounds of Leading Schools. They believed they were to receive a certain amount of funding over a certain period.

Once more Labor in Government oversees economic disaster and causes more stress to thousands of teachers and, in particular, the principals who now have to explain to their parents and citizen bodies that they do not know what will happen in the future. Little wonder that Labor does not inspire confidence in the future with this opening decision coupled with its past record.

Low capital works budgets and small increases in teacher numbers provide a stark contrast to the coalition's impressive record of employing 2,000 extra teachers, plus large capital works budgets, along with funding for many specific programs, bringing Queensland's Education budget up to the national average for the first time ever.

The coalition made an impressive start in just two years in redressing the shortfall in numerous capital works projects, some of which were on the drawing board when Labor came to office in 1989 and were no further advanced after six years. Some of the projects were basic requirements to service Queenslanders, to provide the police, magistrates, doctors, teachers and others with suitable premises in which to work. A new police station and courthouse is nearing

completion next to my electorate. This is a very good example of what I am speaking about concerning the dearth of capital works that were undertaken when Labor was in office. This new police station and courthouse have a combined value of around \$7m. It was talked about for six years under Labor. During that time police officers were working in cramped and unsuitable conditions. With examples like that, how can anyone have confidence in another Labor Government? We must bear in mind that to fund the promises made in the recent election campaign without increasing taxes and charges would mean a cutback in capital works. Labor's credibility is the big question mark. In just about every portfolio area in the previous Labor Government there was economic mismanagement or underperformance. It would be difficult to concede, given that about a third of the current Ministers were Ministers in the previous Labor Government, that anything will change.

I commend to the member for Nicklin that he consider Labor's past record in Government before supporting the Premier's motion and that he err on the side of caution by supporting the Opposition motion if he is serious about delivering better outcomes for the people of Queensland. We talk about responsibility and the need for Government to listen to the people. We have to bear in mind the past record of this Government that is now seeking the confidence of the House. The member for Nicklin has to think very seriously about supporting this motion, because we are talking about a return to stability and economic management in this State, which is something that we did not see from the Labor Party between 1989 and 1996.

Mr LAMING (Mooloolah—LP) (1.10 a.m.): Firstly, Mr Speaker, I join other members in congratulating you on being elected as Speaker. It is a very important position, and I am sure that you will conduct yourself very well. Together with other members, I commend the former member for Nicklin, who did a very good job in the Speaker's chair. I worked closely with him and found him very good to work with. I also congratulate the member for Woodridge who, I understand, will soon be appointed as the Chairman of Committees. I am sure that he will support you ably in that position. I also commend the work of the Clerk of the Parliament and his clerks assisting, who do a very professional job regardless of which side members sit on in this Chamber. They are to be commended.

I congratulate all new members of all political parties. Ours is a very important job.

None of us knows how long we are going to be here, and when we are here it is time to do those things that we set out to do. It is interesting to listen to the maiden speeches of the new members. I suggest to those members that they revisit their maiden speeches if they are re-elected to see whether they were able to achieve some of the things that they set out to do in their maiden speeches. It is very important to do that, because it does remind us about what we are here for.

I also congratulate those members who have been returned to the Parliament. They were obviously regarded by their electors as doing a good job both here in the Parliament and in their electorates. Of course, there are members from both sides of the House who were not returned to the Parliament. Those members, too, should be acknowledged for the work that they did in their electorates and in the Chamber. Some members lose their seats through no fault of their own; the tide was going one way or the other. Nevertheless, those members contributed greatly to the process in their electorates and in this Chamber.

Of course, I am rising to oppose the motion of confidence in the Beattie Government. By way of comparison with this Government, one has only to look at some of the things that the former coalition Government had to address when it came to power after the Mundingburra by-election in 1996. I shall mention just a few of those things. One of them was the abolition of the tolls on the Sunshine Motorway. That had been a very unjust burden on the people of the Sunshine Coast for a long time. I am one of the members who are very proud to say that that was one of the things that should have been done a long time ago.

Mr Davidson: Hear, hear!

Mr LAMING: I note the support of the member for Noosa.

I also commend the former Minister for Transport, the member for Gregory, for the great job that he did right throughout the Transport and Main Roads portfolio. He was an excellent Minister, and he is just one example of the sort of Minister we had in our coalition Government. I believe that this incoming Government is going to find great difficulty in emulating the work of that former Minister.

I turn now to the work that was done by the former Attorney-General, the member for Indooroopilly. It is good to see him in the Chamber. Law and order is a very big issue. It

has been a big issue for a long time, and it has to be addressed on a number of fronts, not only on the legal side but also on the police side, which I will mention directly. The former Attorney-General did an excellent job despite a lot of criticism, particularly from the then Opposition. The Criminal Code had to be reworked completely. The Penalties and Sentences Act and the Juvenile Justice Act contained some major flaws and weaknesses, which were addressed by the member for Indooroopilly. A number of very fundamental things had to be done. I hope that this incoming Government does not set about rolling back some of the good things that were done by the coalition Government in that particular regard.

I have mentioned police numbers. We had the ridiculous situation in which police numbers decreased under the previous Labor Government. That is one of the major reasons why I would have difficulty in supporting a motion of confidence in a Labor Government. Heaven forbid that it should even consider going back to that sort of record whereby police numbers in this State decreased. The numbers are already very low on a national scale. For example, police numbers in the North Coast Region went from 726 in 1996 to 932 in 1998. The Sunshine Coast—or the North Coast Region, to give it its correct title—is one particular region that has never been well served with police numbers. This problem was starting to be addressed. I commend the good work done by the former Police Minister, the member for Crows Nest. He did an excellent job as a Police Minister in this State in many fields, not the least of which was getting those police numbers up and the opening of the new police academy in Townsville. I am anticipating another 40 new officers for the North Coast Region in August. That was the plan. I certainly hope that they are still forthcoming and that they continue to be forthcoming.

We do need more police in Queensland. We particularly need police in a couple of regions, namely, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. There is a police staffing allocation model. I do not mind telling this Parliament—I said it when I sat on the other side of the Chamber and I will say it on this side of the Chamber—that the police staffing allocation model that was brought in during the Goss years is flawed. It is better than having no model to work on, but it is flawed. It does not cater adequately for the fast-growing regions of the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. It should be examined—not on the inputs but on the outputs and on how it

actually provides police numbers around Queensland. It needs to be examined to make sure that those particular fast-growing regions are adequately handled.

I also wish to comment on ambulance staff numbers. Once again, the Sunshine Coast received a good boost of numbers. I am sure that it was not the only district that received extra ambulance staff. Stations in my electorate of Mooloolah, namely those at Buderim and Kawana, received a big boost in staff numbers. I also commend the former Minister for Emergency Services, the member for Southport, for the great job that he did in his roles as Emergency Services Minister and Minister for Sport.

While mentioning sport, I should also mention the funds that went to the Sunshine Coast University for the building—and it commenced only a couple of weeks ago—of a synthetic international-standard track at the university, which will be a drawcard for people coming from overseas to train prior to the Olympics. The former Minister for Sport in the coalition Government did an excellent job. The incoming Government will have great difficulty emulating the efforts of that particular Minister, too.

I remind honourable members on both sides of the House of the cessation of the Seniors Card discount for motor vehicle registrations, which was suspended by the Goss Government in 1994, I believe. We had the ridiculous situation in which we had two classes of citizens: those who received their senior citizens cards after June 1994 and who did not get a discount on their registration for their motor vehicles, and those who got it beforehand. We addressed that issue. I commend the Treasurer, the member for Caloundra, who will be remembered as one of the great Treasurers in Queensland. She did a big job to keep this State financially in the black and operating very well. Hers was one of the portfolios that were badly handled by the previous Labor Government. It is going to be very interesting to see whether some of those things remain in place, such as the registration discounts for seniors and the cutting of registration costs for vessels—boats—which were to be reduced by 50%. We will see whether they come to pass.

I noticed that it was stated in the Governor's Speech that there would be no new taxes and charges. I do not believe that in that speech there was any suggestion that some taxes would not be increased. We will see whether that comes to pass in the new Budget to be brought down in September.

Those are just a few examples that affect my electorate and the good work done by the coalition Government.

Labor has proven time and again that it is unable to provide sound and responsible Government for Queensland as evidenced by its numerous policy failures, some of which I have already mentioned. I will outline a few of those failures in the Housing portfolio, which I have been given the opportunity to shadow. I commend the former Minister, the member for Moggill, who did an excellent job in that portfolio. I will start with the HOME Scheme, a financially flawed home-lending package that has seen hundreds of hardworking people who had a dream of buying their own home with a little help from the Government end up with not a dream but a nightmare. However, it is not just a simple matter of the \$17.3m of taxpayers' money that has been written off under the HOME Scheme; that figure also represents the despair, anguish and heartache of the 1,100 battling Queenslanders who have seen their aspirations, hopes and dreams repossessed along with their homes. HOME was marketed as Home Ownership Made Easy, but as every member on this side of the House knows, it stands for home ownership mismanaged entirely.

If the HOME Scheme was not damaging enough to the community, what about the number of subcontractors who were left out of pocket by the poor contractual management practices of Labor? For example, let us consider the financial years between 1991 and 1996 under Labor in the former Departments of Administrative Services and Housing, Local Government and Planning, where there were no fewer than 39 contractor failures or no fewer than 146 contracts worth a total of \$59.25m. That was \$59.25m ripped out of the pockets and mouths of hardworking and deserving subcontractors.

One does not have to go far to find other examples of Labor's poor management. One has only to look at the public housing system. Labor oversaw a tenancy management system that tolerated and even harboured tenants who not only damaged the dwellings that they occupied but also destroyed the communities of which they were supposed to be members. That went on unabated. I think this is also an appropriate moment to examine some of the other anomalies in their system. For example, what about the financial eligibility criteria? Irrespective of the size or the composition of the family unit, the income threshold was \$55,000. It did not matter whether prospective tenants were an

employed couple with four children receiving social security payments or a single public servant on an AO6 salary level; they were equally eligible for public housing. During Labor's last stint in Government, we witnessed long waiting lists for public housing and an increase in the number of rental accounts in arrears. I suppose that I should not be overly critical of Labor's management of those issues when it was clear to any rational person that there was a total absence of it.

Thankfully for Queensland, the coalition returned to Government just in time to turn those problems around and get the State back on track. We did that by addressing the policy failings of the then Opposition by implementing sound and reasonable policies. That is a fundamental characteristic of coalition Governments here in Queensland. We addressed the problems associated with public housing by introducing tougher new tenancy management practices that stated clearly to tenants that, if they did not pay, they did not stay; if they unreasonably disturbed their neighbours, they could find new neighbours without the Government's assistance; and if they were irresponsible, the Government would no longer have a responsibility to provide them with housing.

Through tighter eligibility criteria and the introduction of the priority housing system, the coalition also targeted assistance at those Queenslanders in most need. Along with addressing those issues, the coalition also looked ahead to the ever-growing issue of an ageing society. Unlike Labor's approach of just building more three-bedroom detached houses, the coalition addressed the needs of older Queenslanders by realigning the portfolio through strategic asset sales of surplus detached housing under a construction program geared to include more seniors units and one and two-bedroom apartments. Under the coalition, Queenslanders witnessed a reduction in the public housing wait list down from 29,580 applicants in March 1996 to 24,070 in December 1997. The coalition Government also addressed the social issues associated with high densities of public housing through urban renewal programs, the most significant of those being in the suburb of Inala. The \$100m project titled "Inala—A New Beginning" is the largest urban renewal project ever undertaken in Queensland. Through the involvement of the private sector and the local community, that project will see the revitalising of the entire suburb.

However, the public housing system was not the only issue neglected by the previous Labor Government. Another issue was the

security of payment for subcontractors and suppliers involved in the building industry. Labor had six years to address that issue but failed in its duty to do so. The coalition Government, however, held a commission of inquiry, consulted extensively with the major stakeholders and developed a whole-of-industry strategy to address the issue, which, I should remind members opposite, has the full support of the key industry stakeholders. Prior to the last election, the coalition also introduced an amendment Bill before this House detailing significant amendments to the Subcontractors' Charges Act—which is one of the two Acts covering the security of payment issue—in the process of drafting amendments to the Building Services Authority legislation.

During our 27 months in Government, the coalition had a number of other significant achievements, such as the introduction of the Home Safe Program, a \$3m Statewide initiative that provides additional security for seniors in public housing dwellings located in high crime areas. What about the increased funding and full Statewide expansion of the Home Assist and Home Secure programs, which provide for basic household services for seniors living in private accommodation? One should not forget our commitment to people requiring disability housing, a commitment that saw more than twice the number of people with a disability housed in 1996-97 than those housed in the previous financial year. That commitment was recognised by a prestigious award.

Because of the capacity of Mr Borbidge and the coalition Government, Queensland was powering ahead and was on course to be a major economic player within the Asia-Pacific region. However, with the member for Brisbane Central at the helm, I believe that Queensland has become the SS Minnow, reversed course and is heading directly for Gilligan's Island. In conclusion, I have absolutely no confidence in the Labor Government led by the member for Brisbane Central.

Mr BLACK (Whitsunday—ONP) (1.28 a.m.): I congratulate the Speaker on his election to his office. Winston Churchill once told Parliament about his experience with the boneless wonder at the carnival. His mother refused to allow him to see that carnival exhibit because it was so disgusting and abhorrent. Upon entering Parliament, he was astonished to see all about him politicians whom he could describe only as "boneless wonders". Why boneless wonders? He described them in that way because they were the politicians of the

lost years: politicians whose policies were stuck squarely in the past, politicians who refused to address the problems and the storm clouds of the future. I am not about to suggest that the survivors from the past Parliament are boneless wonders, but as assuredly as the sun will rise tomorrow they are guilty of the same sin: a stubborn refusal to address the problems and threatening storm clouds of the future.

One Nation members in this House, elected to support one nation, one Queensland, are gravely concerned for the future of Queensland. We are like Churchill of old—astonished that the members in the last Parliament had stubbornly refused to address the problems of the future.

The electors of Whitsunday have bestowed on me their confidence. I am humbled by the honour and most certainly I challenge all members in this House to confront the problems of the future—confront unemployment, which will cause huge social problems in the future; confront the policies of globalism, which will destroy our sovereignty and is now in the process of doing just that; confront family turmoil, which is creating problems ranging from crime to poverty; and confront Government level playing fields and "get big or get out" fantasies, which are destroying jobs and sending Australian companies and jobs offshore.

My electorate of Whitsunday has been hard hit by all of these Government policies of destruction—these stupid policies, these policies that hurt Australians. That is why my Whitsunday electors sent me into this House: to confront and deliver on the problems of the future. I thank the electors of Whitsunday for their confidence and I thank the hardworking band of loyal and dedicated men and women who worked long hours for One Nation and contributed greatly to my election. I would also like to thank my wife, Veronica, and our three grown-up children, David, Dianne and Sandra.

The people of Whitsunday will always be first in my representations in this House, first in my desire to address the problems of the future, which are now causing so much suffering in the Whitsundays. Whitsunday is a diverse community—canefarmers who are now threatened by the sugarcane fungus, graziers who are troubled by markets and closure of abattoirs, small crop farmers who are disturbed by foreign imports, miners who are frustrated by Government and divisive laws, retail and small business long forgotten by big Government, professionals and tradesmen who find opportunities declining and the skilled

and unskilled who fear unemployment and insecurity. Everybody fears for their future.

