

THURSDAY, 2 DECEMBER 1999

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. R. K. Hollis, Redcliffe) read prayers and took the chair at 9.30 a.m.

PETITION

The Clerk announced the receipt of the following petition—

Watercraft Engine Noise

From **Mr Welford** (520 petitioners) requesting the House to legislate to enforce all watercraft engines be muffled so as not to exceed 55 decibels when measured at 30 metres at any moment of time.

Petition received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Pasminco Century Zinc Mine; Native Title

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.32 a.m.), by leave: Last week in this House, I informed honourable members of some of the major projects and policy initiatives that my Government has delivered in the past 17 months. Today I am proud to say that my Government is about to deliver yet another major project. But not just any major project—this project is the Century mine in far-north-west Queensland, the largest zinc mine in the world. It also boasts one of the world's largest resources of lead and silver. For some years, Century has been referred to as a trial mine, or even a mine in waiting. Now the moment is at hand for the giant Pasminco Century mine to realise its potential and to become a fully operational and export production mine.

Century—owned by Pasminco Ltd—is on target for its first shipment of about 10,000 tonnes of concentrate during the next three weeks. That will be a proud moment for Queensland and, in particular, for the previous Goss Government and my Government. I am proud to say that this project was identified, sponsored and now delivered by State Labor Governments, and I acknowledge the efforts of the Minister for Mines and Energy, Tony McGrady, who has had ministerial responsibility for the vast majority of the life of Century mine. I also place on record my Government's appreciation to the many people who have worked on this project in the public and private sectors, the indigenous community—particularly the traditional

landowners—and the original developers of the mine, Century Zinc, which was a subsidiary of CRA Limited.

I also believe it is appropriate to place on record the history and almost incomprehensible statistics that earn Century a major place in Queensland's illustrious mining history. Back in 1992, the Labor Government established the Carpentaria/Mount Isa mineral province, which resulted in the north-west attracting investments of more than \$3.5 billion—including the Century project. Importantly, this Labor initiative also helped to create more than 2,000 permanent new jobs and about 7,000 other jobs in associated industries. My Government wants to continue to build on this. That is why my Government earlier this year announced the North-West Queensland Development Initiative. This new initiative will focus on getting the maximum social and economic benefits from resource projects. The initiative also aims to identify and assess new economic development opportunities to generate local jobs and new local businesses.

The Century project is unlikely to be matched in the near future, particularly in terms of resource size. In full production, Century will mine 5 million tonnes of ore per year. This means that, during its projected minimum 20-year life, Century will produce about 8% of the world's zinc, 880,000 tonnes per year of zinc concentrate containing 500,000 tonnes of zinc metal and 70,000 tonnes per year of lead concentrate. Century is also big in terms of investment. Capital expenditure was \$810m and the operational work force is about 450.

As I said earlier, this was a project promised and started—and now delivered—by Labor Governments. This is in stark contrast to the stalling, spoiling and mismanagement of the Borbidge/Sheldon coalition Government. The coalition almost lost this project through its intransigence and incompetence, particularly on the issue of handling native title. Their incompetence almost cost Queensland this project. They stand condemned.

In contrast, I advise the House this morning that on AM the Federal Attorney-General indicated that—

"On the face of it it appears that the Queensland legislation"—

that is, in relation to native title—

"is capable of being the subject of a positive determination."

The introduction said—

"Now it's the Labor Government in Queensland's turn ..."

in relation to native title. It goes on—

"Federal Attorney-General Daryl Williams is heading north today to oversee the details."

The reporter continued—

"... Premier Peter Beattie is keen for his native title plan to earn the approval of the Attorney-General and the Senate ... by all accounts he's on the right track. The Federal Attorney Daryl Williams thinks so."

It goes on—

"The Attorney won't say whether Queensland's plan will be put to the Senate at the same time as he reveals his proposal to fix up the veto impasse but one thing the Government has in its favour, Labor federally is in the mood to do deals with the coalition and will be under pressure to sign off on a State Labor plan."

We are making progress with native title.

But there are some issues at a Federal level that I will draw to the attention of the House. I have made much of the agreed outcome my Government achieved with the south-east Queensland forest agreement. I need not remind honourable members of the historic nature of this agreement or its protection of timberworkers' jobs. Nor do I need to remind members of the 25-year resource security for small mills, the survival of small country towns and the protection of 425,000 hectares of Crown native forest.

I have also informed the House of the Federal Government's refusal to date to help fund this historic agreement. From a total cost of \$80m we asked the Federal Government for just \$36m. The Deputy Premier and I met with the Prime Minister on this proposal. We are still waiting for the funds. By handing over this amount, the Federal Government could have proved its commitment to this workable forest agreement. It could have shown its commitment to the first agreement in Australia to actually produce a result that all stakeholders accept. The Prime Minister could have given us the money and been applauded widely. He still has that opportunity and I urge him to do so. Instead, he chose to travel to Western Australia—into the midst of an RFA war—to bear the brunt of a local Liberal Party split that has produced a level of hatred between the Greens and the

timberworkers not seen in Western Australia for years and avoided in this State because of our skilled negotiation.

I thought this rebuff from Canberra was the worst we could expect. I thought to myself, "Surely they couldn't destroy their forestry credentials any further?" But I was wrong! On November 11, Mr Costello, the Federal Treasurer, released the second stage response to the Ralph review of business taxation. The response included two items of relevance to investment in private plantation forestry. Honourable members will remember the crucial role private plantations play in plans to replace in 25 years' time the timber resource presently coming from our Crown native forests. These two items are the Commonwealth's desire to limit the extent to which losses from non-commercial activities can be offset against other income and their intention to modify the payment rule so that prepaid expenses can only be deducted over the financial year in which they are applied.

Put very simply, this means that the Federal Government is clearly considering ending the immediate deductibility provisions for investment in new timber plantations. What an absolute brainwave that is. We have Senator Hill running off to Kyoto promising to limit Australia's greenhouse gas emissions to 8% over 1990 levels. We have the Sydney Futures Exchange gearing up to start carbon trading, possibly as early as 2002. We have millions of Japanese investment dollars pouring into this country to establish meaningful areas of native hardwood plantations, and what does the Federal Treasurer do? He pulls the rug right out from under the whole thing. Zip! That is what he has done. Guess who looks the biggest fool of all over this? None other than the Federal Minister for Forestry and Conservation, Wilson Tuckey! On 21 September Wilson Tuckey issued a ministerial press release in which he welcomed the continuation of the immediate deductibility provisions. He was right. He went so far as to say that the business tax package was very good news for the timber industry. Talk about the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing.

If the Federal Government goes ahead with this lunacy, the Federal Government's 2020 plantation agenda will be shot to bits, regional development will again be a loser, diversification of farm income will remain a pipedream and greenhouse gas emissions will worsen. Let us be very clear about that. That is without mentioning the effect on hard-won agreements such as the South East

Queensland Regional Forest Agreement and the effect this will have on it.

This agreement required the Crown to plant some 5,000 hectares of new hardwood plantations while encouraging private firms to do likewise. Already we have companies such as East Coast Tree Farms based at the port of Brisbane planting heavily in the Boonah and Beaudesert areas. Another company called GRO is looking at locating plantations in the Bundaberg area. What protests have we heard from Minister Tuckey and that other greenhouse warrior Robert Hill? Nothing! Zilch! Not a peep! It is crucial that Australia and Queensland continue their efforts to expand the plantation sector to three million hectares by 2020. Failure to do this will lock the Australian timber industry into a marketing time warp. Most importantly, if the Federal Government cannot guarantee us tax deductibility, it must deliver on the \$36m we are seeking for the south-east Queensland agreement. Nothing less than that is acceptable. This is a significant issue for this State. I cannot understand why the Federal Government is undermining plantation timber in this State.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Disability Services Queensland

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (9.42 a.m.), by leave: Tomorrow is the United Nations International Day of People with a Disability. This day aims to promote the human rights of people with a disability and thereby help them live their lives with dignity. With this in mind, I am proud to announce that my Government has met another election commitment that will help improve the lives of Queenslanders with a disability. At 1 o'clock today, the Minister for Disability Services, Anna Bligh, and I will officially launch Queensland's first department solely dedicated to disability issues, Disability Services Queensland.