People work hard but Government has betrayed their expectations. Government has failed to solve the impact of technology. Its destructive globalism policy has destroyed decades of investment and hard work. People expect democratic, responsible and honest Government but are getting distant, unaccountable and devious Government. We are getting disastrous and inept Government that administers policies in a witless and chaotic fashion. The confusion in Queensland's northern meat processing industry is a case in point. Six out of nine abattoirs that once serviced the huge cattle-raising region north of Mackay have closed. In such an environment, there was a certain inevitability about the decision to close the Borthwicks abattoirs in Bowen last year—a plant which had served this major community for more than a century.

The Labor and Liberals in Canberra dismissed this as a necessary result of change. But they live in an unreal world. The result in human terms is 400 lost jobs—400 futures destroyed and 400 families disgusted at both the failed national and State leadership. Labor is in big trouble in the Whitsundays. It has been usurped by the wagging tongues of the lawyers. They have no clue how to relate to the electors—the grassroots, the workers. Labor has shown a callous contempt for the basic rights of Queenslanders. They are a party of backroom boys, of discordant factions. By their remoteness and daily deceit, they follow a path of destruction for democracy. Labor has lost sight of its traditional support base—the workers who have since flocked to One Nation.

Queensland has lost its momentum because of the greediness and hypocrisy of all the old political parties. They pretend to fight each other but they are more like a club of bedfellows leeching off the taxpayer. As the new member for Whitsunday, I am prepared to work with anybody who is prepared to work for Australia—for one Australia, for all Australia—working for Australians. I follow in the wake of a host of great Queenslanders who have represented Whitsunday—men such as Ron Camm, who spent long years in this House.

Such men would have been horrified at the reports this week that the feared sugar cane fungus has got past quarantine and gained a foothold in Australia. The entire sugar industry in Queensland and in every community from the New South Wales border

to Cape York could be devastated by this fungus. Billions of dollars of investment and sales are at risk. The jobs of thousands could vanish—all because the Federal Government has sat on its hands on so many issues affecting Australia. For far too long the Government has underfunded research for the industry and has gone slow on the development of value-added products for the industry. Drastic action is now required to stem the threat of this destructive fungus and to save jobs, farms and industry. Quarantine must be tightened, poaching must be wiped out, illegal immigration confronted and all steps taken to prevent a spread of this fungus from Western Australia to Queensland.

What is more worrying is that media reports are suggesting that this fungus is here already. If that is so, then every effort must be made to fund the sugar industry in its battle to remove this scourge. This is not a time for the faint hearted, for a slow response by Government or for a mumbo jumbo attitude that pledges action but does very little. This must be a priority challenge for Government for immediate action. Anything less than total support and action will be viewed as just another failure by Government—a Government that is distant, non-accountable and confused as to where its true loyalties lie.

Another industry vital to Whitsunday is tourism. It is also in trouble, not because of Pauline Hanson and One Nation but because of the weakness and failings of Government, because of the Asian crisis and blinkered elements within the industry itself. Both Labor and Liberals in Canberra have been badmouthing Australia for years. Now they are taking to touring Asia to badmouth Pauline Hanson for their own failures and betrayals of Australia and Australians. This is not only the height of bad manners but also stupidity gone mad. They are trying to kill tourism and blame it on Pauline Hanson. They are deliberately stirring up hatred and racism and, as such, they are the greatest racists of all time who are badmouthing their own country and people.

Many of the hierarchy of the publicly funded statutory bodies set up by the Labor Party during its decade in Government have swung into vilification mode to badmouth Australia, Australians and One Nation. They are doing exactly what they were set up to do—conduct hate tours of Queensland to badmouth Queensland and Queenslanders, especially country people. They serve no useful purpose except to push a Labor Party agenda and squander huge sums of tax money. They must be abolished, the squandered tax money recovered and, where

crimes of a serious nature are found, prosecutions launched to fit the crimes.

Tourism will survive despite the professional name callers and vilifiers. Tourism is big in Whitsunday because it has beautiful natural resources and unlimited attractions for tourists. Tourism is a major employer and we must keep it as a major employer. But how do we do this when taxes and other influences continually force up costs and globalisation policies cripple the Asian economies and prevent spending and travel?

People who visit Whitsunday always go away with friendly memories of a great holiday in an exotic environment. This is hard to beat anywhere in the world. Whitsunday is, by Brisbane standards, an electorate of moderately small communities, but communities with the vigour and resourcefulness of the bigger towns and cities in Queensland. They may be smaller, but they need the same facilities and services as the big city. Unfortunately, they have suffered at the hands of globalisation and the withdrawal of services. This must stop. It will stop when One Nation forms Government in Queensland and in Canberra. If the old parties and the elite little club in Canberra do not come up with some quick answers to the problems facing Australia, that time will not be long coming.

The Liberals, Nationals and Labor are tied together like Siamese twins on policies that are destroying Australia. They cannot even oppose each other when it comes to the election of a Speaker because of their deals behind the scenes. This is one reason I am here today representing Whitsunday. The electors of Whitsunday are sick and tired of deals between faceless men. They want change—change for the better for Australia and Queensland, not a continuation of the same old fumbling and stumbling that has characterised policy makers for the past two decades in this country and not a continuation of the tight old style of Government that refused to act on outlandish corruption such as the Heiner affair, with the destruction of documents. It is endemic corruption. The electors of Whitsunday want change and One Nation is here to get change or to learn the reason why.

Mr ROWELL (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (1.42 a.m.): Certainly right throughout north Queensland there are major concerns about a changeover to this Labor Government. Firstly, Madam Deputy Speaker, through you I congratulate the new Speaker of the House. It is a very important role within the parliamentary process. I also acknowledge the

work of the previous Speaker, Neil Turner. He was a good friend and an excellent member and he did a lot for this precinct. The period I served with him in Government was a particularly interesting period.

I also acknowledge former member Naomi Wilson, who represented an electorate to the north of mine. She did an enormous amount of work. She took on a ministerial responsibility at a fairly late stage and worked as a Parliamentary Secretary prior to that. The work she did within the Parliament in relation to family services was very commendable.

I also acknowledge the speech made by the new member for Callide, Jeff Seeney. I think he hit the nail on the head on numerous occasions. He is a person of the land and he is well aware of the difficulties. During the period I was Primary Industries Minister, I went through Callide a couple of times and met with him. He has a good, firm grasp on the problems associated with Callide and certainly with rural industries.

Let us look through the scale of industries throughout Queensland. First there is mining. There is an absolute need for infrastructure. Major developments are going on at Cannington, Ernest Henry, Mount Isa and at numerous other mines in the western areas. Planning is a vital part of the future prospects of these mines, whether in relation to harbours or roads. We will see ports extended in Townsville and certainly Karumba.

Agriculture is another very important area, with fisheries and aquaculture and a whole range of other industries involved. They all come under the Department of Primary Industries. I believe some significant gains were made in those areas in the time the coalition was in Government.

We could look at the grazing industry principally in north Queensland or we could look at cattle. The loss of the Indonesian live cattle market was of great concern to a lot of people because being able to sell cattle into a market very close by was a great alternative. I commend the work of the live cattle export advisory committee and Don Heatley, who developed a live cattle trade with China. There were a few hiccups with blue tongue, but a suitable area was identified. After some involvement with AQIS and its equivalent in China, we made some good progress and I believe that we will be sending cattle over to China in the very near future. We will also be assisting the Chinese in developing their feedlots. Our technology is far superior to what they have at present. I believe we can be of

great assistance and develop very good trade with them.

We are seeing a contraction of the cattle industry on the coastal belt as sugar takes over there. Currently the industry is worth \$2 billion and I believe somewhere in the future it will be worth very close to \$3 billion, of which about 90% will come from exports. Certainly it is presently 85%. Sugar really is the major primary industry in the State at this present time.

During the period I was Primary Industries Minister we had to deal with the issue of the single desk seller. Of course, it was a Federal issue as much as a State one and some amendments had to be made to the Trade Practices Act. That was secured with the Federal Government and I believe that the position of the single desk seller is now secure. It is the important section of the selling process of the industry where we are not competing against ourselves but where we have a product that we can sell quite adequately to the rest of the world. We have very stringent quality controls and, of course, with those quality controls and the ability of the people to be agents for selling it, we have done particularly well in the past.

The other very important aspect of the sugar industry that I was involved in was the security of tenure of terminals. That is quite important. Unfortunately, prior to the Sugar Industry Act there was no ability for the industry to have ownership of these facilities. We were able to go through a process of deciding how we could give security of tenure. We have given the industry a long-term lease. It will now be up to the industry to divest the interests of those terminals. I believe that over a period of time the ownership will revert absolutely to each industry person in a fairly equitable situation. World prices for the crop are in the doldrums—they are going down—which will have a major impact on the sale of our sugar and on our ability to sell that sugar to a lot of countries throughout the world.

Mention was made of the threat of the exotic disease, smut, from the Ord. That will require leadership from the State Government in Queensland. This dreaded disease has the ability to devastate considerable areas of country. It can very often go unnoticed for some period of time. We believe that that is what may have happened in the Ord River. The disease can be carried by wind. It can be carried by contact through insects or equipment, or even by humans.

One of the best prospects we have for combating this disease is breeding resistant varieties. As time progresses, I believe we will need Government support to do that. We have to emphasise the need to crank up a breeding program over time. We need the support of a nationwide program to combat outbreaks of exotic diseases wherever they occur. Unfortunately, from time to time, despite our best endeavours they will be introduced. I witnessed that with the outbreak of black sigatoka in the banana industry. A grower in the Daintree area had to totally destroy 87 acres of his crop, without receiving very much support. Some support did come from the Federal and State Governments, but there really has been no mechanism to address this situation. I believe there is a role that Queensland can play, and we were on track and doing something about it prior to our leaving Government.

Horticulture is developing rapidly throughout the north. The coalition has mounted a number of successful campaigns to assist horticulture development. For example, we brought about the eradication of the papaya fruit fly in about half the time that the most optimistic people predicted. I believe that by 23 August this year we will have achieved total eradication. We will have to do some monitoring for about another eight months. If all goes well, the whole of north Queensland will be cleared of the papaya fruit fly. We have had problems with the spiraling white fly, which has been on Australian shores for some time. Unfortunately, it got into the Cairns area. The department acted very swiftly. We put a perimeter around the affected area. Live plant material could not be moved out of that area. As a consequence, we have been able to contain it. We also used some biological control with a wasp called the *Encarsia*. It has been particularly effective in reducing the spread of the spiraling white fly in the Cairns region at Edge Hill. There was also an unusual outbreak of the papaya fruit fly in the Torres Strait. The department acted very swiftly and took a thousand blocks with methyl eugenol as the attractant and Malathion as the chemical that kills it. I believe that it is going well at present.

We have a number of major industries on the tablelands. We are looking at export potential with mangoes, longans, lychees and avocados. On the coast, the banana industry dominates. It is probably worth about \$160m per year. Paw paws are worth \$10m per annum. Aquaculture is also extremely important.

I wish to mention that the Ingham TAFE College will be a reality. It will be of major benefit to my electorate. That was something that Labor axed back in 1990. That is just one of the reasons that I cannot support the motion moved by the Premier. I have witnessed what Labor will do when it gets into Government. It usually acts very swiftly to knock off programs in non-Labor electorates.

Tourism is a major industry in Cairns and, in the north, Mission Beach. I wish to make special mention of Port Hinchinbrook. I am pleased that the Premier is in the Chamber. About a year ago, the Premier attended a little soiree—a Night to Remember Forever. I understand that he acted as a waiter, along with the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources. The Governor's Speech mentioned the Government's commitment to tourism. However, it tried to put Port Hinchinbrook under. It cannot be consistent. That is another reason why I cannot support the Premier's motion. Why did the Government—then in Opposition—stick its nose into something that did not have a great deal to do with it?

Mr Foley interjected.

Mr ROWELL: The member is very friendly tonight. What does he have to say?

Mr Foley: I thought we almost had you there for a while.

Mr ROWELL: You nearly did, but not quite. You were getting close, but you could not quite get over the line. Each person paid \$85 to go to that soiree to fight against Port Hinchinbrook. That was absolutely amazing.

I wish also to mention a client survey carried out by AC Nielsen McNair which demonstrated clearly that the Department of Primary Industry in Queensland was providing an excellent advisory service and has been received extremely well. In the survey, "4" was considered to be the top figure for the rating. Some 954 producers acknowledged a score of 3.73, and 50 producers acknowledged a score of 3.76. That was extremely commendable for the department. But what happened? The Government sacked the director-general, Roly Nieper. He had a major involvement in the outcome of that survey. Labor had no regard for a person who made a major contribution to the success of this department. It is a great shame when a person of the calibre of Roly Nieper is axed because of the vindictiveness of this Government. That is another very good reason why I could not support its motion of confidence.

I acknowledge many of the professional officers who work in the department. In the four months that I was the Minister I travelled throughout much of Queensland. There was good spirit, a lot of achievement and a range of expertise second to none. To mention anybody would probably put the kiss of death on them, because this department—

Mr Palaszczuk: What did you do in four months?

Mr ROWELL: I am just about to get to that. I do not think I will have enough time.

I wish now to mention some of the achievements of the department. I am pleased that the member for Inala, the Primary Industries Minister, has raised this matter. The softwood and hardwood plantations are a great initiative of the department. About 30 years ago, the coalition planted a lot of these pine forests that we are now harvesting. If we had not done that, they would not have been there to harvest. If the Minister for Primary Industries visits the mill at Tuan some time, he will see one of the best operations anywhere in the country, if not the world.

Mr Palaszczuk: It is good news.

Mr ROWELL: I am pleased that the Minister agrees with me. The whole thing about this great plantation industry is that it employs about 17,000 people. This Government is very keen on employment; we should be planting more forests. We had a \$20m program to plant another 10,000 hectares of forest. I am sure the Minister will be supporting that. At present, the industry is worth about \$1.7 billion.

I turn to aquaculture, an area where we did some really interesting work in Government. I am sure this Government will support it, too. We put \$750,000 into Cairns for the breeding of barramundi cod and coral trout. That was an excellent project. In fact, I believe in the future this industry will be worth probably \$1 billion to Queensland. Some \$500,000 went into freshwater fisheries at Walkamin, where there is another excellent project. Some 42 ponds were put in there, and eels, sleepy cod and crustaceans are being bred. Does the Minister support that? That is great. Did his party close down the Bribie Island aquaculture station or let it run dead? Does the Minister remember that one?

Mr Veivers: No, Henry does not know where that is.

Mr ROWELL: He probably does not, but that is okay. At that station we are breeding Moreton Bay bugs and a whole range of other

crustaceans. It is breeding whiting fingerlings that are being released into the Maroochy River. We put \$3m into the commercial fishing licence buyback. That was a great initiative allowing commercial fishers to get out of the industry with some dignity.

Mr Palaszczuk: What about the by-catch regulations?

Mr ROWELL: Hang on. We are moving on to the by-catch reduction devices. This will save a lot of fish kills. There has been a lot of support in the fishing industry for this. Of course, then we have the turtle exclusion devices which are doing an excellent job, too. To make sure that we had the best technology possible, we gave \$10,000 to John Olsen to expand his expertise overseas. I think that will prove to be money extremely well spent.

Mr Palaszczuk: We announced it.