Disability Services Queensland will drive the reform of disability services in this State. This department will be responsible for raising community awareness about disability services. It will also work closely with communities to improve the delivery of services and information to people with a disability, their families and carers. People can call a 1800 number for help and information about services available across Government.

This new department will be funded out of existing budget allocations. In other words, services will not be affected. The emphasis is

on improving service delivery and, as a result, new offices and signs will appear gradually in regional centres as the new department comes online. There will be eight departmental regions. Six will be operational immediately, with the other two coming online by December next year. These changes will be of great benefit to people in the regions in this State, many of whom have missed out on disability services for years. In fact, they have never had those services. It will mean that Cairns will have its first disability services area office. It will mean that Wide Bay will no longer have to rely on Rockhampton for regional support, because by next December it will have its own regional director. It will mean new shopfront offices in Cooktown, Mount Isa, Murgon, Mundubbera, Hervey Bay and Gympie. In addition, regional Queenslanders will have a voice on the new Disability Council, which includes members from all parts of the State. Today that council will meet for the first time.

We have delivered the first framework for disability services across Government. I congratulate the Minister on the announcement today and the work she has put into making this a reality. This whole-of-Government approach aims to put Queensland at the cutting edge of disability service delivery. I seek leave to table a copy of the framework for the information of the House.

Leave granted.

Mr BEATTIE: In conjunction with the launch of the new department, we will run a multimedia community awareness campaign, which is logical and would be expected. The ad campaign, called "Just Like You", will promote acceptance of people with a disability. Today's announcement underscores my Government's commitment to improving the lives of Queenslanders with a disability. The campaign "Just Like You" is designed to make people with a disability part of the community, and not only in terms of how they see themselves but also in terms of how they are perceived by the rest of the community.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Business Cadetship Scheme

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (9.45 a.m.), by leave: Last year the Beattie Government instigated a business cadet scheme to allow young Queensland businesspeople to spend time in foreign countries. The scheme, to which this

Government has allocated \$1.7m over four years, was introduced not only to further the skills of these young people but also to imbue an export culture among the coming generation in the Queensland business community.

I am pleased to be able to tell the House that, following the success of the four cadets involved in the first year of the scheme, the Government will be awarding six cadetships for next year. As part of this scheme, cadets will be required to create a program aimed at increasing trade and investment outcomes for Queensland industry. The project will be based on a proposal submitted by the applicant and must relate to the nominated specific industry sector. The project will need to be developed in conjunction with a Queensland industry organisation or at least two small to medium sized enterprises in Queensland.

The industry sectors targeted by Government include telecommunications, information technology, organic foods, biotechnology and health care services. The whole purpose of this scheme is to give young Queensland businesspeople business contacts in other countries that they will be able to use later in their own business career. While the cadets will have specific tasks with trade and investment offices, they will also be expected to get out and about in the business communities in their host countries. The projects being undertaken by the six cadets in next year's round cover a wide cross-section of Queensland industry.

Robyn Cross, who will be based in the Queensland Trade Office in London, will examine the export potential of organic stockfeed to service the growing market need for organic meat products in the European Union, as well as the export of organic meat products to the European Union. Julia Tu will be based in Hong Kong. She will investigate and identify opportunities for Queensland Health and information technology industries in Hong Kong. John Nowland will be based in Taiwan. He will explore the opportunities for the Queensland aged care industry to export services and products into the Taiwanese market. Judith Veco will be based in Tokyo. She will research the opportunities for Queensland biotechnology providers to export products and expertise to the Japanese market. Gerald Haaima will be based in Los Angeles. He will undertake research into the manner in which biotechnology research undertaken in public institutions is transferred to commercial development and how this model can be applied in Australia. Owen Carter will be based in Shanghai. He will

research market opportunities in China by identifying local companies and instrumentalities that purchase transmitting components to contract mobile phone transmission stations.

In the past few years we have seen a dramatic change in our export profile, and I expect we will see an ongoing and continuing change. In this context, it is important that we do not retreat from the rest of the world but continue to engage it. We have always been a nation of exporters and will continue to be so. Schemes such as this will encourage an export culture, which is necessary for our future.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Workplace Relations Legislation

Hon. P. J. BRADY (Kedron—ALP)
(Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations) (9.49 a.m.), by leave:
Earlier this week, a Senate committee tabled its report on the Workplace Relations Legislation Amendment Bill—Peter Reith's so-called second-wave changes. Peter Reith's response to criticism of his legislation by the committee, including criticism by Democrat Senator Andrew Murray, is that the second-wave changes to the Workplace Relations Act are like servicing a new car after 20,000 kilometres. Reith implies that all it needs is to change the oil, change the filters and tighten a few nuts and bolts here and there. But the fact is that the results of the Senate inquiry confirm that the legislation should be recalled entirely due to its inherent design defects. The recall is long overdue for the many Australian workers and members of the Australian community who have suffered as a direct result of the unfair and unbalanced Reith industrial laws.

Clearly, Mr Reith has failed to make out a case for any further changes. Democrat Senator Murray has branded the Bill as "too harsh, too regressive and too unfair to attract our support". Democrat leader Meg Lees has now stated that her party will reject every one of the Bill's key elements. She said—

"It is very difficult to unscramble the omelette to make this Bill fair and balanced."

It is notable that the major elements of the Bill that were rejected outright were the key planks of the Federal Government's brave new world for the Australian workplace, relating to conciliation, mediation, awards, agreements, AWAs, secret ballots and independent contractors. This has only justified and confirmed our Government's submission to the Senate inquiry that highlighted the grossly

unfair and unbalanced nature of the existing laws and the proposed amendments.

Indeed, the Queensland Government's abolition of the small business exemption from unfair dismissal laws has been backed by Democrat Senator Murray in his supplementary report. As noted by Senator Murray, the Queensland Government evidence to the inquiry has once and for all debunked the myth propagated by some employers and the coalition that exempting small business from unfair dismissal laws is linked to jobs growth. Once again—and for the record—there is no evidence to support the claim that the previous small business exemption contributed to employment growth. The report has also illustrated the dismal failure of the Federal Government's award-stripping process. In 1997, there were 3,197 Federal awards. As at 31 October 1999, only 359 awards had been simplified—a mere 11% in nearly four years—when Reith's architects said that the whole process would be completed in 18 months.

On the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, it is encouraging also to see the outright rejection by both Labor and the Democrats of the attempts to cheapen and politicise the independent umpire by introducing fixed terms of limited tenure for members of the commission. According to Senator Murray—

"Controlling the appointment process, controlling the dismissal process, and putting employees on short-term contracts, results in a significant and regrettable loss of independence."

Perhaps one of the most pertinent comments is that one of the most difficult issues confronting us as individuals and as a society is how to balance the competing demands of our working lives with our personal lives. It is indeed disheartening that the Federal Government has chosen not to even address this matter—blatantly ignoring the social impact of its deregulatory approach to industrial relations suffered by Australian workers over the last three and a half years.

The dissenting senators' reports are a slap in the face for the Reith proposals. Importantly, the inquiry has highlighted the real need to amend the Federal laws to redress the social inequities many Australian workers have suffered as a direct consequence of the introduction of the Workplace Relations Act in 1996. At a bare minimum, the Federal Government should now make the following amendments to the Act—

in line with Queensland's legislation and the recent Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report, introduce maternity leave provisions for long-term casual employees;

amend the operation of Australian workplace agreements in line with Queensland legislation to ensure there is a stronger public interest test, that they only apply to adult employees, and that the more vulnerable and disadvantaged are protected;

bring Australian workplace agreements before the Australian Industrial Relations Commission to ensure they are subject to independent scrutiny and approval; and increase the powers of the independent umpire—the Australian Industrial Relations Commission—to ensure that the Australian community, workers and employers are protected from damaging and protracted industrial disputation such as has been witnessed under the Workplace Relations Act.