Mr ROWELL: I am sure the member opposite will be supporting it. The member is too late; he has gone. We gave it to him about two months ago. The other thing we have got going is the vessel monitoring devices.

Mr Littleproud: A double opening.

Mr ROWELL: Yes, the member opposite will open things three times—even a tin of baked beans. He is that sort of a guy; he cannot keep his little fingers out of it. As far as the fishing industry is concerned, these vessel monitoring devices are excellent. There is a lot of support from the whole commercial fishing industry for the vessel monitoring devices. They had to be implemented in July to enable scallop fisheries to make sure that they kept out of the areas that they should not be in. We can even expand that further now and put it into a lot of other areas so that they do not go into seagrass areas, and so on. I am sure that the new Minister for Primary Industries will be supporting all of those good initiatives that we came up with. It is excellent that he will be supporting them.

In his Speech, the Governor referred to a centre for excellence for irrigation. We proposed \$12.5m for that. I think that is a good initiative. Does the member opposite agree with that? No, he has gone quiet. That was an initiative that we were really interested in getting up and going because I believe that we can save water and make better use of it if we have a centre for excellence for irrigation. Of course, if we do that, the money that is spent to build dams and so on can be extended.

Mr Palaszczuk: You don't want to build dams.

Mr ROWELL: We were going to build more dams. We were going to build \$1 billion worth of dams. Of course, I was really concerned about the 600 people whom the Government knocked out of the DPI. It was an absolute disgrace. We have them back there working with people. The client survey clearly demonstrated that there was a lot of support for what our former Government was doing. This Government has to match that, and we will be watching it to make sure that it does everything possible as far as the people on the land are concerned.

Mr Palaszczuk interjected.

Mr ROWELL: Anyway, I cannot stop.

Time expired.

Mr BAUMANN (Albert—NPA) (2.02 a.m.): Firstly, I would like to join with the many other members of the House who have offered their congratulations tonight to Mr Hollis on his election to the esteemed office of Speaker. I am sure that, if he could have enjoyed the same majority in the electorate of Redcliffe in the recent election, he would have been more than happy. I would like also to pay tribute to those tireless workers and supporters from the electorate of Albert who made very sure that I was not retired by popular vote the last time around. I am here for another term.

Mr Palaszczuk: I'm surprised.

Mr BAUMANN: I knew Henry would be surprised. It is another one of his oncers, I think. He just cannot pick them.

I turn now to the serious business at hand, and that is the motion before the House tonight. One of the key reasons this House cannot have confidence in this minority Labor Government is its total unreliability and confusion on the issue of the resolution of native title issues and the Labor Government's displayed inability to develop a sustainable and just economic framework.

At some stage later today the Premier will introduce legislation to put in place two points of the 10 point plan developed by the Prime Minister, the States and stakeholders. These two points are validation and confirmation of extinguishment. Of course, we on this side of the House welcome the comprehensive jettisoning of Labor native title policy by Queensland's Labor Premiers on these two crucial points of the plan. Obviously, it is the commonsense thing to do.

Validation of dealings in land by Governments between the enactment of the Native Title Act in January of 1994 and the Wik decision of December 1996 even though a procedural matter at one level is

nonetheless a very major issue. It is, indeed, because of the potential invalidity of a large number of grants made during this period by both the Goss and Borbidge Governments over land which the Native Title Act said was not native title land but which the Wik decision then said could be native title land. So we had the position in which Governments acting in line with Paul Keating's disastrous and ineffective Native Title Act could have been making invalid grants because they did not take into account common law native title. Of course, they could not and did not take it into account because they did not and could not know at that time that it existed. So commonsense certainly demanded that it be fixed.

Notwithstanding that, with a great deal of support from the Democrats and the Greens in the Senate where the Labor Left had and still has full sway, the ALP baulked on the issue. That was incredibly hypocritical of Labor, but very revealing perhaps of the ALP's motivation on this issue generally. In what were very similar circumstances in relation to invalidity in 1993, the Labor Party was perfectly ready to validate without qualification. I refer, of course, to the situation at that time when many grants in land made between the enactment of the Racial Discrimination Act in 1975 and the Native Title Act could have been invalid because they might have been racially discriminatory. At that time Labor was perfectly capable of accepting that Governments could not have known such actions were potentially racially discriminatory because the native title was not recognised by the law. In other words, the situation was essentially exactly the same.

Governments dealt in land in accordance with the law of the day but found retrospectively that they may have been in breach of a law, in that case, the one we just spoke of—the RDA. Why there was a change of heart in relation to the very similar problems subsequently presented by Wik can only be answered by those Left Wingers who drove the debate this time around. It certainly is the case this time around that Labor wanted to place very significant qualifications on the validation regime.

What Labor wanted—and it is very clearly expressed in the amendments moved to the Native Title Amendment Bill in the Senate and by exchanges during the Committee stage of that debate—was a regime which would have left many mining tenures in particular wide open to native title issues. Labor wanted validation of dealings like mining lease grants and mining lease renewals during this so-called interim period to be able to be validated

by the States only after they had been gazetted in a manner that aimed at attracting native title interests. If native title interest was attracted, then claimants could have an opportunity to go to the Federal Court. If they went to the Federal Court and a grant made during this period was determined to be invalid, as Labor believes most are, then the right to negotiate would apply.

I strongly suspect that that particular position was sparked quite specifically by a Queensland project none other than Ernest Henry. The Labor Left wanted to try to generate a situation in which Ernest Henry would have to face a retrospective right to negotiate. If it could achieve this, it might well catch a range of others, possibly scores of them around the country. In Queensland alone, for example, some 800-plus mining tenures were dealt with during that interim period.

That is absolute stupidity and absolute bloody-mindedness. That is just one of the many moves by Labor aimed at stalling the resolution of the native title issue, one of the many efforts by Labor to make native title even more litigious than Paul Keating managed to do—a fair effort—one of the many efforts by Labor to extend the reach of compensation and one of the many efforts by Labor to make mining very unfairly carry a large element of the native title burden so that Labor's cappuccino drinkers in the inner suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne can sit back and enjoy that warm inner glow, confident that they had done the politically correct thing without, of course, risking a cracker of their own.

Mr Bredhauer: What's the matter with cappuccinos, anyway?

Mr BAUMANN: Not a thing, probably. It will give the honourable member opposite that warm inner glow as well.

Mr Bredhauer interjected.

Mr BAUMANN: I am sure the member would. It would take one of those Labor Left gentlemen to identify that warm inner glow, wouldn't it? One could hear them say, "Leave the bulk of the challenges and the costs to the miners and the pastoralists. Just leave us alone with our warm inner glow." Lovely stuff! We are very grateful on this side of the House to at least have the understanding at this point that Labor in Queensland has again thumbed its nose at the Left. That, of course, is a very brave act by the Premier—if he is listening—because all of us know that when the former member for Logan led the Labor Party in this State he also treated the Left with

contempt. That led, in time, to a break-out, and even strident criticism, to be quite generous, which in turn generated a vow from that faction that it would never silently tolerate or accept such treatment again. At the moment the silence is deafening, so perhaps the Left has rolled over, too.

Anyhow, it is pleasing to see that the member for Brisbane Central, so early in his tenure, is prepared to treat the Left with the same degree of disdain as the former Labor leader. It is particularly refreshing to see the member for Brisbane Central chancing his arm in this regard so very early in his tenure when he lacks anywhere near the degree of support in the caucus, or certainly in the electorate, that the member for Logan achieved—if somewhat briefly under all the circumstances. One could say that he epitomises the old adage—if one is not living on the edge one is taking up too much space.

We will, however, be watchful of the legislation as it is introduced to ensure that it does deliver what the Premier has been so keen in recent days to suggest it does, which is an unqualified validation regime, despite the position of the Federal Labor Party. We need that, and we need it quickly. Another area in which we are particularly pleased to see the new Government dump Labor policy is in relation to the confirmation of extinguishment provision, which is point two of the 10 point plan. The Premier says he is doing it, but I do not think he quite knows what he is doing, judging by some of his quite extraordinary comments in recent days concerning extinguishment.

The confirmation of extinguishment provisions means just that: they are not provisions which extinguish, as the Premier so clearly suggests. They are provisions which merely confirm that extinguishment has taken place, at some time in the past, in line with the clear interpretations of the High Court. The fact that this regime is a simple confirmatory regime is well recognised and accepted by at least the Right Wing of the Labor Party in Canberra in general, and by the Federal Opposition Leader in particular. This is the maxim: that native title is extinguished by inconsistent grant. Where the grant is a grant of exclusive possession, native title is totally extinguished. Where the grant is a non-exclusive grant, the extinguishment is to the extent of the inconsistency in relation to what native title may remain on non-exclusive tenures. It can co-exist with the rights granted to, say, a pastoral leaseholder. But even so, where there is a conflict the rights of the pastoralist will prevail.

So what the native title amendment legislation of the Commonwealth does is simply affirm this view of the common law accepted, as I say, by most sensible commentators and by the parliamentary Leader of the Federal Labor Party in particular. To achieve that, there is simply a schedule attached to the legislation which lists those tenures which are grants of exclusive possession in this country, State by State. In relation to Queensland, that list naturally includes grazing homestead perpetual leases. The Premier, however, seems to be of the view that what he proposes to do is actually extinguish native title, and he has referred particularly to the fact that that is his intent in relation to grazing homestead perpetual leases. Of course, that is nonsense. There can be no such deliberate extinguishment. More pointedly, one cannot extinguish what is already extinguished.

I know that the leaders of the Labor Party in Queensland gave instructions for the State to argue in the Wik case, and in the Waanyi case, that native title over all pastoral land in this State was extinguished. It argued that very forcefully. But those days are behind us. The fact is that native title is only extinguished totally on grants of exclusive possession. Grazing homestead perpetual leases are grants of exclusive possession which have totally extinguished native title. So this Government cannot somehow extinguish it again—even if it would if it could.

The Premier then compounded his error in relation to the question of compensation. He has suggested that compensation for his alleged statutory extinguishment of native title on grazing homestead perpetual leases will, possibly, be in the form of infrastructure. Again the Premier is out on a very strange limb indeed. Compensation will not be a factor for native title that he has not extinguished but which was extinguished quite some time ago. But if it was payable hypothetically, it certainly will not be decided statutorily by the Premier, it will be determined by independent processes by the courts.

There may well be the potential for some negotiation, but it is a very brave statement indeed from the Premier that any such compensation, by way of infrastructure, will be deducted from any orders in relation to compensation. He may get a real shock—even a rude shock—because that is not his call. I suspect that some of the confusion the Premier is displaying on this issue is related directly to the balancing act he is seeking to engage in and which is so clearly going to bedevil him every step of the way.

What Labor wanted in the Senate in relation to confirmation was to strike out the entire Schedule. This is because the Left Wing of the Labor Party in Canberra, which basically pulled management of the matter right out from under Kim Beazley and went its own way, does not believe that even exclusive tenures extinguish native title. Labor, in the Senate, in the debate run by Nick Bolkus, had to be dragged screaming to agree to the proposition that private freehold land extinguished native title. We are scaremongers! I would say it is enough to terrify all Australians.

But it is Nick Bolkus and the Labor Left which clings hardest to the view that freehold does not extinguish. Senator Bolkus, and others from the Labor Party, argued that even that had not been conclusively decided and they wanted to leave the matter to the courts. Of course, in relation to lesser tenures—even those which are almost universally accepted as grants of exclusive possession—the Labor Left wanted the issue as to whether there was any extinguishment of native title left comprehensively to the courts—tenure by tenure test cases. This would result in literally years, possibly decades, of litigation. So much for certainty! That is part of the Premier's current, clearly almost wholesale confusion on this topic. He is trying to serve a number of masters and the job is getting the better of him.

He realises that it is the commonsense, just and equitable thing to do to confirm extinguishment as set out in the Native Title Amendment Bill and thus endorse point two of the 10 point plan. But he is aware of what Federal Labor wants—or at least he is aware of what the Left of the Queensland Labor Party wants—and he is trying to have two bob each way. None of this augurs well for the handling of this issue by this Government in the months and the years ahead.

Senator Bolkus has repeatedly said that Federally Labor remains committed—that was his very word—to the amendments to the 10 point plan which the ALP first moved in the Senate late last year. These include limited validation. That would put projects like Ernest Henry at risk. These include no schedule of confirmation of extinguishment. We would have years, and possibly decades, of expensive test cases and uncertainty deep into the next century.

These include the wholesale application of the theory of revival of native title: that there is no extinguishment, just suppression, so that native title can revive, and return, and be claimed and litigated for ever. These include

maintenance of a full right to negotiate in relation to mining on pastoral land; to a full right to negotiate over infrastructure projects built by third parties; to a full right to negotiate for the intertidal zone; to a full right to negotiate over compulsory acquisitions for third parties in towns and cities; and to a full right to negotiate in relation to any mining lease renewals—even those dealt with during the so-called intermediate period. They include constraints on pastoral activity. They include opposition to virtually every aspect of the 10 point plan, and to many subsidiary but important aspects of the Native Title Amendment Bill as well. The situation is like this: the Premier has been assiduously ducking any substantive statement on where he stands on native title since this debate began years ago. He either does not know what to think or he does not dare express what he does think. A key case in point is the right to negotiate. That is the crucial point of native title policy.

Nick Bolkus has delivered Labor's view time and again. Native title without the right to negotiate is nothing, he says. Yet the right to negotiate will smother the mining industry in this State. If the Premier goes along with the right to negotiate, he will be committing this State to double-digit unemployment and the jobs, jobs, jobs he talks about will be lost, lost, lost. He will strangle billions of dollars in development, and he knows it. So why does he not answer the central question? It is simple enough: does he back Labor policy or does he back commonsense? The fact that the Premier will not tell us is a key reason why this House cannot express confidence in his Government, particularly in relation to the native title issue.

If Federal Labor wins the next general election, will the Premier fold to the Left? More than likely, we say. Will we see all of Labor's native title policies come into play? It is hard to think that we will not, given the passionate zeal with which Labor in the Senate pursued its goals. Can we trust him in the meantime? Having given the Left two major swipes—by ostensibly going along with validation, and confirmation, however confusedly—what is going to happen when he gets to the most substantive issues? Will he need to deliver some quid pro quos to the Left? Will he need to develop legislation in a fashion that will enable him to slot in Labor policy if and when Labor wins federally? The Premier says that he is on about stability and certainty. In relation to native title, he is on about hiding around corners. Neither he nor his

Government deserves the confidence of this House on this topic.

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (2.21 a.m.): At the outset, Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your election to that high office. In debating this confidence motion, this Chamber is dealing with the future and the direction of this great State of ours. In particular, in debating this confidence motion, we are debating a motion about this minority Labor Government—a motion of confidence which it believes it will gain with the support of the member for Nicklin, based on a letter from the member for Nicklin to Mr Beattie, the Leader of the Labor Party, and, prior to that, a letter from Mr Beattie to the member for Nicklin dated 25 June this year, when Mr Beattie was Leader of the Opposition. I mention these two letters because they are most important factors in this debate. I believe that it is legitimate to make them part of this debate. The letters should be part of the debate and part of the motion. It was for that reason that the Leader of the Opposition included these particular matters in his amendment to the motion of confidence.

This matter is of major concern to the member for Nicklin, and I can understand that. He is no doubt coming under a great deal of pressure from members of the Labor Party, because they are concerned about the amendments to the motion which have been moved by the Leader of the Opposition. What are the Opposition's amendments? They clearly and simply spell out the basis on which this minority Government will govern. I would have thought that the member for Nicklin would have been able to accept this particular amendment without any qualms, because it does not go outside the letters that have been mentioned in this Chamber. It simply emphasises their importance and significance.

Mr Schwarten interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the Minister is going to continue interjecting he should do so from his correct seat.

Mr BEANLAND: The member for Nicklin talked about integrity and principle. In fact, I felt that he was lecturing all members in this Chamber. On a couple of occasions I have heard the member talking in the media about integrity and principle. How can he talk about integrity and principle if he is not prepared to insert into the motion of confidence the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition? Firstly, it recognises the commitments given by the Premier to his good self. Secondly, it requires the resignation of the Premier and the Government if those

commitments are not honoured in full. I would have thought that, by putting those commitments in this letter and by raising these issues in this letter—

Mr Borbidge: Setting a standard.

Mr BEANLAND: Yes, he was setting a standard. These issues were significant to him. They are not matters to be lightly jettisoned or abandoned and thrown overboard. If the member for Nicklin is not prepared to accept the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, I believe that the people of Queensland—and certainly I—will believe otherwise. And when the member talks about integrity and principle, I will not be able to believe that he is genuine in his concern about those matters. What we are talking about is that genuine concern—nothing more and nothing less. I know that the member for Nicklin is under great pressure from members of the Labor Party. I have noticed them moving across the Chamber to talk to the member for Nicklin to shore up their position on this matter—as well they might. That occurs all the time.

This is a very serious and important matter. The letter of 25 June from the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr Beattie, contains no trickery or nonsense that would be of concern to the honourable member. I believe that it would be worth while going through some aspects of this letter. I am not sure whether members have done this, but they should. The first subject raised in the letter is "Liaison with Independent Members". The second paragraph of that section states—

"A senior member of the Premier's personal staff will have responsibility for assisting the two Independents to ensure access to Ministers, key public servants including heads of Departments, and the Premier."

Surely that is not a matter about which the member for Nicklin or the Premier would be concerned.

The next section headed "Parliament" states—

"I note and share your strongly held desire to lift the standard of behaviour in the Parliament."

Mr Speaker, I reflect upon your election to that position on Tuesday of this week. At that time the Premier indicated that he is determined that his Government will play its part in setting high standards of honesty and accountability. If we are talking about honesty and accountability, then why should the Government not be called upon to resign if it is

not fulfilling these significant issues that were raised in that letter by the then Leader of the Opposition—now the Premier of this State? He considered them to be serious enough to include them in a letter to the member for Nicklin. The letter goes on to state—

"... ensure Standing Orders allow adequate opportunities for all Members to:

1. Ask Questions both without notice and on notice."

I believe that that has been the case and will continue to be the case. The letter continues—

"Move private members bills and have them debated."

That is a matter which I understand the Premier has accepted and, in due course, members will be debating the Sessional Orders. The letter continues—

"Participate in the 6pm debate"—

which I understand has been taken care of—

"Participate in legislative debates"—

all members of this House have always had that ability—

"Assume an appropriate role on at least one of the Parliamentary committees"—

I understand that matter has been taken care of—

"Involve Independents in the budget process, in particular through Estimate Committees."

That certainly happened in the past with the Independent member for Gladstone, and I am sure that it will happen in the future.

The letter then mentions the "Term of the Government". The Premier has picked this up in his motion. I would have thought that the most significant part of that section would be that—

"There would be no election held before May 2001."

The Premier's motion picked that up and goes on to say "without express resolution of the Parliament". That is fair enough. The matter has been covered. So why should we not have reference to this letter in the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition?

The next section headed "Assurances from Independent Members" states—

"Independent Members deserve to be treated with courtesy and respect."

That is not something that members opposite did at all times in the previous Parliament. I refer members to the Hansard debate in February 1996 in relation to this particular debate. The letter continues—

"I confirm my verbal advice that I would seek your support and the support of Mrs Cunningham for Parliamentary motions of confidence/no confidence and supply. I also seek agreement to detailed consultation on any new legislation arising from the electoral platform that I took to the electorate for the June 13 election, noting however your right as an Independent to vote on bills and clauses as you see appropriate."

Again, that is fair enough. The "Community Consultation" section mentions citizen-initiated referenda. I will not go into that, because private members' Bills will be allowed.

The next heading in the letter is "Queensland Finances", which I thought was a fairly straightforward issue. I point out to the member for Nicklin that that section sets out what I understand to be the Labor Party's position on this matter. What could be more clear than the section under the heading "Queensland Finances"? The letter states—

"In our meeting you expressed very clearly your commitment to maintaining sound financial management of the State."

The letter then sets out a number of points that I think are worth reiterating—

- "1. Labor's new initiatives are accommodated within the framework of the existing budget and forward estimates with only modest adjustments to outlays.
2. Labor will maintain a surplus budget framework and in each year, will further reduce net debt.
3. Labor will deliver a budget surplus in both cash and GFS terms.
4. The adjustments to the surplus figures reported in the recently delivered State Budget can be funded without drawing upon reserves for future superannuation liabilities or the contributions paid by members of public sector superannuation schemes.
5. Labor can deliver its capital and current program without imposing any new taxes or increasing existing taxes and charges above current real levels."

They will not be increased above the CPI level. The list continues—

6. "Labor's policies are fully costed and fully funded."

I ask: what can be the concerns in relation to those provisions? Perhaps the Treasurer of this State is planning on some increases in taxes and charges above the CPI. However, the letter states clearly that Labor's election commitments are fully costed and can be contained within the budgetary framework and that there will be no real increases in its taxes and charges, that is, above the level of the CPI. I ask the member for Nicklin: what can be of concern? According to the Labor Party, it is quite clear that those commitments can be met. Why would there be pressure upon the member for Nicklin and why would he be concerned that this Government should resign if it does not honour those commitments in full?

Next is the section headed "Ministerial Financial Responsibility". That section goes into some detail. I will not take up the time of the Chamber, because I want to deal with some other matters. That section contains a number of points. No. 1 states—

"Six-monthly reports to Parliament on Ministerial expenses provided in a format that is readily understandable by the community."

Annual reports have been presented to the Parliament. Whether they were provided six monthly, annually or quarterly—so be it—they were still reports to this Parliament. No. 2 states—

"All overseas travel by Ministers will require personal approval by the Premier, based on a detailed submission outlining the benefits for Queensland and the proposed cost. There will be a full report to Parliament ..."

Under the former Government, that was certainly the case. I believe that that was the case also under the Goss Labor Government. For as long as I can remember, there have been reports to this Parliament. Just as the first point contains nothing new, the second point contains nothing new. No. 3 states—

"Ministers will only be given approval to be accompanied on overseas travel by their spouse or partner when expressly approved by the Premier ..."

Again, there is nothing new in that provision. No. 4 states—

"Ministers will not be entitled to Ministerial credit cards."

I certainly did not have a ministerial credit card in the former Government. I was not aware that Ministers did have them.

Mr Borbidge: We cancelled them. They were only issued for overseas travel.

Mr BEANLAND: The former Premier informs me that they were issued only for overseas travel. I certainly did not have one. I do not believe that other Ministers in the former Government had them. I make the point to the member for Nicklin that Ministers did not have those.

No. 5 deals with the Ministerial Services Branch being free from political influence. I have always believed that that was the case. I do not believe that there is anything new in that provision. There are a couple of other points in that section that raise some more entertaining matters. Generally, they have been along lines similar to the policies of the former Government. This Government may have made some minor changes, but there is nothing drastically, extraordinarily new.

The next section deals with parliamentary entitlements. I understand that the current Government has indicated that it will honour that. I understand that that has been foreshadowed. We might be given more information about that either later today or in the very near future. That commitment will be honoured; there is no problem.

Under the heading "Concluding Remarks", the letter states—

"In our discussions you have emphasised parliamentary accountability and a government committed to addressing the sense of alienation among many Queenslanders. I believe the initiatives outlined here—and broader policy program advanced by Labor during the 1998 election campaign—can make a real difference.

Our job now as parliamentarians is to ensure honest, stable and accountable government for Queensland. I believe Labor can work effectively with the Independent Members in the interests of our State, and I look forward to discussing these issues further.

Kind regards

Peter Beattie

Leader of the Opposition"

That letter was dated 25 June 1998.

Following the receipt of that letter of 25 June, the member for Nicklin wrote to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Beattie, saying—

"Thank you for your letter dated June 25, 1998 outlining our recent discussions.

In light of the above, I confirm that I will support your Government on Confidence motions unless, there is evidence of gross fraud, misappropriation or like illegal activities, and, that I will support your Appropriation Bill and not abstain from voting."

That is fair enough. What is the problem with supporting the amendments put forward by the coalition? Why is the Labor Party so afraid of this amendment? What does it have to hide?

Mr Borbidge interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: As the Leader of the Opposition says, what is the value of this agreement if it cannot be enforced? What is the value of the whole arrangement? Members opposite discuss integrity, honesty and accountability. Where is the accountability in this agreement? This is not just some private agreement; this is a public agreement. It is an agreement that involves this Parliament. It involves the Chamber; it involves the people of Queensland. Therefore, in relation to this matter, I say to the member for Nicklin that if he is genuine—and I believe that to this point he has been genuine—the test is about to arrive. If he is genuine, he must support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

A number of other points need to be raised in relation to this matter. It is clear that the Labor Party has a great deal of concern about some matter. If there were no concern, the member for Cook would not be moving an amendment to the Leader of the Opposition's amendment. Clearly, the member for Brisbane Central is concerned about some commitment in this letter, which was given by him when he was the Leader of the Opposition. That is a commitment that he now wants to sneak away from—otherwise he would be supporting the Opposition's amendment. So much for his comments about integrity and honesty. So much for his genuineness in relation to this Parliament. Of course, this letter is supposed to be the foundation of the new-found Beattie Labor Government. What a foundation it is!

If Labor is not prepared to stand by these arrangements, they are fundamentally flawed from the outset. They are straightforward arrangements. There is nothing clever about them. I have been through most of them in detail. I do not think anybody will find anything in those arrangements that one could not genuinely expect this minority Government to keep in this place. It is straightforward.

Mr Cooper interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: As the member for Crows Nest says, the member wrote that letter when he was Leader of the Opposition. He believed that he could keep those commitments. I ask the Premier: what has happened to cause him to try to walk away, to turn his back and to do yet another of the backflips for which he is well known? They did not call him "Backflip" for nothing. The public of Queensland will experience distrust and uncertainty in relation to this minority Labor Government if this particular amendment by the Leader of the Opposition is not accepted. Of course, the actual letter itself will not be worth the piece of paper it is written on. It will be nothing more than a set of words. It will not be worth a cracker. If one is not prepared to stand up for it, it certainly will not be worth the paper on which it is written. It is a straightforward commitment by the former Leader of the Opposition to the member for Nicklin for the benefit of the public of Queensland. As the member was telling us before, he is interested in genuineness, sincerity, accountability and integrity. That is what I thought this motion of confidence was all about. So Labor has moved an amendment in an attempt to wriggle its way out of the basis of this Government. No doubt the people of Queensland have something in store for them down the track. So much for the dignity of Parliament and lifting the standards of Parliament!

Earlier today, the Premier endeavoured to portray his Government as receiving 53% of the two-party preferred vote. I think that was the figure he used.

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr BEANLAND: I am pleased that the Premier agrees with me. Of course, that is another furphy, another attempt by the Labor Party to rewrite history. Under the situation that existed at the last election, there was no two-party preferred vote. The electoral office has not distributed it and, as I understand it, that is not something that is going to be done. It might be a lot of wishful thinking, but I say to the Premier of this State that it is not true. It does not stand up to scrutiny. It is just one of those throwaway lines that might make him look good.

We on this side of the Chamber are concerned—and, no doubt, the Government is also concerned—firstly about the Government's commitment to 5% unemployment. The time in which to achieve that figure has gone from three years to five years. Secondly, the Opposition is concerned

that each day the Government has to find \$1.5m—and it has been in office some 34 days—in order to honour its election commitments. Over its three-year term, the Government has to find \$1.5m each day in order to fund its \$1.5 billion worth of election commitments. No doubt, the Government is concerned about that also.

Time expired.

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (2.41 a.m.), in reply: I offer my sincere thanks to all members for their contributions to the debate on this motion. Although I did not agree with a number of the speeches nor with the tone of others, it is important that I acknowledge, I respect and I defend the right of members to express their views, and I thank them for their contributions. I will deal with a number of specific matters later.

Firstly, in relation to the amendments proposed to the original motion, we on this side of the House will oppose the amendment proposed by the member for Caboolture. I will come back to the reason for that very shortly. I might say that the views of the member for Caboolture and supported by the member for Tablelands and others—and I say this with the greatest respect—were based on rumour, innuendo and shallow media reports. In my view, One Nation is being manipulated by disaffected people pursuing a 10-year-old vendetta between outside individuals. I think that it is unfortunate that, in its first contribution to the debate in this House, we saw One Nation getting into the gutter in attacking a number of Ministers in a way that I believe was simply unhelpful to the sound running of a decent Parliament. I say—and I do this in the kindest possible way—that it is absolutely essential that, if we are going to run a decent Parliament, when members raise issues they should at least have the decency to test them and, I believe, should not make wild allegations that simply are totally unsubstantiated. I will come to the detail of that very shortly.

I make the further point that I believe one of the reasons why One Nation has 11 members in this Parliament is that there is significant disenchantment with the major parties in how they behave—something with which the members of One Nation would agree. Today, they behaved in exactly the way the major parties have behaved for the past 25 years, which is why they are here. I think that a lot of people who voted for the One Nation members would be disappointed in the

way in which they have behaved. I will come back to that.

In relation to the amendment proposed by the honourable member for Surfers Paradise, I indicate to him that the Government is opposed to a significant part of his amendment. I accept the amendment moved by the Transport Minister, which acknowledges that the House recognises the commitments given by the Premier to the member for Nicklin. Obviously, I have discussed this matter with the member for Nicklin. It is quite clear and appropriate that that acknowledgment be on the record. There is no doubt about that at all. That letter that I wrote to the member for Nicklin is on the public record. I tabled it in the Parliament. However, the Leader of the Opposition and his team know that what he tried to do with the amendment is just simply gamesmanship. It is just politics and it is nothing more. It is designed to try to give the Opposition the opportunity to try to bring down the Government on any whim at any time. That is what it is about. It is about trying to get out of the commitment that I gave to the member for Nicklin that we would not have an election before 5 May 2001.

Mr Borbidge: They're your commitments.

Mr BEATTIE: Let us forget about the nonsense. The Leader of the Opposition ignores that if the member for Nicklin believes that at any time I or my Government has not lived up to the commitments I gave in that letter, he has options. He can come into this House and vote with the Opposition, and that is the end of the Government. The Leader of the Opposition knows that. That option and powers rest with the member for Nicklin. So let us expose the nonsense. It is done. That is why accepting the part amendment that was moved by the Minister for Transport is the sensible thing.

Mr Borbidge: That's the reason you should accept the amendment.

Mr BEATTIE: What I just said exposed the nonsense of the Leader of the Opposition once and for all. It is finished.