The report has illustrated that Reith's mantra of promoting choice is illusory. Reith's mantra of choice clearly does not include mutual choice. He shows little regard for the position of vulnerable workers or for the need to provide greater balance and concern for the social consequences of his Act. Reith's Bill is rejected as unfair and unjust legislation. By comparison, the report demonstrates that Queensland's new industrial laws have the right approach in balancing social and economic goals and promoting fairness between employers and employees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Legal Aid Queensland

Hon. M. J. FOLEY (Yeronga—ALP)
(Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for The Arts) (9.55 a.m.), by leave: Tomorrow is Legal Aid Queensland's 20th birthday. When Legal Aid Queensland came into being 20 years ago, it had 69 staff, eight regional offices and an annual budget of \$6m. Today, its staff numbers more than 300, it has 13 regional offices and an annual budget of almost \$50m.

Legal Aid Queensland's achievements over the past 20 years are too numerous to list. Over the past 18 months alone, it has increased community access to justice by putting information and a referral database on the Internet, launched an Integrated Indigenous Strategy to help overcome the effects of violence against women in remote

Aboriginal communities, launched its Women's Justice Network in south-west Queensland, and the list goes on.

Over the past 18 months, Legal Aid Queensland's standards of excellence also have been recognised at a national level. In December last year, it won the prestigious Quality in Law Award, recognising outstanding achievements in the area of quality management and best practice in the legal profession throughout Australia. Legal Aid Queensland was one of only seven Australian organisations to reach the finals of this year's Australian Quality Awards for business excellence. And its client service centre has won two major awards since its inception in October 1997: the Queensland Public Sector Best Training Initiative Award in 1998 and the Australian Telemarketing and Call Centre Association award for Queensland call centre of the year with a staff of under 50.

But sadly, the past few years have not been all smooth sailing for Legal Aid Queensland. The Beattie Labor Government has boosted funding to Legal Aid Queensland by over \$5m a year more than it received from the previous coalition Government. But the Federal Government, whose lack of affinity with 20 year olds has become legendary—firstly, through cuts to welfare and, more recently, through its dastardly proposals for higher education—has shown an appalling neglect of Legal Aid. It has slashed funding to Legal Aid Queensland by \$2.5m a year and is refusing to reveal what is in store under the next round of Federal funding. Perhaps, as an indication of birthday goodwill or a little early Christmas cheer, the member for Warwick could end his stubborn muteness in relation to Federal funding for Legal Aid by calling on his colleagues in Canberra to do the right thing.

It is to the great credit of Legal Aid Queensland that it can continue to increase its services and maintain its standards of excellence, despite the savagery of the Federal Government's funding cuts. But make no mistake, those cuts have hurt, and those feeling the most pain are among the neediest in our society. Federal Justice Minister Senator Amanda Vanstone is impervious to this pain. In the Senate last week, she said this—

"The cut to Legal Aid funding made by this Government some time ago was in fact a call to the States to pay their fair share."

Senator Vanstone went on to say—

"With some pressure on the purse strings, I think you can make the case that it is in fact forcing the administration

of Legal Aid in the States to look for more efficiencies and to find them for the benefit of people who need to use Legal Aid."

These remarks demonstrate that the Federal Government shows arrogant disregard for the rights of the battlers and the most needy in our society. On the eve of the 20th birthday of Legal Aid Queensland, I can assure this House, and Senator Vanstone, that this organisation is highly efficient and that this Labor State Government is paying its fair share. We will continue to do all in our power to force the Federal Government to do justice to Legal Aid.

Let me also take this opportunity to acknowledge this historic 10th anniversary of that great day when Wayne Goss and the Labor Party defeated the forces of corruption and reaction and led the Queensland people towards the sunlit uplands of hope and a fair go for all.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Mining Industry Task Force

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister Assisting the Deputy Premier on Regional Development) (9.59 a.m.), by leave: Leading up to the last State election, it was a Labor commitment to convene a task force of key mining industry stakeholders. The purpose of convening this group was to discuss ways of minimising the negative impact of the Asian crisis on the mining industry, maximise employment levels and discuss any other relevant issues. Upon returning to Government, one of my first priorities was to organise the first meeting of this task force. That first meeting was held at Moranbah on 23 September 1998 and was attended by representatives of the Queensland Mining Council, unions and local government.

This meeting gave the various stakeholders an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the other party's point of view during difficult market conditions. At this meeting, one of the first issues raised was the need for the Government to provide a more equitable export coal royalty regime. Following extensive consultation with the industry, the Government made amendments to the coal royalty regime, which have provided a level playing field for the first time for the coal industry.

The second mining task force meeting was held in Mackay in September this year.

Once again, the meeting was well attended by representatives of the Mining Council, unions and local government. As the primary focus of this meeting was training and apprenticeship levels, it was also attended by representatives of the Queensland Mining Industry Training Advisory Board. At that meeting we also discussed fatigue in the workplace and, as a result of that, four workshops were convened across the State.

During the meeting, other issues were discussed, such as inductions, training of statutory officials and apprenticeship levels within the mining industry. Once again, it was pleasing to see the cooperation displayed by the different parts of industry. The reason this meeting focused on training was that this Beattie Labor Government recognises a trained work force is a key benefit to employers, employees and to the State in general. We are committed to focusing on traineeships and apprenticeships to build and maintain a skilled work force. One of the outcomes of this meeting was that I should write to individual companies to seek their opinions on how the uptake of apprentices could be made a more attractive proposition for the industry, and that has been done.

The most recent mining task force meeting was held on Monday of this week. At that meeting, apart from the regular attendees, representatives of mining contractor companies also attended. As well as presentations on economic forecasts, discussion again took place on the training of statutory officials, inductions and apprenticeship levels. Following the meeting, a subgroup was formed to examine the replies from the various mining companies who were contacted in regard to apprenticeship levels.

The meeting of this task force has been very successful. They have covered some very important issues, and I believe that they have the potential to identify and resolve many other important issues relevant to all sectors this industry. This Beattie Government is all about working through the issues and seeking positive outcomes. The mining task force is a sign of our commitment to this, and I am pleased to be able to report on its successful progress. In conclusion, I am also happy to congratulate the class of '89 on our 10th birthday.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Transport Call Centres

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP)
(Minister for Transport and Minister for Main

Roads) (10.02 a.m.), by leave: Queensland Transport has been working tirelessly in recent months to improve its services to customers. Today, I can inform the House of substantial improvements in telephone call centre response times and of changes which will lead to reductions in waiting times for driver licence testing.

The growth in monthly call volumes gives an indication of the challenges faced by Queensland Transport call centres. Call numbers have risen from 58,000 per month in May 1997 to 133,000 per month in September this year—an increase of approximately 130%. This increase in call numbers had led to unacceptable call waiting times for customers. In May this year, the average waiting time had increased to well over 10 minutes. On occasions, individual customers waited 30 to 40 minutes to be answered. The number of complaints regarding call centre delays being received also increased.

Extra funding was made available from an internal reallocation of funds by Queensland Transport in January 1999 to recruit and train additional service consultants for the call centres based in Emerald and Fortitude Valley. An additional \$1m has been budgeted for this year for call centre operations. Significant improvement in the performance of call centres was achieved in October and continued in November as a result of the increase in resources, improved management practices and technological enhancements. Waiting times have been reduced by more than 75% on the waiting times in May. Indeed, waiting times for November are averaging three minutes. Complaints about call centre services received in Queensland Transport's customer feedback facility have similarly fallen by more than 86% between May and now, and further improvements are targeted.

I commend staff and management at the Queensland Transport call centres on the excellent effort they have made to improve service to customers. I might add that I visited the call centre in Fortitude Valley the other day to personally commend them for their efforts. Customers dealing with Queensland Transport by telephone can be assured that everything possible is being done to improve services and my Government is committed to ensuring staff and management will be able to meet customer expectations on an ongoing basis.

In recent times, driver licence waiting times in some areas have increased to unacceptable levels. For example, in south-east Queensland, wait times currently average between seven and eight weeks. This increase

in waiting times has arisen in part as a result of the introduction of the new Q-Safe tests last year and the regular increase in the number of tests being conducted at this time of the year, largely due to the number of school leavers applying for their licences. The Q-Safe test provides a more comprehensive test of driver skill and has been welcomed by all stakeholders as a key contributor to improved road safety among new drivers.

Queensland Transport recently embarked on a wide-ranging consultation process with a view to reducing licence testing waiting times. As a result of this consultation, Queensland Transport will introduce a range of measures, which will see waiting times progressively improve over the coming months to a point where the average waiting time should be about two weeks. Some of the measures proposed include centralised test bookings, a streamlined testing process, the appointment of eight additional temporary driving instructors to south-east Queensland until the end of February, and consideration of relocatable relief teams. These measures will improve customer service for those waiting to do licence tests without compromising the improved safety outcomes resulting from the introduction of the Q-Safe test.

Whether they are seeking information over the telephone or waiting to be tested for a licence, Queenslanders should see continuing improvements in waiting times in the coming months.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence

Hon. J. C. SPENCE (Mount Gravatt—ALP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Minister for Women's Policy and Minister for Fair Trading) (10.06 a.m.), by leave: Today I table an historic report that has the potential to galvanise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into taking action against violence in their own communities. The report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Task Force on Violence was written for indigenous people by a group of women who felt that the time for passivity about violence in their communities has long passed. For the first time in Queensland, a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have produced a report to Government that turns the microscope on their own families and communities. Their document amplifies the voices of their communities, analyses the

issues and makes recommendations to Government. It numbers more than 300 pages and has 123 recommendations.

The report belongs to the women of the task force, and I acknowledge their presence in the gallery today. But it does not belong only to them. They dedicate it to the hundreds of people who bared their souls and shared their pain with the task force. Many of them began by saying, "I have never told anybody this before". The report is also for indigenous families caught in the cycle of violence. Especially, it is for the children who, as the report tells, are often moulded by violence. They are forced to cope in ways that, too often, make them part of the cycle.

Importantly, it is a document for all of us—for non-indigenous people who want to better understand why violence plagues so many communities and how it shapes too many lives and for we in Government, who are able to give assistance to communities that are saying "Enough" and who are stepping forward with their own solutions.

I will not even attempt to sum up, because I could not do justice to the work of these women. Suffice to say that non-indigenous Queenslanders who find time to read even less than 40 pages in a single section called Forms of Violence will find their hearts aching. That section is told largely through the voices of community members who give raw accounts of the experiences of themselves and their loved ones. They tell of terror and despair that is inescapable, because they are part and parcel of their families. If such accounts are painful to read, how agonising it must be to live these lives.

The report covers violence in all its forms: physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and self-inflicted. It says that the very public implosion of indigenous communities can no longer be hidden or excused as being "the Aboriginal way". Such thinking is a serious indictment that must be challenged and rejected. It puts it into context, using a broad brush to paint in the backdrop to a detailed analysis.

Of course, many communities are violent—non-indigenous communities included. But the violence portrayed in this text has a life of its own. It was nourished by a brutal colonial history and by the violent oppression of Governments and other institutions. Now the violence is feeding on itself. Some women, who are often victimised by male partners, parents or uncles, are falling into despair and alcoholism. Elders, whose authority can bring some order to the more functional communities, are at risk of abuse.

And, most tragically, some children are acting out violence in shocking ways.

The task force members heard of this sad reality from people all over Queensland. They listened to and took written submissions from discrete indigenous communities, rural and regional towns, the suburbs of Brisbane and the inside of prisons. They heard from men and men's groups as well as from women. The authors want to look to the future, to building secure and optimistic lives for their children. They found that all of the indigenous people who addressed them cited alcohol and other drugs as intrinsic to violence.

Many of today's children have been immersed since birth in alcoholism and violence. When they become old enough to offend against the law and against others, they are doing no more than mirroring the behaviour they have witnessed. For the women behind this report, the time for being labelled "victims" has passed. As the task force chair, Ms Boni Robertson, writes in her foreword—

"Through our collective efforts, we can break the cycle of violence and work towards a future that allows our children to be proud of their cultural identity and to live a life free of ongoing violence and abuse."

The Queensland Government wants to help these communities and the individuals within them to take control of their own destinies. The report provides Government with guidance from the people themselves. It has suggestions for many departments, demanding a concerted cross-Government response. We will spend some months considering the report and design a strategic response by early 2000. It would be unfair to ignore the work already done by Government agencies and the fact that some issues highlighted by the task force are already receiving Government attention.

For instance, my colleague the Minister for Police has begun piloting the transfer of community police to the Queensland Police Service. The Departments of Housing and Families are resourcing women's shelters or planning new shelters in remote communities, including Doomadgee, Palm Island and Lockhart River. My own Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development is funding the Aboriginal Coordinating Council to review community governance, funding grassroots organisations to combat violence and implementing an economic development strategy.

Some of the task force's recommendations fall within the Federal Government's reach. I note that the Federal Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Senator John Herron, has been promoting his commitment to family violence prevention and has promised \$6m in national funding over four years. I have sent Senator Herron a copy of the report and have sought an assurance that Queensland will receive its due share of Federal money. But the annual allocation from this fund will be only \$1.5m to be spread amongst all States and Territories. \$1.5m would barely build two shelters on Cape York alone. Senator Herron is a Queensland, and I have no doubt that he will be deeply affected by the words of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of this State. I would urge him to seek further funding for the urgent issues of family violence.

Finally, I salute the women who have put so much effort and emotion into this document. I understand that many of them were enduring violence even as they were working on the report. To the chair, Boni Robertson, and her co-workers, I say: thank you. They volunteered for an enormous task and have made an historic contribution to one of the most important challenges faced by our nation.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Fire Deaths

Hon. M. ROSE (Currumbin—ALP)
(Minister for Emergency Services) (10.14 a.m.),
by leave: December is traditionally Queensland's worst month for fire deaths. I cannot stress enough the need for Queenslanders to take extra care this month and throughout the festive season to reduce the risk of tragedy. The Fire Fatalities: Who's At Risk? report, which was released last year, highlighted that the festive season could easily turn into tragedy for Queenslanders. The research report found that on average more people died in Queensland in preventable fires during the month of December than in any other month of the year.

Firefighters believed that the casual mood leading up to Christmas, combined with alcohol, might be a contributing factor to the increase in domestic fire deaths. Often people become complacent about fire safety during the festive season, and that can be disastrous, if not tragic. Because it is a holiday period, many people are often out of their normal

environment and may not take the same care and safety precautions they would at home.

Firefighters highlight a wide range of potential fire causes over summer, including faulty fairy lights, fans, airconditioning units, televisions and dryers, neglected mosquito coils and candles, and water getting into electrical wiring. It goes without saying that parents should not allow their children to have access to matches or cigarette lighters. Only yesterday a three-year-old child playing with a lighter started a fire in Mount Isa which extensively damaged a home. Luckily, no-one was injured.

It disturbs me, as I am sure it would every member of the House, that there have been 19 fire deaths in Queensland so far this year. At least seven of those deaths are considered by firefighters to have been preventable. That is almost double the four preventable deaths last year—and we still have December and the festive season ahead of us. Firefighters are not being sensationalist when they plead for people to take extra precautions. They are being realistic. They have seen the horror of fire deaths and the tragic aftermath for families that have lost loved ones.

People cannot afford to be complacent about fire safety for their own sake or for the sake of their families. If people are staying in holiday accommodation over the Christmas season, they should check if there are smoke alarms and have an evacuation plan in place. People should not assume that they are immune from fire simply because they are on holidays. If they are at home, they should not become complacent. They should take exactly the same precautions. Fire is a deadly enemy.

The Fire Fatalities: Who's at Risk? report revealed that 101 people died in domestic fires in Queensland from 1991 to 1996. Seventeen of those deaths occurred in December. These tragic statistics went against the national trend, which showed that people in other States and Territories were more likely to die in a fire during the winter months. Winter 1999 has been horrific in terms of fire deaths. Let us all make sure that we do not follow it with a tragic festive season. Smoke alarms make an ideal Christmas present. They provide early warning of fires and give people valuable time to evacuate the home or building. They are inexpensive and proven lifesavers. I recommend that people who already have battery operated smoke alarms installed in their homes check to ensure they are working. The life they may save could be their own or that of a family member or friend.