I move to the other issue that is important, and that is the Heiner matter. I am going to deal with this Heiner matter in some detail because the One Nation members have been duped. I say this with some degree of respect because I understand, as they are the new players on the block, that some of the old hands who have been around are going to try to take advantage of them. I say to the member for Caboolture that, in good faith, I am going to go through this matter stage by

stage, step by step, and explain exactly what the position is.

In 1989, the then National Party Government established the Heiner inquiry into management issues raised by the union representing staff of the John Oxley Youth Centre. Because the previous National Party Government had not properly constituted the inquiry, there was no legal protection for Mr Heiner or the witnesses who were giving evidence. In other words, the inquiry was improperly established by a previous Government. The National Party Government got it wrong. That is a fact. There is no argument about it. None of the people briefing the One Nation members will argue about that. That is fact one.

On that basis, the Crown Solicitor advised that the investigation should not continue and that the documentation should be referred to the State Archivist for destruction, because the inquiry was wrongly established and because there was no legal protection for witnesses who gave evidence before the inquiry. Following careful consideration of these issues over three Cabinet meetings and on the basis of advice from the Crown Solicitor, the Goss Government authorised the destruction of material collected by Mr Heiner.

In February 1995, the then Attorney-General, Dean Wells, made a statement to the Queensland Parliament at which time he tabled copies of advice from the Crown Solicitor. Nothing was hidden. The legal advice is on the record of this Parliament.

Let us go back. On 5 March 1990, Cabinet was informed that representations had been received from a solicitor representing certain staff at the centre. At that time, no formal legal proceedings had been instituted, nor was any legal action subsequently instituted. Never! There was no legal action at any time. Never! At all times Cabinet acted in complete good faith to protect the whistleblowers involved in this case. This was about protecting the whistleblowers. These whistleblowers were given no legal protection whatsoever by the previous National Party Government in the way in which the inquiry was established. All relevant legal advices from the Crown Solicitor to the Goss Government were tabled in this Parliament in February 1995 and provided to the Senate inquiry into unresolved whistleblower cases. Subsequently, considerable further information was given to the Senate inquiry.

There was no cover-up and there has never been a cover-up. This matter has

wasted hundreds of thousands of dollars of public money. This matter has been the subject of inquiries—and members should listen to this—by two Senate select committees. At least twice a Senate privileges committee has considered the matter; the Criminal Justice Commission has; the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee has; EARC has; the Auditor-General has looked at it twice; the Connolly/Ryan inquiry has; and, more recently, this matter was the subject of a report by Tony Morris and Mr Edward Howard. The matters they raised were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

On the advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the coalition Government decided to take no further action. So nothing could have been more thoroughly investigated. How much longer are we going to waste thousands of dollars on this business? The Parliamentary Criminal Justice Commissioner now has custody of the Connolly/Ryan records—

An Opposition member interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: Wait a minute. It is not finished. The Parliamentary Criminal Justice Commissioner now has custody of the Connolly/Ryan records to see whether further investigation is required. The process is ongoing, notwithstanding all these investigations. Yet again, I am prepared to table the same documents for the information of the Parliament so that those unfounded and mischievous allegations can be dismissed once and for all.

I have discussed this matter with the Independent member for Nicklin. I promised him accountability. I promised him that I would have an open Government. As a result of that discussion with Peter Wellington, I have promised him that tonight I will table the Cabinet documents in the Parliament. I will table them because of the commitment I gave to the Independent member for Nicklin. Those Cabinet documents confirm exactly what I have told Peter Wellington privately, and they will now confirm to all the world exactly what the case is.

I go one step further and I table all these relevant Cabinet documents, because when they are examined the people of Queensland can see the precise advice on which Cabinet acted. The chair of the recent Senate committee of inquiry concluded this—

"In respect to the shredding of the Heiner documents I do not believe there is any evidence of a political conspiracy on behalf of the government. A newly elected government was confronted with

a problem created during the term of the previous administration. The government sought advice through the correct channels and, irrespective of whether the advice was correct or not, it acted upon the advice that was given."

That is clearly not a party political person from our side of the fence. It is clear that an independent Senate chairman reached that conclusion. What I am doing today in tabling these documents is unprecedented, but I want to make clear that I do this to fulfil a commitment I gave to Peter Wellington and I do it because, as far as I am concerned, my Government is entitled to start on a clean sheet.

I will not regard this as a precedent. I have previously refused to release these documents because I am totally committed to the principle of Cabinet confidentiality, and I am not going to do this again. I am doing this for the two reasons I gave. First, this motion being debated tonight is the most important motion that my Government will ever have to debate. This is the motion establishing my Government's credentials. Therefore, I am not prepared to allow that establishment of confidence to be in any way impaired. The second commitment is what I said to Peter Wellington when I met him and when I corresponded with him. I promised accountability and I will fulfil that promise by tabling these documents. I want to make it clear: this is not a precedent and I will stick to the principle in which I believe very strongly and passionately, that is, Cabinet confidentiality.

I believe that the member for Nicklin was right in his speech today, which was an excellent speech, when he said that the real enemy is unemployment. That is what we ought to be talking about. We ought to be talking about the things that can improve and change people's lives. That is what we ought to be doing, not playing senseless games and wasting taxpayers' money. Of course I feel angry that we waste our time on these matters.

Let us as a Parliament debate what is important, and that is improving the lives of all the people we represent. The Heiner documents do not do that. We have a personality conflict, a bitter one admittedly, that had nothing to do with the Labor Party, that goes back a long time, and we have been caught up in it. I have tabled these Cabinet documents tonight, having declined to do so in the past, because my Government is

entitled to start with a clean bill of health. I stress that again.

Today, One Nation members, despite claiming that they were going to raise the standards of the Queensland Parliament, made scurrilous and unfounded attacks on the integrity of five of my Ministers. The very suggestion that any of these Ministers would have deliberately and corruptly suppressed evidence of child abuse is offensive in the extreme—absolutely offensive. If One Nation members want to behave in that way, they will be judged badly by the community. One Nation's first action in this Parliament was to use parliamentary privilege to attack the personal integrity of five of my Ministers. The tabling of these documents not only exposes the fraudulent dishonesty of One Nation's behaviour, but also ends once and for all this ongoing waste of taxpayers' money and the abuse of parliamentary privilege.

Let us look at the documents I will table. First of all, as one of the Cabinet documents indicates, the destruction was under the terms of section 55 of the Libraries and Archives Act of 1988. It was done under an Act of Parliament. It was not done without some authority; it was done on Crown law advice under an Act of Parliament.

Let us look at what I am tabling. I am tabling Cabinet submissions Nos 100, 117 and 160. I table them for the information of the House. They relate to the three Cabinet meetings at which these matters were discussed. On 21 February 1995 in a ministerial statement on the Senate Select Committee on Unresolved Whistleblower Cases, the then Attorney-General, Dean Wells, outlined a lot more of the details. Because I have limited time tonight, I table that statement as well and I urge members to read it. It is an excellent statement that explains more detail than I have.

In addition to that, I also table the following documents: a copy of a letter to the Acting Director-General of the Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs from the Crown Solicitor dated 18 January 1990; a copy of a letter to the Acting Director-General, Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs from the Crown Solicitor dated 19 January 1990; a copy of a letter to the Acting Director-General, Department of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs from the Crown Solicitor dated 23 January 1990; a copy of a letter to the Acting Secretary to Cabinet from the Crown Solicitor dated 16 February 1990; and a letter from the then Acting Cabinet

Secretary to the State Archivist seeking permission to destroy all documents obtained by Heiner during the inquiry. Mr Speaker, you have got the lot. Now there is no excuse for this nonsense to continue.

I will refer to a couple of aspects of these documents so that they are on the record of this Parliament. Let us look at the Crown law advice provided on 18 January 1990, signed by K. M. O'Shea, the Crown Solicitor. What did he say to this? This is the Crown law advice. He said—

"I note your instructions that Mr Heiner was not appointed by the Governor in Council to conduct this inquiry which, of course, means that the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1954-1989 has no application to the inquiry."

In other words, people were not protected. He went on—

"The effect of this is that Mr Heiner cannot subpoena witnesses or examine them on oath nor can he subpoena documents in the possession of any person."

So in other words, no-one had any protection. The whole inquiry was flawed. That is Crown law advice, not my opinion. Let us move on to what else was said. A letter from Crown law on 23 January 1990, again signed by K. M. O'Shea, states—

"I do not see any difficulty in destruction of the material supplied to Mr Heiner, naturally any material removed from official files should be returned to those files but the tape recordings of interviews had with people or any notes or drafts made by Mr Heiner should I suggest be destroyed."

That is Crown law's advice. They are not my words; they are from Crown law. I table these documents. The record speaks for itself. Honourable members can read all these other documents. As far as I am concerned, this Government is not going to waste one more cent on this personal vendetta that exists between private individuals. Enough is enough. It is over.

Let me move on to the other matters raised in the debate. A number of matters were raised in relation to issues, particularly in relation to the history of this State and how people were perceived either in Government or in Opposition. One of the things that disappointed me during this debate was that no-one came up with an alternative to the Labor Government. No-one came up with a strategy that says, "Here is a better alternative

to provide certainty or direction to this State." From that point of view, I believe that those members in this House who are genuinely interested in the future of this State will support the motion of confidence in my Government.

I believe that members opposite have failed the simple test of putting forward any plan for an alternative Government. However, what was put forward, particularly by members of the coalition, was a grab bag of negatives. The coalition front bench, just four weeks after many of its members left their ministerial offices, was bereft of one positive idea. I did not hear any positive ideas from members opposite about what this State should do over the next three years. I did not hear one alternative to the structure that we offer to give certainty.

Over the past 12 or 14 hours we have heard about 40,000 words from the Nationals, the Liberals and One Nation. I did not hear a paragraph which put forward a better recipe for Government for the next three years than the one offered by Labor. I could not find a sentence that offered more certainty for Queensland than is offered by the Labor Government. I did not notice a single phrase which contained even a hint about a better solution than Labor's. I did not even recall five words out of those 40,000 words that were constructive.

What has the public gained from today, apart from a passing headache? The Nationals and Liberals have told us that they ran a wonderful Government. If we believe that, clearly the people got it wrong when they voted recently. I do not believe that we can treat the electorate with contempt. Let us look at the voting figures. A number of members made reference to the voting figures. Some disputed my figure of 53% for the two-party preferred vote. I accept that because of the nature of this election it is difficult to determine a two-party preferred vote. But as someone who has spent years calculating votes, I know that it can be done. A 53% two-party preferred vote for us is a modest assessment of what we would have got on two-party preferred terms, had it been distributed.

However, let us take the primary vote. I am happy to pursue the argument. The first preference votes in the 13 June State election were as follows: Labor, 38.9%; One Nation, 20.7%; Liberal Party, 18.1%; and last—in every meaning of the word—was the National Party, with 15.2%. So what we have is a Leader of the Opposition who has the audacity to come into this House and say that

I should not form a Government when the party that he leads received 15.2% of the vote of the people of Queensland. I ask all Queenslanders: do they believe that the Premier should come from a party that can receive only 15% of the vote?

Mr Hamill: One in seven.

Mr BEATTIE: Yes, one in seven. Let us have no more nonsensical arguments about statistics. If members opposite want to cite the primary vote figures, that is fine with me.

Mr Littleproud interjected.

Mr BEATTIE: I can understand the member's disappointment. The primary vote figures are very, very clear. Whether we argue this on a two-party preferred basis or on a primary vote basis, there is absolutely no doubt that my Government has the credentials and the support of the people of Queensland to form a Government.

I turn to a number of the other issues raised. Questions were raised about unemployment and whether we would reach our target. I understand—and I have never pretended otherwise—that my 5% unemployment in five years target is tough. It is difficult. Of course it is tough and of course it is difficult. However, the difference between us and the Opposition is that we are prepared to have a go. I am determined that we will do everything we can to reach that target. But what did the former Treasurer's Budget papers say? They said that unemployment would go from 8.5% to 8.75% in the next year. In other words, in the draft Budget she brought down she was saying to Queensland that there would be 9,300 more Queenslanders unemployed this financial year than last year, and yet she has the hide to come in here and attack me on the basis of unemployment. At least I am prepared to have a go, and so is my Government.

A number of references were made to the issue of WorkCover. A number of comments were made about our trying to attack the WorkCover scheme and about how workers compensation was going to run into difficulties. What the Opposition has not told the truth about is this: in the last Parliament, the Government tried to make a number of changes to WorkCover. The Opposition joined with the Independent member for Gladstone to protect that scheme. I pay tribute to the Independent member for Gladstone for the role that she played in that. That scheme was basically a continuation of the Goss Government scheme introduced at the end of 1995. We now see the success of what was achieved. The scheme is now moving into the

black; it is now moving in the direction it ought to be. It is a credit to us that we had the courage to take that stand.

I make no apology for saying that we will drive the issue of apprenticeships and traineeships. In respect of industrial relations, we will drive an arrangement that not only gives average Queenslanders a fair go in the workplace; our scheme will also create employment opportunities. That is why one of the first proposals that the Minister for Employment—and we have a Minister for Employment—brought to Cabinet was to establish a fund that would create 3,000 apprenticeships over the next three years. Do honourable members know why that is necessary? It is because for too long Governments in this State have failed to skill up the work force. They have failed to give our young people an opportunity. That is why that fund is important. I will not move away from apprenticeships and giving our young people a chance. That is why we have to skill up our work force. That is why that is an important initiative—an initiative that the former Minister toyed with but backed off on, because he did not have the courage to go ahead with it.

Industry has applauded us for our courage in introducing the fund that will create those 3,000 apprenticeships, because it knows we need them. All members of this House should be appalled by the fact that last year a major firm in north Queensland had to import boilermakers from South Korea. Does the honourable member know why? That was because we had not done enough in relation to apprenticeships and traineeships to provide apprenticeships here for boilermakers. I will tell the House this: we will be creating opportunities for boilermakers and all of the other trades so that we skill up our work force. If we do not have skills we cannot create long-term jobs.

Let me turn to financial matters. I turn to the comments by members opposite in relation to the costing of Labor's election promises, and in particular the alleged black hole that was supposedly found by Treasury in Labor's costings, according to the Leader of the Opposition. Treasury is like a reliable, well-oiled machine. If we put data in the machine, it will accurately process it. If the Leader of the Opposition wants certain questions answered, he will get the answers to his questions.

Mr Borbidge: That is what you did with KPMG.

Mr BEATTIE: No. But the Leader of the Opposition will not get the truth. The truth is what we got from KPMG. We did not get

involved in trickery. There were no half-smart questions. We went to an international firm of accountants that has a world-class reputation. We put all of our books on the table. There was no trickery, which is what we saw from members opposite. Here we had a world-renowned firm of accountants whose reputation was on the line. It gave us the clean bill of health that we needed. But what did we find when we got there?

Mr Hamill: It wasn't pretty.

Mr BEATTIE: It was not pretty. We found that so many of the former Government's election promises had not been funded. A good illustration was the development on the Cairns seafront.

Mr Hamill: At the Esplanade.

Mr BEATTIE: Yes, it was on the Esplanade. The former Government simply went to Cairns and promised \$4m. When we went to have a look, where was the money? It was not funded. \$120m—and you denied this—

Mr Hamill: The Pacific Motorway.

Mr BEATTIE: Yes, the Pacific Motorway. I have a letter from the former Transport Minister that said that we were \$120m short. Yet the member opposite said that it was not true. Here we have its own Minister who wrote to Treasury explaining it. The former Government ran the books of this State like Christopher Skase would. That is what it did. It should not try to pretend that it did not.