PAPER

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following paper was tabled—

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for The Arts (Mr Foley)—

Queensland Law Reform Commission—
Annual Report for 1998-99.

OVERSEAS VISIT

Report

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.17 a.m.): I table a report to Parliament on my visit to Canada and the United States from 13 to 21 November 1999.

NOTICE OF MOTION

State Government Performance

Dr WATSON (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.17 a.m.): I give notice that I will move—

"This House notes, that after 17 long months of the Beattie Labor Government, Queensland has—

- its first budget cash deficit in over 20 years;
- the most regressive business policies in the country;
- the second highest unemployment rate on mainland Australia;
- witnessed a sharp decrease in business investment;
- failed to attract investment for any major projects;
- experienced a job creation freeze; and
- suffered international embarrassment on at least three occasions with EXPO 2002, Technomart III and Baywatch."

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Backflow Prevention Programs

Mr ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (10.18 a.m.): I move—

"That this House take note of Public Works Committee report No. 61 on public sector backflow prevention programs."

Last financial year in Queensland there were 65 deaths and 1,698 serious bodily injuries in our workplaces. In 1998, there were 279 deaths, 4,330 injuries requiring

hospitalisation, 6,189 injuries requiring medical treatment and 3,921 injuries arising from road accidents. In 1997-98, only four people presented at Queensland hospitals after being struck by lightning. In 1998-99, there were 10.

In the same period in Queensland, I have been unable to identify a single substantiated case of death, serious injury or ill health arising out of a backflow incident in a public sector building. Backflow does present some risk to the community. However, it is important to put this risk into its proper perspective. The committee has found in its majority report that, whereas high risk sites do exist, backflow presents only a minimal risk overall to public health, it is easily prevented and current public sector backflow prevention programs are an appropriate management response. On the evidence presented to the committee, backflow occurrences are highly unlikely and the chance of it occurring in public sector buildings is being incrementally reduced by the application of sound management principles.

In the period leading up to the inquiry, there was a great deal of hysteria generated around the backflow issue. The significant question arising from all of this is this: where have all these dangerous backflow incidents been occurring? During the inquiry, a number of alleged backflow incidents were placed before the committee. All of the incidents investigated, except one minor incident in the private sector, could not be substantiated. One celebrated case involved the claim that a Sydney pensioner had died after drinking water contaminated by backflow. The facts were that the incident was taken from a training video used by Sydney Water to outline a potential outcome of a hypothetical backflow incident. It simply did not happen.

Public sector agencies are implementing appropriate risk management strategies to minimise the risk of backflow in Government buildings. The fact that we are not experiencing catastrophic effects from backflow suggests that they are effectively managing this risk.

Mr LAMING (Mooloolah—LP)
(10.21 a.m.): While respecting the terms of reference of the committee's inquiry into the backflow prevention program, the real issue is that, as my question without notice on 29 April asked, did the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing terminate the engagement of BHF/PPK to continue their work with Queensland Health's backflow prevention program? A number of related matters have demanded a lot of attention over the intervening months, including the Quality

Water co-venture and the internal audit of the backflow prevention program. These matters serve both to throw light on and to confuse the central issue.

In short, BHF/PPK have been working with Project Services as backflow prevention program coordinators for approximately two years. They also work with Project Services on Queensland Health's backflow prevention program. Quality Water, however, was a marketing initiative and does not have any real significance on either program. It was discontinued by mutual agreement on 18 February 1999. We believe that there had been no problem with either the Public Works backflow program or Queensland Health's backflow program. In fact, BHF/PPK appeared to have been responsible for the introduction of enhanced efficiencies.

The internal audit was launched in January this year following the director-general's concerns with some of Quality Water's marketing initiatives and with tendering arrangements for the department's original backflow contracts. There was no mention at all about Queensland Health's backflow program in the objectives of the audit. The audit identified a potential conflict of interest between BHF and a potential supplier that should have been discussed with the director-general and the general manager of Project Services. There was no suggestion of impropriety in this report, but this was later suggested by the Minister.

The alleged conflict appears to have been answered satisfactorily by BHF. It also seems strange to me that nobody from the Minister down seems to have taken the trouble to contact BHF and discuss the matter. They could have resolved the issue then and there. To simply terminate their agreement with Queensland Health seems to me to be a denial of natural justice. But, even if there was a potential conflict, it would have been with the Department of Public Works' own backflow program, not Queensland Health's. So, if any action was to be taken at all, it should have been with the Public Works' program. Work was still being done, as it should have been, by BHF/PPK at the time of the Public Works Committee hearing in July—six months later, despite the claims of impropriety.

It appears, however, that BHF/PPK were terminated from a written agreement with Queensland Health's backflow program on the strength of an audit report which looked into the Public Works' backflow program and the Quality Water program, neither of which had anything to do with stage 2 of Queensland

Health's backflow prevention program. Regardless of who is responsible for this chain of events, we remain unconvinced that it was fair to BHF/PPK or that it resulted in the best outcome for Queensland Health's backflow prevention program.

Mr PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (10.24 a.m.): I rise to support the member for Nudgee's motion dealing with the Public Works Committee's report relating to backflow. The Minister referred the backflow issue to the committee following statements by Opposition members and reports in some media outlets. Almost all of those claims made in those reports were not supported by evidence presented to the committee. For that reason, I refer honourable members and others to the committee's concerns about the "emotive and reactionary reporting of this issue in the period prior to and during the inquiry".

Some of that reporting was based on claims by some members of this House, as well as a number of other individuals. I believe that, in matters such as the quality of water supply, which is an understandable concern to all of us, we all have responsibility to deal in facts and not exaggerate or make emotional claims. This is particularly so when we are dealing with Government buildings such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes or office blocks.

I believe that anyone who read the committee's report would conclude that it is very easy to make claims about health risks but much harder to substantiate them with hard facts. The committee threw open its doors and effectively asked anybody with facts to come forward. Nobody presented such evidence, and further research by the committee did not turn up any such information. We all must be careful in matters such as this to guard against elevating scuttlebutt or urban myths to the status of facts.

I believe that, as the report concludes, the Government is on the right track in its risk management approach to handling potential backflow problems. This is the approach taken since 1995. As the committee concludes, it is an appropriate way to go about it and it is working. I believe that it is important to recognise that the minority report does not disagree with the substantial findings of the majority report.

Mr ROWELL (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (10.26 a.m.): As stated in the chairman's foreword, the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing requested the committee to inquire into the department's backflow

program. The terms of reference set for the inquiry were broad so as to enable the production of an open and accountable outcome. In the initial stages of the inquiry, there was an intent to ensure that the outcome was impartial and fully reflected the actual position of the investigative process the committee carried out. As the issue had been referred by a Minister of the Crown and the media had focused on the backflow issue, it was incumbent on the committee to ensure that it provided an informed report.

The Department of Health had been placed under the spotlight with a range of controversial issues. With the complexity of procedures in health facilities, it was essential that the committee was confident that the measures implemented were sound to ensure the safety of hospital drinking water. There was an obligation on the committee to use the best endeavours to provide a comprehensive report to the public on backflow issues in hospitals. Did Queensland Health end up with an effective program? The program starting from stage 2 was to cost \$1.19m to audit all sites in the State. It was then renegotiated with BHF/PPK plus Project Services in an agreement in writing for \$205,000, which was part 1 of stage 2.

Following the audit, Project Services terminated the agreement with BHF/PPK, whose expertise was an integral part of the process up to that time. A revised sum of \$95,000 was considered for Project Services to carry out the audit on the four Health facilities to assess the need for backflow devices and requirements. To quote from the committee report presented to Parliament—

"The committee is unable to make further comment on the efficiency of other backflow works undertaken by Queensland Health."

Yet it became difficult to fully examine the background of these activities and others through the committee. It is not unreasonable with sensitive issues, such as the possible contamination of drinking water, that any doubt is removed from the installation of water conducting systems, particularly in hospitals. It may be difficult to track the course of where a sickness could have its origins. Wherever possible, it is only commonsense that prevention is the key to eliminating the pollution of water supplies. Ensuring the backflow issue in public health facilities was examined fully was a responsibility given to the Public Works Committee to inquire into.

Mr MUSGROVE (Springwood—ALP) (10.29 a.m.): In hearing the contributions from

those opposite, I am somewhat disappointed that the contributions made this morning bear no resemblance whatsoever to the dissenting report presented to the committee and to the House. The majority report of the committee ran to some 10 pages. Attached to the back of that is a few paragraphs from the Opposition which do not substantially disagree with the majority report. But today we are once again seeing a grubby attempt to turn this potentially most serious of public health issues into a political issue.

I congratulate the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing for the courage he showed in referring this issue to the committee, even though the Opposition spokesperson is a member of that committee. I think it is most important that committee inquiries are conducted in a serious and apolitical fashion. It is particularly disappointing when people in this place cannot separate their shadow ministerial responsibilities from their committee responsibilities.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The time for the debate on committee reports has expired.

Mr LINGARD: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I bring to your notice that not all members of the Public Works Committee have spoken in this debate. Therefore, I move—

"That the debate be adjourned."

Motion agreed to.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Chevron Gas Pipeline

Mr BORBIDGE (10.30 a.m.): I ask the Minister for Mines and Energy: has he discussed with the Auditor-General the potential exposure of Queensland taxpayers to hundreds of millions of dollars in costs through the take or pay gas contracts entered into by Energex and Ergon for gas that is not yet guaranteed and with customers who are not yet confirmed? Has the Auditor-General approved such dealings by Government owned corporations in the Minister's charge?

Mr McGRADY: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Once again we see the alternative Government of this State trying to undermine two of the major projects which have the potential to create thousands and thousands of jobs in regional Queensland. I nominate the Tarong Power Station, which comes under criticism from the Liberal Party Leader on a daily basis. And on an almost daily basis we have this attack on the proposal to build a pipeline from Papua New Guinea to Queensland. Day after day we see this attack.

Yesterday, in my opinion the Treasurer of Queensland answered the questions which were presented to him.

I make it perfectly clear that this Government has an energy policy. This Government is trying to get a balanced mix, and a gas pipeline from Papua New Guinea plays an important role in this mix. This is a massive contract which in my opinion will bring many benefits to the State of Queensland.

In answer to the question: no, I personally have not had any discussions with the Auditor-General. I have had a number of briefings from and discussions with Energex, which keeps me informed of its proposals. As I said yesterday, at the end of the day we appoint boards to grow their particular business. There are occasions on which they need ministerial approval and when that happens they will come to the shareholding Ministers.

I say to the Opposition: have some faith in this State because, to me, the project of a pipeline from Papua New Guinea down to Gladstone and then possibly on to Brisbane is one of the great visions this Government has. I appeal to the Opposition to get behind this State, show some confidence in this State and work towards trying to provide jobs in the regions of this State that desperately need them.

Chevron Gas Pipeline

Mr BORBIDGE: I direct a question to the Minister for Mines and Energy.

Mr Elder: Wrecker!

Mr BORBIDGE: We on this side remember the State Bank of Victoria and we remember the performance of State Labor Governments interstate.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Ask the question.

Mr BORBIDGE: That was the preface to my question; I am leading into my question. I refer to the fact that, as the shareholding Minister of the Queensland electricity supply industry, the member for Mount Isa is prepared to exercise his ministerial authority in relation to issues such as overseas trips by executives and salary and bonus packages for CEOs, and I ask: why is the Minister therefore determined to hide from the people of Queensland their exposure by him to hundreds of millions of dollars in costs associated with the take or pay gas contracts signed by Energex and Ergon for gas that is not yet certain to be delivered and for which they do not have firm customers?

Mr McGRADY: Once again I thank the Opposition Leader for the question. All I can say—

Mr Hamill: He reveals his ignorance.

Mr McGRADY: As the Treasurer says, this reveals his ignorance. The facts are that before any contracts will be duly actioned a number of inquiries will take place, including due diligence.

What a pathetic exercise we have been through in this past week. Do those in the Opposition not understand what their leadership is trying to do? This is a billion-dollar investment in the South Burnett, which nobody could ever claim to be Labor heartland. It is worth \$1 billion and those opposite are trying to wreck it. They are trying to wreck the construction of a power station which will bring 2,500 jobs to the South Burnett. On top of that, they are trying to wreck a pipeline which in my opinion shows vision—a pipeline which will bring relatively inexpensive—

Mr BORBIDGE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The remarks being made by the Minister are offensive and untrue and I ask that they be withdrawn. All we want is to know how much this Minister is putting this State into hock.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member will not debate the point.

Mr McGRADY: I challenge the Leader of the Opposition and his cohorts to travel to regional Queensland and to talk to people in Townsville. They should talk to Townsville Enterprise, because if they do not, we will. We will spread the message right across the State that the alternative Government of this State is trying to sabotage one of the greatest visionary projects that this State has seen in many a long year.

When it comes to fruition, this pipeline will provide a base power station in Townsville. That is what this coalition is trying to stop. It is playing its political games at the expense of regional Queensland. The Opposition ought to be ashamed of itself. It does not deserve to take over the Treasury benches of this State. It is all very well for you to sit there and smirk and smile. As I said yesterday, you are traitors to the Queensland economy.

Mr BORBIDGE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That remark is totally offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! This is the difficulty: it was not particularly addressed to any one person. It was addressed to a group.

Mr BORBIDGE: Mr Speaker, would you like us all to get up one by one and take exception? I am sure that can be arranged.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I think we should. It is your question time. If you wish to do that, you most certainly can do so.

Mr BEANLAND: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, I believe that if you check Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice you will find that that is the case under the House of Commons Standing Order 487.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! What is the case?

Mr BEANLAND: The case is that that was aimed at the Opposition. The Opposition Leader was asking the question. Clearly, it was aimed at him.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! If the member for Indooroopilly argues that, he would realise that there are other people who sit up the back on that side of the House who also would—

Mr LAMING: I rise to a point of order. I draw the Speaker's attention to Standing Order 120 where all personal reflections are offensive and it should not be necessary for members to rise.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the honourable member for Chermside.

Multiculturalism

Mr SULLIVAN: I refer the Premier to his commitment to enhance multiculturalism in Queensland. I ask: what progress has been made in that important aspect of his portfolio?

Mr BEATTIE: I hardly need to tell all members that Queensland is indeed a lucky State. We enjoy our quality of life that is the envy of other States and indeed other nations. That is because we in Queensland enjoy a truly dynamic and diverse multicultural society of which we are all proud. There are about 150 different countries of birth, 120 languages and 43 religions. We have more than 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups in Queensland alone. Just last week, I had the pleasure of meeting some of the outstanding members of our multicultural community at the Queensland Multicultural Service Awards here at Parliament House. They were attended by a number of Ministers and members, including my Parliamentary Secretary, Gordon Nuttall, who has responsibility for these issues.

At the same time, I launched the first annual report on the implementation of the Multicultural Queensland policy. It highlights the achievements of Government agencies in implementing the policy, summarises issues raised by the community in Statewide

consultations held in the first half of 1999 and sets future directions for 1999-2000. It shows clearly that although much has been done in the field of multiculturalism, there is still much more to be done. It also shows that Queensland is continuing to develop as a cohesive, inclusive and harmonious society that values the diversity of its people.

At the same function I also launched a very important publication that draws on statistics to present a picture of Queensland's cultural diversity. That may sound pretty dry and uninteresting reading for anyone who is not a bean counter, but that is not the case. This book titled "Diversity—A Queensland Portrait" takes a close look at people who were born overseas and how they have fared after moving to Queensland. It contains statistical information on our cultural diversity, including our indigenous peoples, migrants, languages spoken and religions practised. The statistics are brought to life by the inclusion of stories of 16 Queenslanders who were born in the top eight source countries for migration to our State. They include the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam. These are stories of unsung heroes, battlers and quiet achievers. They put a human face to the statistical picture. I table a copy of that report for the information of the House. I recommend that report to the House as a valuable resource for planners, policy makers, researchers, students and community workers. It is a picture of a society committed to a multicultural Australia, one of which we can be very proud. As the Minister responsible for multiculturalism, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to table that report.