I will return this State to frugal management. That is what this Government will do. I will stick to every one of the commitments that I gave to the Independent member for Nicklin. The previous Government ran this State like Christopher Skase would, but I am not prepared to do that. I repeat very clearly: in relation to the commitments that we gave, Labor can deliver its capital and current program without imposing any new taxes or increasing existing taxes and charges above current real levels. We have already seen what the Treasurer pointed out today: a \$750m carryover of capital works. The former Government did not even deliver on that.

Mr Hamill: Total carryover.

Mr BEATTIE: Sorry, total carryover. It did not even deliver on it. No wonder they were saying that unemployment would go up by 9,300.

Let me conclude by saying that Queensland needs a Government that can drive this State forward. That is what we offer. I am sick of the political games, and that is all

that we have seen for the past 12 hours. We have seen nothing constructive. Queenslanders want a positive, constructive Government, and that is exactly what they are going to get.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted contained in Mr Bredhauer's amendment stand part of the amendment of Mr Borbidge—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 44—Beanland, Black, Borbidge, Connor, Cooper, E. A. Cunningham, Dalgleish, Davidson, Elliott, Feldman, Gamin, Goss, Grice, Healy, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Kingston, Knuth, Laming, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, Malone, Mitchell, Nelson, Paff, Pratt, Prenzler, Quinn, Rappolt, Rowell, Santoro, Seeney, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Springborg, Stephan, Turner, Veivers, Watson. Tellers: Baumann, Hegarty

NOES, 44—Attwood, Barton, Beattie, Bligh, Boyle, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Clark, J. I. Cunningham, D'Arcy, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Fouras, Gibbs, Hamill, Hayward, Lavarch, Lucas, McGrady, Mackenroth, Mickel, Mulherin, Musgrove, Nelson-Carr, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Reeves, Reynolds, Roberts, Robertson, Rose, Schwarten, Spence, Struthers, Welford, Wellington, Wells, Wilson. Tellers: Sullivan, Purcell

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the Noes.

Resolved in the **negative**.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! All further divisions will be of two minutes' duration.

Amendment (Mr Borbidge) agreed to.

Amendment (Mr Feldman) negatived.

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

AYES, 45—Attwood, Barton, Beattie, Bligh, Boyle, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Clark, E. A. Cunningham, J. I. Cunningham, D'Arcy, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Fouras, Gibbs, Hamill, Hayward, Lavarch, Lucas, McGrady, Mackenroth, Mickel, Mulherin, Musgrove, Nelson-Carr, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Reeves, Reynolds, Roberts, Robertson, Rose, Schwarten, Spence, Struthers, Welford, Wellington, Wells, Wilson. Tellers: Sullivan, Purcell

NOES, 43—Beanland, Black, Borbidge, Connor, Cooper, Dalgleish, Davidson, Elliott, Feldman, Gamin, Goss, Grice, Healy, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Kingston, Knuth, Laming, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, Malone, Mitchell, Nelson, Paff, Pratt, Prenzler, Quinn, Rappolt, Rowell, Santoro, Seeney, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Springborg, Stephan, Turner, Veivers, Watson. Tellers: Baumann, Hegarty

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

PAPERS

The Clerk informed the House of the tabling of the following documents—

PAPER TABLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 202

The Clerk informed the House that the following paper was tabled on 10 June 1998 in accordance with Standing Order 202—

Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee Report No. 45—A report of a review of the activities of the Criminal Justice Commission pursuant to s.118(1)(f) of the Criminal Justice Act 1989.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by The Clerk—

Ambulance Service Act 1991—

Ambulance Service Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 188

Auctioneers and Agents Act 1971—

Auctioneers and Agents Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 151

Banana Industry Protection Act 1989—

Banana Industry Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 164

Building Act 1975—

Fire Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 183

Standard Building Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 169

Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980—

Building Units and Group Titles Regulation 1998, No. 189

Central Queensland University Act 1998—

Central Queensland University Statute No. 1 (Membership of Convocation) 1998

Central Queensland University Statute No. 2 (Conduct of Council Elections) 1998

Civil Justice Reform Act 1998—

Proclamation—section 4(2) of the Act (to the extent it inserts the definition "client") commences 2 July 1998, 196

Collections Act 1966—

Collections Regulation 1998, No. 152

Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984—

Community Services (Aborigines) Regulation 1998, No. 192

Community Services (Torres Strait) Act 1984—

Community Services (Torres Strait) Regulation 1998, No. 193

Competition Policy Reform (Queensland) Act 1996—

Competition Policy Reform (Queensland—Chicken Meat Industry Exemptions) Regulation 1998, No. 209

Competition Policy Reform (Queensland—Dairy Industry Exemptions) Regulation 1998, No. 201

Competition Policy Reform (Queensland—Sugar Industry Exemptions) Regulation 1998, No. 215

District Court Act 1967—

District Court Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 153

Environmental Protection Act 1994—

Environmental Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 179

Environmental Protection (Interim Waste) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 162

Environmental Protection (Noise) Amendment Policy (No. 1) 1998, No. 168

Fire and Rescue Authority Act 1990—

Fire Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 183

Fisheries Act 1994—

Fisheries Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 213

Gaming Machine Act 1991—

Gaming Machine Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 211

Gas Act 1965—

Gas Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 204

Government Owned Corporations Act 1993—

Government Owned Corporations Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 202

Government Owned Corporations and Other Legislation Amendment Act 1998—

Proclamation—part 4 of the Act commences 22 May 1998, No. 144

Proclamation—the provisions of the Act that are not in force commence 20 July 1998, No. 200

Health Act 1937—

Health (Drugs and Poisons) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 149

Health (Drugs and Poisons) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 203

Invasion of Privacy Act 1971—

Invasion of Privacy Regulation 1998, No. 154

Justices Act 1886—

Justices Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 155

Motor Vehicles Safety Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 182

Travel Agents Regulation 1998, No. 156

Land Act 1994—

Land Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 173

Legal Practitioners Act 1995—

Trust Accounts Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 157

Lotteries Act 1997—

Lotteries Amendment Rule (No. 2) 1998, No. 217

- Magistrates Courts Act 1921—
Magistrates Courts Amendment Rule (No. 2) 1998, No. 150
- Marine Parks Act 1982—
Marine Parks (Moreton Bay) Amendment Zoning Plan (No. 1) 1998, No. 159
- Meat Industry Act 1993—
Meat Industry Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 165
Meat Industry (Hygienic Production of Game Meat for Human Consumption) Standard 1998, No. 174
Meat Industry (Hygienic Production of Poultry Meat for Human Consumption) Standard 1998, No. 175
Meat Industry (Hygienic Production of Rabbit Meat for Human Consumption) Standard 1998, No. 176
- Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994—
Motor Accident Insurance Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 216
- Natural Resources Legislation Amendment Act 1998—
Proclamation—part 3 of the Act commences 25 May 1998, No. 172
- Nature Conservation Act 1992—
Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 5) 1998, No. 178
- Occupational Therapists Act 1979—
Occupational Therapists Amendment By-law (No. 1) 1998, No. 146
- Officials in Parliament Act 1896—
Proclamation—that certain officers of the Crown are liable to retire from office on political grounds and are capable of being elected members of the Legislative Assembly and sitting and voting in the Legislative Assembly at the same time, No. 194
- Petroleum Act 1923—
Petroleum Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 205
Petroleum (Entry Permission—Epic Energy Pty Ltd) Amendment Notice (No. 1) 1998, No. 214
- Plant Protection Act 1989—
Plant Protection Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 166
Plant Protection (Banana Black Sigatoka—Wattle Hills) Quarantine Notice 1998, No. 210
- Podiatrists Act 1969—
Podiatrists Amendment By-law (No. 1) 1998, No. 147
- Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926—
Primary Producers' (Levy on Cane Growers) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 171
- Queensland Competition Authority Act 1997—
Queensland Competition Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 145
- Queensland Law Society Act 1952—
Queensland Law Society (Solicitors Complaints Tribunal) Amendment Rule (No. 1) 1998, No. 197
- River Improvement Trust Act 1940—
River Improvement Trust Regulation 1998, No. 190
- Soil Conservation Act 1986—
Soil Conservation Regulation 1998, No. 191
- South Bank Corporation Amendment Act 1998—
Proclamation—the provisions of the Act that are not in force commence 29 May 1998, No. 167
- Speech Pathologists Act 1979—
Speech Pathologists Amendment By-law (No. 1) 1998, No. 148
- Sugar Industry Act 1991—
Sugar Industry Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 184
- Superannuation (State Public Sector) Act 1990—
Superannuation (State Public Sector) Amendment of Deed Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 186
- Supreme Court Act 1995—
Supreme Court Regulation 1998, No. 158
- Surveyors Act 1977—
Surveyors Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 208
- Townsville City Council (Douglas Land Development) Act 1993—
Townsville City Council (Douglas Land Development) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 180
- Transport Infrastructure Act 1994—
Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 170
- Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994—
Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 1998, No. 163
Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 1998, No. 181

Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 1998, No. 187

Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995—

Motor Vehicles Safety Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 182

Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 170

Travel Agents Act 1988—

Travel Agents Regulation 1998, No. 156

University of Queensland Act 1998—

Proclamation—certain provisions of the Act commence 2 July 1998 and 1 January 1999, No. 198

Valuation of Land Act 1944—

Valuation of Land Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 212

Water Resources Act 1989—

Proclamation—section 9 of the Act commences 17 July 1998, No. 207

Water Resources (Rates and Charges) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 185

Water Resources (Tinaroo Falls Dam Catchment Area) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 1998, No. 206

Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993—

Proclamation—sections 56 and 57 of the Act commence 1 September 1998, No. 160

Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998, No. 161 and Explanatory Note for No. 161

Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995—

Workplace Health and Safety (Advisory Standards) Notice 1998, No. 177

Workplace Relations Act 1997—

Industrial Court Amendment Rule (No. 1) 1998, No. 199

REPORT OF THE TRAVELSAFE COMMITTEE OF THE 48TH PARLIAMENT

The Clerk tabled the following report of the Travelsafe Committee of the 48th Parliament, received after the dissolution of the 48th Parliament—

Travelsafe Committee Report No. 25—Shared Bikeways

MINISTERIAL RESPONSES TO PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Clerk tabled the following responses to parliamentary committee reports, received after the dissolution of the 48th Parliament on the dates indicated—

22 May 1998—

whole of Government response from the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care (Mrs Wilson) to a report

of the Public Accounts Committee entitled Aboriginal Councils and Torres Strait Island Councils: Review of Financial Reporting Requirements

17 June 1998—

response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Mr Beanland) to a report of the Public Works Committee entitled The construction of a replacement watchhouse and arrest courts in Brisbane

9 July 1998—

interim response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for The Arts (Mr Foley) to a report of the Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee entitled Privacy in Queensland

24 July 1998—

further response from the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care and Minister for Disability Services (Ms Bligh) to a report of the Public Accounts Committee entitled State Government Funding Supplied to 99 FM Community Radio Association Inc.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Appointment of Mr W. T. D'Arcy

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (3.31 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That Mr William Theodore D'Arcy be appointed Chairman of Committees of the Whole House."

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Changes in Ministry; Appointment of Parliamentary Secretaries

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (3.31 a.m.), by leave: I desire to inform the House that on 26 June 1998, His Excellency the Governor—

(a) Accepted the resignations of—

Robert Edward Borbidge as Premier;

Joan Mary Sheldon as Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts;

Michael James Horan as Minister for Health;

Denver Edward Beanland as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice;

Theo Russell Cooper as Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing;

Robert Joseph Quinn as Minister for Education;

Douglas John Slack as Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier;

Bruce William Davidson as Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry;

Brian George Littleproud as Minister for Environment;

Thomas John George Gilmore as Minister for Mines and Energy;

Diane Elizabeth McCauley as Minister for Local Government and Planning;

Santo Santoro as Minister for Training and Industrial Relations;

Vaughan Gregory Johnson as Minister for Transport and Main Roads;

Michael Desmond Veivers as Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport;

David John Hopetoun Watson as Minister for Public Works and Housing;

Marcus Hosking Rowell as Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry;

Lawrence James Springborg as Minister for Natural Resources; and

Naomi Kate Wilson as Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care.

(b) Accepted the resignations of—

Robert Edward Borbidge,

Joan Mary Sheldon,

Michael James Horan

Denver Edward Beanland,

Theo Russell Cooper,

Robert Joseph Quinn

Douglas John Slack,

Bruce William Davidson,

Brian George Littleproud,

Thomas John George Gilmore,

Diane Elizabeth McCauley,

Santo Santoro,

Vaughan Gregory Johnson,

Michael Desmond Veivers,

David John Hopetoun Watson,

Marcus Hosking Rowell,

Lawrence James Springborg,
and

Naomi Kate Wilson

as members of the Executive Council of Queensland.

(c) Appointed—

Peter Douglas Beattie to be Premier and to be a member of the Executive Council of Queensland.

(d) Appointed—

Peter Douglas Beattie as Minister for Health;

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice;

Minister for Education;

Minister for Environment;

Minister for Training and Industrial Relations;

Minister for Public Works and Housing;

Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry; and

Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care

and

James Peter Elder as Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts;

Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing;

Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier;

Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry;

Minister for Mines and Energy;

Minister for Local Government and Planning;

Minister for Transport and Main Roads;

Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport; and

Minister for Natural Resources.

(e) Appointed—

James Peter Elder as a member of the Executive Council of Queensland.

I lay upon the table of the House a copy of the Queensland Government Gazette Extraordinary of 26 June 1998 containing the relevant notifications.

I also inform the House that on 29 June 1998, His Excellency the Governor—

(a) Accepted the resignations of—

Peter Douglas Beattie as Minister for Health;
 Attorney-General and Minister for Justice;
 Minister for Education;
 Minister for Environment;
 Minister for Training and Industrial Relations;
 Minister for Public Works and Housing;
 Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Forestry; and
 Minister for Families, Community Care

and

James Peter Elder as Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for The Arts;
 Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Racing;
 Minister for Economic Development and Trade and Minister Assisting the Premier;
 Minister for Tourism, Small Business and Industry;
 Minister for Mines and Energy;
 Minister for Local Government and Planning;
 Minister for Transport and Main Roads;
 Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Sport; and
 Minister for Natural Resources.

(b) Appointed—

Peter Douglas Beattie to be Premier and to be a member of the Executive Council of Queensland.

(c) Appointed—

James Peter Elder, to be Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade;
 Terence Michael Mackenroth, to be Minister for Communication and Information and Minister for Local Government, Planning, Regional and Rural Communities;
 Robert James Gibbs, to be Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing;
 David John Hamill, to be Treasurer;

Paul Joseph Braddy, to be Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations;

Matthew Joseph Foley, to be Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for The Arts;

Wendy Marjorie Edmond, to be Minister for Health;

Thomas Alfred Barton, to be Minister for Police and Corrective Services;

Anthony McGrady, to be Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister Assisting the Deputy Premier on Regional Development;

Stephen Dominic Bredhauer, to be Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads;

Dean MacMillan Wells, to be Minister for Education;

Robert Evan Schwarten, to be Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing;

Anna Maria Bligh, to be Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care and Minister for Disability Services;

Judith Caroline Spence, to be Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Fair Trading;

Rodney Jon Welford, to be Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Natural Resources;

Henry Palaszczuk, to be Minister for Primary Industries; and

Merri Rose, to be Minister for Emergency Services.