While I am on my feet, I point out that what we have seen from the Opposition this morning is more wrecking of Queensland. This Opposition is anti-Queensland. They are wreckers of the worst kind. One would think that when it came to major projects, such as the Tarong Power Station based on gas, they would be in here supporting it. The PNG gas pipeline has to go through due diligence. That is the appropriate way for it to go. We will do that properly.

Energex and Ergon Gas Contracts

Dr WATSON: I direct my question to the Treasurer of this supposedly open and accountable Government. Given that he did not hesitate to exercise his authority as a shareholding Minister when it came to demanding dividend payments from the electricity distribution companies on their 1997-

98 profits, supposedly in the interests of taxpayers but more accurately because of his Budget imperatives, including his direction of 25 September 1998 to the board of Energex, which I table, I ask: why was he prepared to exercise his ministerial authority to demand dividend payments measured in tens of millions of dollars to hide the true extent of his Budget cash deficit, but is not prepared to exercise his authority on behalf of taxpayers by making them aware of their exposure to potentially hundreds of millions of dollars in costs associated with the proposed Energex and Ergon gas contracts?

Mr HAMILL: I thought I was going to be hearing War and Peace from the Opposition Treasury spokesman, but he finally got around to asking the question. In relation to the question and not the prologue, I make the following observation. As I stated in this House yesterday in response to a remarkably similar question from the Leader of the Opposition, the whole issue of the negotiations in relation to gas for a potential contract with the representatives of the Chevron gas pipeline is subject to a due diligence process. That process is a full and proper process analysing the exposures, impacts and risks inherent in any of those contracts.

Dr Watson: Are you going to make it public?

Mr HAMILL: That is a process that is commercial in confidence, as the former Professor of Accounting at the University of Queensland should well know.

As a shareholding Minister, I state again for the record that following the receipt of that report on the due diligence process—

Mr Borbidge: You won't make it public.

Mr HAMILL: Again the Leader of the Opposition talks about secret reports and so on.

Mr Elder: Starland, Fantasyland.

Mr HAMILL: Unlike Once Upon a Time, this is a very real project. Again, this is a Government that takes its responsibilities very seriously indeed. We are not at liberty to divulge the detailed and confidential commercial information pertaining to those private sector entities with which certain Government owned corporations are negotiating. We will respect, as we should, the commercial confidences involved in that process.

I make this point abundantly clear both to the Leader of the Opposition and to the Leader of the Liberal Party: as a shareholding Minister, I will not shirk the responsibility I have

as a shareholding Minister. That is why we are doing a proper due diligence process over these negotiations. The appropriate decisions will be made following the receipt of that due diligence report.<End of answer>

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Chair wishes to recognise the presence in the public gallery of a former Minister and member of this place, the Honourable Bill Eaton.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Foreign Students

Mr PURCELL: The Premier set a goal of attracting foreign students to our universities as part of the goal of making Queensland the Smart State. I ask: will he tell this House of any developments in that regard?

Mr BEATTIE: Today I congratulate the University of Southern Queensland for adding two more national awards to its recent international award as the World's Best Dual Mode University. It won those latest awards for its success in attracting foreign students. The USQ won the export award category in the annual Multicultural Marketing Awards and was runner up with a highly commended in the Government award category. No other Australian university won awards in that competition organised by the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales.

The USQ's achievements are particularly welcome because they mirror my Government's goals. I want Queensland to become the Smart State. Achievements such as these certainly show that our universities are up among the country's leaders. I want more of our companies and organisations to export, because this simply means jobs and more jobs for Queenslanders. The export of the USQ's courses brings in much-needed foreign currency and advertises our expertise overseas.

I am proud of Queensland's multiculturalism. As I said earlier, it is one of this State's great strengths. Queenslanders go out of their way to make visitors to this State feel welcome. This enhances the educational opportunities we are offering. USQ Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Swannell, has said that USQ has actively promoted multiculturalism on and off campus and this year launched a register of languages whereby staff made themselves available to students in 37 different languages, if cultural or language difficulties were a barrier to understanding or learning. The USQ is Australia's most multicultural campus, with students from nearly 50 different countries studying degree and

postgraduate programs. The university says it aims to provide excellent teaching and materials in such a way that anyone who wants to learn can learn at their own pace, in their own time and in a way entirely suited to the individual. Recently, on the Gold Coast, when the venture capital conference was held, I had the pleasure of launching the USQ's new Internet courses. The university is one of the most effective in providing courses via the Net. The courses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is a great university and all honourable members should be proud of it.

While on the subject of investment opportunities, let me remind the House that the real issue today is this: why has the Federal Government undercut the investment in hardwood timbers by removing tax deductibility? It is an absolute disgrace that the Federal Government has undercut the hardwood timber industry which this Government is seeking to build by taking away tax deductibility. I have not heard the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the Liberal Party come in here and say, "Let's talk to the Federal Government about restoring tax deductibility so that we can restore investment in hardwood timbers." What about the communities that will lose out because of this? They should stand up for Queensland for a change.

Australian Road Rules Brochure

Mr JOHNSON: I refer the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads to Queensland Transport's failure to ensure that the information concerning the Australian Road Rules was made available to all Queenslanders prior to 1 December, and I ask: can the Minister confirm that many Queenslanders still have not been able to obtain the brochure and that Queensland Transport customer service centres do not have copies available and have not even been providing them to new licensees—that is if people can get a licence? As the media campaign was concentrated on the availability of the brochure, has an amnesty period for offences been arranged with Queensland police?

Mr BREDHAUER: I thank the honourable member for the question. However, the basis of his question is wrong. Over the past three months, Queensland Transport has spent \$1.5m on a variety of initiatives to promote the new Australian Road Rules. However, as the member for Gregory—

Mr Johnson: There's still people who haven't got the brochure. That's the point.

Mr BREDHAUER: As the member for Gregory would be aware, having formerly been the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads—

Mr Johnson: Done a damned good job of it, too.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I am getting the impression that honourable members do not want to hear the answer to this question.

Mr BREDHAUER: As the member for Gregory would be aware, as a former Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads, the development of the Australian Road Rules has occurred over many years and was approved by the Australian Transport Council last year. Between 21 and 24 November, 1.2 million copies of the leaflet were distributed to households around Queensland by Queensland Transport and its distribution networks. We have become aware of a number of isolated incidents where people have indicated that they have not received the brochure. However, I point out to the honourable member that the brochure has not been the only part of the campaign. There has also been a significant advertising campaign. A glove box guide has been produced and a range of other initiatives have been undertaken by Queensland Transport to promote the initiative. Where we have become aware of individuals—and there are a number of cases—saying that they have not received the brochure, we have taken immediate steps to distribute them by mail forthwith. Yesterday we did a computer check of the 1800 complaints telephone line. There is no pattern to this. These are just isolated instances. I suspect in some cases people may have disposed of the brochure that arrived in their mailbox, thinking it was another form of advertising, junk mail or something like that. We have distributed it.

The police have indicated that matters involving road safety and potential risk of life will be enforced from yesterday's date. However, they will be exercising some discretion in enforcing the less significant and non-life-threatening offences that arise through the changes to the road rules.

Regional Forest Agreement

Mr PITT: I ask the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade: can he detail to the House the contribution being made by the Federal

Government to the development of all plantations, which is an integral part of the widely supported Queensland proposal for a regional forest agreement?

Mr ELDER: Following on from the theme of the Premier this morning, we as a Government delivered an historic agreement in relation to our RFA outcome—an agreement signed by all of the players. We then went to the Federal Government to look at the support that it would provide in terms of this historic agreement. Early discussions with the Federal Government about the \$36m we were looking for were based on a number of points, one point being—and they continually raised this with us—that they would review their capital contribution downwards, because they were helping in other ways. Specifically, they said that they would allow tax deductibility—no changes to the taxation laws as they apply to plantation timbers. Wilson Tuckey himself said, after the initial round of the business tax changes announced by Treasurer Costello, that he was happy with that and that it would be good news for the timber industry.