(d) Appointed—

James Peter Elder;

Terence Michael Mackenroth;

Robert James Gibbs;

David John Hamill;

Paul Joseph Braddy;

Matthew Joseph Foley;

Wendy Marjorie Edmond;

Thomas Alfred Barton;

Anthony McGrady;

Stephen Dominic Bredhauer;

Dean MacMillan Wells;

Robert Evan Schwarten;

Anna Maria Bligh;

Judith Caroline Spence;

Rodney Jon Welford;
Henry Palaszczuk;
and
Merri Rose

to be members of the Executive Council of Queensland.

I also inform the House that in accordance with the Constitution Act 1867, His Excellency the Governor, acting by and with the advice of the Executive Council, appointed—

Mr Gordon Richard Nuttall, MLA, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier;

Mr Michael Francis Reynolds, MLA, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier in North Queensland;

Mr Stephen Robertson, MLA, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier; and

Mr Darryl James Briskey, MLA, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer.

I lay upon the table of the House a copy of the Queensland Government Gazette Extraordinary of 29 June 1998 containing the relevant notifications. The Queensland Government Gazette Extraordinary also contains a copy of His Excellency the Governor's Proclamation made under the Officials in Parliament Act 1896 on 29 June 1998.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (3.37 a.m.): I have to inform the House that arrangements have been made and the Honourable the Speaker informed accordingly for the Honourable Terence Michael Mackenroth, Minister for Communication and Information and Minister for Local Government, Planning, Regional and Rural Communities to be Leader of the House.

GOVERNMENT WHIP AND GOVERNMENT DEPUTY WHIP

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (3.38 a.m.): I have to inform the House that Mr Terence Boland Sullivan has been appointed Government Whip, and Mr Patrick Douglas Purcell has been appointed Deputy Government Whip.

OPPOSITION APPOINTMENTS

Hon. R. E. BORRIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition)

(3.38 a.m.): I wish to advise the House that on Monday, 29 June 1998, I was elected Leader of the parliamentary National Party and thereby Leader of the Opposition. The member for Toowoomba South was elected Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The member for Albert has been elected Opposition Whip and the member for Redlands Deputy Opposition Whip. The member for Indooroopilly is Leader of Opposition Business in the House.

To save the time of the House, I will table a list of members of the shadow Cabinet and seek leave to have the list incorporated in Hansard.

Leave granted.

NAME and PORTFOLIO

Mr Rob Borbidge MLA—

Leader of the Opposition—

Leader of the Coalition

Leader of the National Party

Member for Surfers Paradise

Dr David Watson MLA

Leader of the Liberal Party

Shadow Treasurer and Shadow Minister for Communications and Information

Member for Moggill

Mr Mike Horan MLA

Deputy Leader of the Opposition

Shadow Minister for State Development, Trade and Rural Communities

Member for Toowoomba South

Mr Bob Quinn MLA

Shadow Minister for Education

Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party

Member for Merrimac

Mr Russell Cooper MLA

Shadow Minister for Primary Industries

Member for Crows Nest

Mr Denver Beanland MLA

Shadow Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care, Disability Services and the Arts

Member for Indooroopilly

Mr Vaughan Johnson MLA

Shadow Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Member for Gregory

Mr Santo Santoro MLA

Shadow Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations

Member for Clayfield

Mr Lawrence Springborg MLA
Shadow Attorney-General, Shadow
Minister for Justice
Member for Warwick

Mr Bruce Davidson MLA
Shadow Minister for Fair Trading and
Consumer Affairs
Member for Noosa

Mr Howard Hobbs MLA
Shadow Minister for Local Government
and Planning
Member for Warrego

Hon Vince Lester MLA
Shadow Minister for Environment and
Heritage and Natural Resources
Member for Keppel

Miss Fiona Simpson MLA
Shadow Minister for Health and Women's
Affairs
Member for Maroochydhore

Mr Allan Grice MLA
Shadow Minister for Police and
Corrective Services
Member for Broadwater

Mr Graham Healy MLA
Shadow Minister for Tourism, Sport and
Racing
Member for Toowoomba North

Mr Rob Mitchell MLA
Shadow Minister for Mines & Energy
Member for Charters Towers

Mr Bruce Laming MLA
Shadow Minister for Public Works and
Housing
Member for Mooloolah

Mr Ted Malone MLA
Shadow Minister for Emergency Services
Member for Mirani

Mr John Hegarty MLA
Secretary to Shadow Cabinet

LIBERAL PARTY APPOINTMENTS

Dr WATSON (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (3.39 a.m.): I wish to advise the House that on 23 June 1998 I was elected Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for Merrimac was elected Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party and the member for Caloundra was elected as the Liberal Party Secretary.

ONE NATION PARTY APPOINTMENTS

Mr FELDMAN (Caboolture—ONP) (Leader of the One Nation Party) (3.39 a.m.): On 29 June 1998 I was elected Leader of the One

Nation Party. The Deputy Leader is Dorothy Pratt, the member for Barambah. The Whip is Geoff Knuth, the member for Burdekin. I will table those positions.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Does the honourable member seek leave to have those tabled?

Mr FELDMAN: Yes.

Leave granted.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS; ORDER OF BUSINESS; SESSIONAL ORDERS; COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS AND MEMBERSHIP

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.40 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"(1) SESSIONAL ORDERS—DAYS AND HOURS OF SITTING, ORDER OF BUSINESS

That except for this day of sitting, for this Session unless otherwise ordered and notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders—

(a) The House shall sit on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9.30am until 1pm and 2.30pm until 7.30pm unless by its own resolution the House adjourns earlier than 7.30pm.

(b) The Order of Business for each Sitting Day shall be as follows—

9.30am-10.30am—

Prayers

Messages from the Governor

Matters of Privilege

Speakers Statements

Motions of Condolence

Petitions

Notification and tabling of papers by the Clerk

Ministerial Papers

Ministerial Notices of Motion

Government Business Notices of Motion

Ministerial Statements

Any other Government Business

Personal Explanations

Reports

Notices of Motion for debate from 6pm to 7pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Private Members' Bills

Debating of Committee Reports on each Thursday

Private Members' Statements, during which Members may speak on any subject for 2 minutes

10.30am-11.30am—

Question Time

11.30am-1pm (Wednesday and Thursday)—

Government Business

11.30am-12.30pm (Tuesday)—

Matters of Public Interest

12.30pm-1pm (Tuesday)—

Government Business

2.30pm-6pm (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)—

Government Business

6pm-7pm (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)—

Private Members' Motions. Time limits—mover 10 minutes, other Members 5 minutes

7pm-7.30pm (Tuesday and Wednesday)—

Adjournment Debate

7pm-7.30pm (Thursday)—

Grievances Debate, during which a Member may speak for a time not exceeding 2 minutes.

The motion "That this House do now adjourn" may be proposed at the conclusion of the day's sitting by the Member occupying the position of Leader or Acting Leader of Government Business in the House.

(2) SESSIONAL ORDER—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY DEBATE

That for this session—

- (a) on days allotted for the Address-in-Reply Debate, a day shall comprise that period from 12.30pm until 6pm on Tuesdays, and from 11.30am until 5pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays;
- (b) the debate may continue from 5pm to 6pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays with that hour constituting one quarter of an allotted day;
- (c) the provisions of Standing Order No. 305 be suspended in relation to Committees of Supply and Ways and Means; and
- (d) all other provisions of the Standing and

Sessional Orders shall mutatis mutandis continue to apply.

(3) SESSIONAL ORDERS—QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

That for this session—

Omit Standing Orders 67A to 70 and insert new Standing Orders.

67A Questions to Ministers

Questions may be asked orally without notice or on notice for written reply.

At 10.30am on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, questions may be put to a Minister without notice relating to public affairs with which he or she is officially connected, to proceedings pending in the Legislative Assembly, but discussion must not be anticipated, or to any matter of administration for which he or she is responsible.

The total period allowed each day for the asking of questions without notice shall not exceed one hour. Every Member is entitled to ask one question on notice each sitting day, which should be lodged with the Clerks at the Table within two hours from the commencement of the day's sitting.

67B Questions to Members

A Member may put a question of which notice has been given, in lieu of a question to a Minister—

- (a) to any other Member of the House relating to any bill or motion, connected with the business of the House on the Business Paper of which the Member has charge; and
- (b) to the chairman of a committee relating to the activities of that committee, however such question shall not attempt to interfere with the committee's work or anticipate its report or refer to any evidence taken or documents presented to such committee.

67C No debate on asking questions

In asking a question, no argument or opinion shall be offered, or any fact stated, except so far as is necessary to explain the question.

67D Number of questions allowed each sitting day

The number of questions which may be asked by any Member without notice shall not exceed one on any sitting day, except for the Leader of the Opposition who may ask two questions without notice.

If an answer to a question without notice requires too much detail, the Minister may request the Member to place the question on

notice to be answered on the next day of sitting.

67E Notice of questions

A question on notice from a Member is to be delivered to the Clerks at the Table.

A question on notice shall be typed or fairly written, signed by the Member, and answered and supplied to the Table Office within 30 calendar days.

68 Rules for questions

The following general rules shall apply to questions—

- (a) Questions shall be brief and relate to one issue.
- (b) Questions shall not contain—
 - (i) arguments;
 - (ii) inferences;
 - (iii) imputations; or
 - (iv) hypothetical matters.
- (c) Questions shall not ask—
 - (i) for an expression of opinion or
 - (ii) for a legal opinion.
- (d) Questions shall not be asked which reflect on, or are critical of, the character or conduct of those persons whose conduct may only be challenged on a substantive motion.
- (e) Questions shall not contain statements of fact or names of persons unless they are strictly necessary to render the question intelligible.
- (f) The Speaker may direct that the language of a question be changed if, in the opinion of the Speaker, it is unbecoming or does not conform with the Standing Orders.
- (g) Questions shall not be unduly lengthy.

69 General rules for answers

The following general rules shall apply to answers—

- (a) In answering a question, a Minister or Member shall not debate the subject to which it refers.
- (b) An answer shall be relevant to the question.
- (c) The answer to each question shall not exceed 3 minutes.

70 Questions not put to Speaker

Questions may not be put to the Speaker.

219A Form of petition

A petition shall be in the following form—

"PETITION

TO: The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

The Petition of (a) citizens of Queensland
or

(b) residents of the State of Queensland
or

(c) electors of the Division of

draws to the attention of the House
(State Grievance)

Your petitioners therefore request the House to

(State action required)

(Here follows the Signatures)

238A Copy of petition to responsible Minister

A copy of every petition received by the House is to be referred by the Clerk to the appropriate responsible Minister who may forward a response to the Clerk for presentation to the House. A copy of this response shall be printed in Hansard and be supplied to the Member who presented the petition.

238B Name of principal petitioner

Every petition must indicate the name and address of the principal petitioner on the front page.

(4) SESSIONAL ORDER—DEBATING OF COMMITTEE REPORTS

That for this session—

- (a) on presentation of a committee report, the Member presenting the report may make a statement to the House for a period not exceeding 5 minutes and a notice of motion may then be given that the House take note of the report on Thursday next;
 - (b) on each Thursday, following Private Members' Bills and prior to Private Members' Statements, notices of motion for the noting of reports may be moved and debated without amendment; and
 - (c) Members may speak on any such motion for 3 minutes.
- #### (5) SESSIONAL ORDER—NOTICES OF MOTION

That, notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders, all General Business—Notices of Motion appearing on the

Business Paper shall be deleted from the Business Paper after the expiration of thirty days from the day on which notice is given.

(6) SESSIONAL ORDER—PUTTING OF AMENDMENTS

That for this session—

Omit Standing Orders 90 to 92 and insert new Standing Order.

Putting of amendments

90. In respect of every amendment the Speaker shall put a question—"That the amendment be agreed to", which shall be resolved by the House in the affirmative or negative.

(7) SESSIONAL ORDER—BILLS PRESENTED BY A MEMBER, READ A FIRST TIME AND PRINTED

That for this session—

Omit Standing Order 241 and insert new Standing Order.

Bills Presented by a Member, read a First Time and Printed

241.(a) A Bill shall be presented by the Member who has obtained leave to bring in the same, and immediately after the presentation of the Bill the Question shall be put, "That the Bill be now read a First time," and "That the Bill be printed," both without amendment or debate.

(b) Immediately after the Bill is printed, a Question shall be proposed "That the Bill be now read a second time" and the Member who has presented the Bill shall forthwith proceed to give an explanation of the Bill.

(c) During or after such explanatory speech, additional information to assist in the understanding of the Bill may be Tabled for incorporation in "Hansard".

(d) Further Debate on the Question "That the Bill be now read a second time" shall be adjourned for a period of at least thirteen whole calendar days.

(e) When a Message is required, recommending that an appropriation of money be made for the Bill, such Message shall be presented to Mr Speaker and read to the House immediately after leave is granted to present the Bill.

(8) SESSIONAL ORDER—DISALLOWANCE MOTIONS

That for this session—

Omit Standing Order 37A and insert new Standing Order.

Disallowance of Proclamations, Orders in Council, Regulations, Rules or Guidelines pursuant to section 118A of the Criminal Justice Act 1989

37A. When notice of a motion to disallow any Proclamation, Order in Council, Regulation, Rule or Guideline pursuant to section 118A of the Criminal Justice Act 1989 to which objection may be taken within a time specified has been given, such motion shall be set down to be considered on the next sitting day upon which General Business has precedence of Government Business:

Provided that if there is within seven sitting days after notice has been so given no day upon which General Business has precedence of Government Business such motion shall be set down to be considered within seven sitting days after notice has been so given.

On the day appointed for consideration, such motion—

- (i) Shall have priority on such day in the order in which notice was given;
- (ii) Shall take precedence over all other business on such day;
- (iii) If not moved on that day, shall lapse.

Mr Speaker shall put the question when debate on any such motion shall have occupied two hours, allocated as follows—Mover of the motion, fifteen minutes; seconder of the motion and any other Member, ten minutes; Minister in reply, twenty minutes.

(9) SESSIONAL ORDER—SELECT COMMITTEE ON TRAVELSAFE—APPOINTMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

(1) That a select committee, to be known as the Select Committee on Travelsafe, be appointed to inquire into and report on all aspects of road safety and public transport in Queensland. In particular the Committee shall monitor, investigate and report on—

- (a) issues affecting road safety including the causes of road crashes and measures aimed at reducing deaths, injuries and economic costs to the community;
- (b) the safety of passenger transport services, and measures aimed at

- reducing the incidence of related deaths and injuries; and
- (c) measures for the enhancement of public transport in Queensland and reducing dependence on private motor vehicles as the predominant mode of transport.
- (2) That the committee consist of 6 members of the Legislative Assembly of whom 3 shall be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition.
- (3) That the committee consist of Ms J Cunningham (Chairman), Mr Healy, Mr Hobbs, Ms Nelson-Carr, Mr Stephan, Mr Sullivan
- (4) That the committee have power to call for persons, documents and other things notwithstanding any prorogation of the Parliament.
- (5) That the committee may examine witnesses on oath or affirmation.
- (6) The Chairperson of the committee or the Deputy Chairperson when acting as Chairperson, shall have a deliberative vote and in the event of an equality of votes shall also have a casting vote.
- (7) That as soon as practicable after the end of each year ending 30 June the committee shall prepare a report on the operations of the committee during that year.
- (8) That the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they may be inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES— APPOINTMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

That notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders, Members be appointed to parliamentary committees as follows—

Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee

Mr Fenlon (Chairman), Mr Beanland, Ms Boyle, Mrs Gamin, Mr Rappolt, Mr Wilson

Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee

Mr Mickel (Chairman), Ms Attwood, Mr Nelson, Mr Reeves, Mrs Sheldon, Mr Springborg

Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee

Mr Lucas (Chairman), Dr Clark, Mr Hegarty, Hon. V Lester, Mr Paff, Ms Struthers

Public Accounts Committee

Hon. K Hayward (Chairman), Mr Connor, Mr Grice, Mr Mulherin, Mr Pearce, Mr Slack

Public Works Committee

Mr Roberts (Chairman), Mr Knuth, Mr Laming, Mr Musgrove, Mr Purcell, Mr Rowell

Scrutiny of Legislation Committee

Mrs Lavarch (Chairman), Mrs E Cunningham, Mr Elliott, Hon. D Fouras, Dr Kingston, Mr Wellington

Standing Orders Committee

Mr Speaker (ex officio) (Chairman), Mr Borbidge, Mr D'Arcy, Mr Feldman, Hon. T Mackenroth, Dr Watson."

Motion agreed to.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY ENTITLEMENTS

Appointment

Hon. T. M. MACKENROTH (Chatsworth—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.43 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

- "(1) That a select committee, to be known as the Select Committee on Parliamentary Entitlements, be appointed to inquire into and report on all entitlements of Members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (2) That the committee consist of 8 members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (3) That the committee consist of the Hon. T Mackenroth (Chairman), Hon. P Beattie, Mr Borbidge, Mrs E Cunningham, Hon. J Elder, Mr Feldman, Dr Watson and Mr Wellington.
- (4) That the committee have power to call for persons, documents and other things.
- (5) That the committee may examine witnesses on oath or affirmation.
- (6) The Chairman of the committee or the Deputy Chairman when acting as Chairman, shall have a deliberative vote and in the event of an equality of votes shall also have a casting vote.
- (7) That the committee report to the House by 1 November 1998.
- (8) That the foregoing provisions of this resolution, so far as they may be inconsistent with the Standing Orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the Standing Orders."

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Address of Welcome by Mr N. Bonner, AO

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (3.45 a.m.), by leave: The

official opening of the 49th Queensland Parliament included an historic address by one of this country's most respected elders. I refer to the address by Mr Neville Bonner, who welcomed the Governor and all honourable members to this Parliament on behalf of the traditional landowners of the site on which this House stands. Mr Bonner is, as honourable members are aware, also the first indigenous person to be elected to the Senate and is, therefore, also rightly regarded as an elder of the Australian nation.

As he is not a member of this House, the contribution he made before all honourable members is not automatically included in Hansard. To do so will require a formal resolution of this Parliament. It is therefore with pride that I move—

"That the speech by Mr Bonner be incorporated into the Hansard record of yesterday's official opening of the 49th Queensland Parliament."

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Compulsory Third-Party Insurance Premiums

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—ALP) (Treasurer) (3.46 a.m.), by leave: In accordance with the Motor Vehicle Insurance Act 1994, I table the recommendations of the Motor Accident Insurance Commissioner on the premiums, levies and administration fees to be paid for compulsory third-party—CTP—insurance policies for the 1998-99 financial year. That appears at Annexure A.

Honourable members will note that the recommendations made by the Motor Accident Insurance Commissioner in February 1998 are at variance with the premiums fixed by regulations tabled in the House this week. As a result, I am required to now inform the House of the reasons why the Motor Accident Insurance Commissioner's recommendations have not been accepted.

On 11 February 1998, the Motor Accident Insurance Commissioner advised the then Treasurer of the necessary increases to compulsory third-party insurance premiums required in the forthcoming financial year in order to maintain a fully funded scheme. Class 1 premiums, for example, needed to increase by \$13. The commissioner explicitly advised the former Treasurer that regulations must be made before 30 April 1998 in order that the increased premiums should take effect from 1 July 1998. The Government was warned that if CTP premiums did not increase on 1 July, the

magnitude of the increase required would necessarily be greater in order to make up the shortfall caused by the delay.

I regret to inform the House that this warning was ignored and consequently Class 1 premiums have increased by \$16 rather than the \$13 increase that was originally recommended. That increase was required only because the previous Government took no action within the two and a half months available to it to make the necessary regulations.

The Beattie Labor Government was able to minimise the increase for Queensland motorists by acting swiftly to ensure that the new premiums took effect from September 1998. The Government also recovered a \$192,000 financial benefit that would otherwise have been realised by the Government's vehicle fleet due to the fact that the majority of vehicles are registered in July. These recovered moneys will be used to fund rehabilitation services for children who are victims of motor vehicle accidents. Through these measures, the Beattie Labor Government has ensured that the impact of the previous Government's inaction has been minimised. Queensland motorists have the security of a fully funded compulsory third-party insurance scheme and the Government vehicle fleet will pay its fair share. I table these documents for the information of honourable members.

NATIVE TITLE (QUEENSLAND) STATE PROVISIONS BILL

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (3.49 a.m.), by leave, without notice: I move—

"That leave be granted to bring in a Bill for an Act to amend the Native Title (Queensland) Act 1993 and for related purposes."

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

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

Second Reading

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (3.50 a.m.): I move—

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

For the last few years, the issue of native title has consumed this State and this nation,

leaving our community confused, uncertain and divided. I am pleased to be introducing as my first piece of legislation as Premier a native title Bill, because it allows me to state from the very outset that the time for cheap politics on native title is over. The time for division, suspicion and hatred is ended. The people of Queensland want certainty. They want the issue sorted out once and for all—not more politics.

Queenslanders understand that the only way this issue is not going to become a permanent site for a lawyers picnic is for all the players to work together towards an agreeable solution. My Government approaches this issue from the fundamental position that every citizen deserves to have their rights under common law protected to the maximum extent possible. This Bill, the Native Title (Queensland) State Provisions Bill 1998, confirms that rights arising from past Acts of Government are secure and absolute.

As a result of this Bill pastoralists, fishermen, miners and others will know that the leases and permits they currently hold are valid, and the rights they thought they possessed under leases and permits are confirmed absolutely. This provides certainty.

We have moved quickly to introduce this legislation so that people are given a clear understanding of their current position at the earliest possible time. We have honoured our commitment to maintain Queensland as a State with low sovereign risk, which stands by, and does not seek to revisit, the grants it has made in good faith in the past. That is Stage 1.

Stage 2 in this process is the establishment of simple, straightforward, workable mechanisms to deal with future activities which might affect native title. We have been waiting for more than 18 months for the Commonwealth to tidy up future act processes. Their failure to develop an acceptable regime forced them to dump the problem onto the States. We accept this challenge, and are committed to thrashing out a workable system with the goodwill and assistance of the people directly involved in these issues.

The Commonwealth's hesitancy in defining a process has provided Queensland with the opportunity to pursue an approach that reflects the genuine aspirations of indigenous Australians and allows the Queensland community to move forward as one. I have released a native title strategy for dealing quickly with these issues. An important part of this strategy is the establishment of a working party with senior representatives of the

indigenous, mining and primary producer communities. What I ask from all members of this Parliament is that they give this strategy and this working party a fair go at developing a solution. Over the next couple of months we will be working together to put in place a set of procedures to manage native title issues and, importantly, to keep them out of the courts.

It requires a can-do Government to sort this issue out so that Queensland can get back to business and get employment growing again throughout this State. For the first time ever, all these groups have been invited to join Government in developing a process that everyone can live with. Everyone has been made aware that there will be some pain. The indigenous communities will bear some of that pain upon the passage of this Bill. I acknowledge that on the record tonight. In a determination of a resolution of this matter, the pastoralists will have some pain, the miners will bear some pain and the Government will bear pain, too.

I am confident, however, that everyone understands and appreciates that without some flexibility and innovation there could be enormous administrative and cost burdens to manage a process that should really be quite simple and open. The strategy I have released is designed to achieve these objectives—

- achieve optimum understanding by all parties about relevant issues, options and their consequences primarily through the mechanism of a working party which I chair;

- apply the new provisions of the Commonwealth Native Title Act to Queensland;

- educate all parties, specifically State officers of all departments and their clients, on the application of native title procedures to State business, balancing efficiency and equity;

- establish a fair and equitable process that encourages mutual agreement and balances the consideration of legitimate indigenous interests, including adequate consultation to establish a framework in relation to proposals for mining and private development;

- mediate claims and undertake broader negotiations in order to halt ambit claims, remove overlapping claims and consolidate related claims;

- undertake strategic negotiations to resolve or avoid litigation arising out of misunderstandings or lack of consultation;

- shift policy focus away from reliance on Commonwealth legislation and winning

test cases towards an agreement-based solution to individual native title issues; and

obtain the most beneficial financial assistance from the Commonwealth for native title compensation.

The key dates and objectives are as follows. Preliminary meetings, which was the first stage—

16-17 July 1998: meetings with indigenous, pastoral, fishing and mining interests regarding the proposed native title strategy.

Validating Legislation, which is what is before the House tonight—

30 July 1998: introduction of Queensland legislation validating "intermediate period acts" and confirming extinguishment of native title on exclusive tenures. Proclamation of this legislation is dependent on the commencement of the Commonwealth Native Title Amendment Act. I might just digress. I did promise that it would be 30 July. I am sure that members will forgive me; it is the morning of 31 July. Let us move on to the revision.

Mr Mackenroth: It is still the same parliamentary day, though.

Mr BEATTIE: That is right. I note that it is still the same parliamentary day.

Let us move on to the revision of native title work procedures. Currently, revision of existing Queensland Government native title work procedures for future dealings and native title to accommodate the effect of the Commonwealth Act—

24 July 1998: consultation with the Commonwealth officials about revised native title work procedures.

28-29 July 1998: workshop on the use of revised work procedures with key Government departments. Necessary adjustments made.

August 1998: revised native title work procedures will be released to Government departments and made available to clients by electronic means. Revised procedures will ensure a smooth transition in the operational response across the whole-of-Government to the changes within the Commonwealth Act and the new State arrangements.

Let us move on to alternative State provisions, which is the second stage in this process—

July 1998: consultation with indigenous and mining interests regarding Queensland's response to mining and native title to ensure a fair and equitable State scheme to

accommodate both native title and industry interests.

21 July 1998: establish working party to represent sectors. That was done.

July/August 1998: development of Queensland's response. Establish a Native Title Mediation Unit. This will be an important unit that members will hear a great deal more of.

24 July 1998: meeting with Commonwealth officials to discuss technical aspects of alternative State provisions.

8 August 1998: senior officials meeting in Melbourne regarding native title.

End August 1998: finalisation of State response to mining and native title and provision of Queensland's proposed legislation arrangements to the Commonwealth for approval. Develop State legislative framework. The Commonwealth Minister's approval is required before Queensland's proposed scheme can become law.

Let us move on to indigenous land use agreements—

August/September 1998: consultation regarding the future use of indigenous land use agreements.

October 1998: development of policy response regarding the future use of indigenous land use (and other) agreements to assist in the resolution of land use matters and the avoidance of litigation. This response will include consideration of any additional resources and legislative amendment necessary to provide a workable framework.

Mediation of native title claims—

July 1998: ongoing mediation of native title claims by the Native Title Mediation Unit to accommodate changes resulting from the Commonwealth Bill (such as the amendment of native title claims to accommodate the higher threshold test for acceptance and registration). Particular focus to be placed on the resolution of claims that are already at an advanced stage in the mediation process.

Commonwealth financial assistance—

July 1998: this matter is, and will continue to be, subject to continuing discussion with the Commonwealth to ensure expeditious resolution with the most beneficial financial assistance from the Commonwealth secured.

Intergovernmental Issues—

August 1998: arrange meetings with other State Premiers and Prime Minister.

In summary the strategy is—

to resolve the immediate validation issue within a month of the Commonwealth legislation being enacted, which is the purpose of this Bill.

I might digress and say that when I met with the Prime Minister, Mr Howard, recently, he signalled to me at the time that he thought that proclamation of the Commonwealth Bill would take place within a month, although he was not absolutely certain of that time frame. Subsequent advice from the Commonwealth has indicated that the proclamation may, in fact, take three months. The bottom line is that we have to fit in—dovetail in—with the proclamation. We will do it when the Commonwealth moves. I hope that there is no delay from the Commonwealth.

The second part of the strategy is to develop a comprehensive package of State-based arrangements within three months. The Government will identify those grants issued by the Queensland Government during the period 1994 to 1996 and will, within six months, inform Aboriginal and Islander organisations of all mining grants or interest in land and resources. The Government will also be prepared to examine ways of resolving compensation claims outside the courts and through the processes of regional agreements. The Government will negotiate the process for resolving these matters with indigenous, mining, pastoral and fishing representatives.

The major purpose of this Bill is to take advantage of the validation provisions within the Commonwealth Bill by providing for the validation of "intermediate period acts" which may have been invalid because of native title. Intermediate period acts are those acts which took place after the date of the commencement of the Commonwealth Native Title Act on 1 January 1994 but before the High Court's decision in Wik on 23 December 1996, on the understanding that native title had been extinguished by the grant of a pastoral lease. The Bill makes it clear that native title holders are entitled to compensation because of the validation of those intermediate acts attributable to the State.

Negotiations are continuing between Queensland and the Commonwealth about financial assistance from the Commonwealth to Queensland for future compensation payments around the 75:25 model outlined by the Commonwealth.

The Bill also confirms the total or partial extinguishing effect on native title of previous

exclusive and non-exclusive possession acts respectively. The term "exclusive possession act" is defined by reference to the schedule of exclusive tenures attached to the Commonwealth Bill. Again, the Bill provides for payment of compensation to native title holders where native title has been extinguished, or partially extinguished, as the result of an act attributable to the State.

The Bill before the House also omits from the Native Title (Queensland) Act redundant or superfluous provisions. Some of these provisions are inconsistent with the Commonwealth Bill and naturally cannot form part of the law of Queensland. Others have never been used. Others may be replaced by any alternative State provisions developed through the multiparty discussions I have facilitated. These changes will commence once the changes to the Commonwealth Act have been proclaimed and, indeed, cannot sensibly commence before then.

Honourable members should note that the Bill does not address what alternative procedures Queensland may adopt in relation to mining. The current procedures are generally known as the right to negotiate. The consultative process will assist my Government to explore the full range of alternatives available. Any new State-based regime will be presented to this Parliament in the form of further amending legislation.

I should point out that the Commonwealth Bill requires all State-based regimes to be approved by the Commonwealth Minister. That ministerial decision is also a disallowable instrument subject to the scrutiny of the Commonwealth Parliament.

I wish to re-emphasise to this House my earnest desire to incorporate native title into our system of land management in a seamless way, which minimises cost and maximises certainty.

There are two final points I wish to make. First, the timetable I have set is tough and it is tight. I am determined to try and stick to it, but I advise the House that it is tough and it is tight. Secondly, I advise the House that for the second part of this strategy we will require the wisdom of Solomon because not only does it have to get through this Parliament but it also needs to pass the Senate test, the whole Commonwealth Parliament test and the High Court test.

I believe that members on both sides are desirous of a genuine outcome in relation to Wik. It will require tolerance. It will require understanding. It will require us to be sensible

and to put the interests of the State first and to not play politics. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Borbidge, adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4.04 a.m. (Friday).