Stage 2 of Costello's business taxes are alarming indeed, because what they are saying is that they will end the immediate deductibility provisions for investments in new timber plantations. Talk about policy inconsistency. We have Senator Hill and John Howard out there saying—

Dr Watson: The Democrats are against it; it's only passed with Labor support.

Mr ELDER: The 2020 plan to plant three million trees is a Federal Government initiative to deal with the growth of plantation timbers and to deal with greenhouse gas issues. When we spoke to the Federal Government—

Dr Watson: Federal Labor is supporting the whole package.

Mr ELDER: Another wrecker!

Mr BORBIDGE: I rise to a point of order.

Mr ELDER: And here is the other wrecker of the Queensland economy.

Mr BORBIDGE: The Minister is misleading the House. Federal Labor is supporting the tax changes.

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

Mr ELDER: Federal Labor is not supporting the changes to this particular provision with respect to the forestry industry, and it said so in a press release of 15 November.

In respect of this tax change there is inconsistency at a Federal level. This tax

change impinges upon the Federal Government's plantation policy and undermines all new plantation investment in this country.

Dr Watson interjected.

Mr ELDER: The honourable member is a wrecker of the Queensland economy. But the acting Leader of the Opposition is by far the biggest wrecker of this economy.

The inconsistency in policy is dripping from them. There is no consistency in relation to tax policy. We will be saying to the Federal Government, "If you're not going to allow the taxation deductibility, we'll be asking for a larger capital contribution for our plantations." They cannot have to both ways. They cannot say to us, "We're going to limit our capital contribution, because we're going to give you tax deductibility" and then withdraw it. For the information of the Opposition, I table the press release.

Australian Road Rules Brochure

Mr NELSON: I note that the Minister for Transport referred to incidents where people did not receive the mail-out as isolated, and I ask: given that the people in Mareeba, Tolga, Malanda, Millaa Millaa, Mount Carbine, Mount Molloy, Almaden and other towns on the southern tablelands in post code 4872—Ravenshoe, Mount Garnet, Irvinebank, Dimbulah and Herberton—which is 85% to 90% of the tablelands, missed out on this mail-out, will the Minister give an assurance that these pamphlets are in the mail to the people of the tablelands?

Mr BREDHAUER: As I indicated in answer to an earlier question, the advice that I sought yesterday in relation to the incidence of non-receipt of the brochure indicated that there was a very small incidence—and isolated incidents—of people who have not received the brochure. If the claims made by the member for Tablelands are correct—

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gregory!

Mr Beattie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BREDHAUER: If the claims made by the member for Tablelands are correct in respect of the leaflets not having been distributed to an area within his electorate, then I will have those claims investigated and I will have the matter rectified today. But I repeat that yesterday I sought information and advice from my department and from the

people who were contracted to deliver the leaflets throughout Queensland. The advice provided to me was that 1.2 million leaflets had been distributed to parts of Queensland. We did have reports of people who had not received the leaflet. And where we became aware of those cases—and this has been happening progressively over the past two or three weeks—we were taking immediate action to rectify it by putting a leaflet in the mail, personally addressed to those people who made us aware of those issues.

Yesterday, when I asked about the distribution of the leaflet, I was told that a scan of the postcodes did not indicate any pattern in terms of areas that had been missed. But if the member for Tablelands has a serious issue in his electorate, then I will have my department attend to that issue today.

Remote Area Housing

Ms STRUTHERS: I refer the Treasurer to the decision of the Federal Government to include the provision of employer-provided housing in remote areas within the fringe benefits tax net, and I ask: what has been the outcome of the Queensland Government's campaign to have this iniquitous policy overturned?

Mr HAMILL: The Queensland Government has been very forthright in advocating on behalf of employees—including, I might say, Queensland Government employees—in the remote areas of the State, in relation to the Federal Government's decision to catch the housing entitlements of those employees within the fringe benefits tax net. In fact, my colleague the member for Mount Isa, the Minister for Mines and Energy, was particularly forthright in raising this matter in this Parliament and elsewhere last year when the enormity of the Federal Government's policy decision was being appreciated.

Let us understand exactly what this decision would have done. This decision was going to take the value of the fringe benefit which is provided—that is, in relation to housing—and that would be used to effectively increase the level of earnings, which would effectively also deny those employees access to a range of benefits which other families would have been able to obtain. For example, when they had the value of the housing benefit in the remote area added to their income, that may have denied those families access to family support payments, for example, or family allowances and so on.

Mr Purcell: Shame!

Mr HAMILL: It is a shame. It is also a shame that other members of the coalition who represent remote areas did not join the Government in their decrying of the Federal Government's policy in relation to this matter. But people in remote areas of Queensland can at least be thankful that the Beattie Government has continued to advocate on their behalf. In fact, in November last year I wrote to the Federal Treasurer about this matter, pointing out how iniquitous this expansion of FBT was and how it would impact very severely upon the provision of services to remote areas in Queensland. After all, the Queensland Government makes no apology for the fact that we provide housing benefits to the people who provide health services, police services, transport services and other services in the remote areas of the State. We need those sorts of incentives to get the appropriate people out into those areas. And country people and other people in remote areas are entitled to those services.

In response to our advocacy, I received correspondence from the Assistant Treasurer, Rod Kemp, basically saying, "Too bad. Not interested." But we did not let it rest at that. We advocated around the other States as well and, thankfully, we got other State Governments on board. Because of the Queensland Government's leadership on this matter, we now have a satisfactory outcome. The Federal Government has backed down, and those workers in remote areas will now get the full benefit of the housing that we advocated on their behalf.

Time expired.

Development Incentive Scheme

Mr LESTER: I refer the Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Natural Resources to the Development Incentive Scheme, which assists primary producers to invest in new water storage for irrigation, and I ask: why did the Minister issue a directive to the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority to cease processing Development Incentive Scheme applications when, in fact, he had no authority to do so? Why did he also issue a directive to the Resource Manager, Natural Resources, not to issue land and water plans under the Development Incentive Scheme? Why are the Minister and the Treasurer taking a submission to Cabinet recommending that outstanding applications, including those already approved in principle by the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority, not be paid, even

though some producers have already, in trust, put some of this forward?

Mr HAMILL: I rise to a point of order. The member has suggested that I am taking some submission to Cabinet in relation to these matters. That is simply not true. I ask that the member withdraw that statement, because it is not true and it is offensive. He is suggesting that I am going to try to provide some disbenefit to those rural producers. That is just not true. I find it offensive. I have been standing up for rural producers.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keppel will withdraw that statement.

Mr LESTER: If I withdraw it, that means that those people who are getting in touch with me are okay now and they do not have a problem.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keppel will just withdraw.

Mr LESTER: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: And could he complete his question? It is getting a bit like Blue Hills.

Mr LESTER: I have already asked the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Then I will now call the Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Natural Resources.

Mr WELFORD: I have no authority to direct the Rural Adjustment Authority, and I have not done so.

Residential Housing

Mrs ATTWOOD: I refer the Treasurer to Australian Bureau of Statistics figures released yesterday which indicate a turnaround in residential building approvals, and I ask: what is the outlook for the residential housing market in Queensland?

Mr HAMILL: The residential housing market has been experiencing some difficulties over the past three or four years. We have had a situation where there has been significant oversupply in the housing market, and it is taking some time for that to be worked through. But over the past quarter, there has been some significant rallying in the number of residential approvals that have occurred in Queensland. In fact, on the figures released for October—the most recent figures available—in Australia as a whole, there was a 1.4% increase in the number of residential approvals. Those are the trend figures—the monthly change. But in Queensland the increase was 3.9%. That is very encouraging. But I have to say that, if we look at the details,

this indicates the fragility that exists in the domestic housing market. And while we can take some comfort from this rallying, what we are seeing is the first impact of the GST being experienced out there in the housing industry.

Members might ask: "How is this a detriment if we have such growth over the last month and in the last quarter?" We are seeing decisions being brought forward.

Mr Schwarten: Panic buying.

Mr HAMILL: As the Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing suggests, there is panic buying. Even on the most optimistic forecast, there is no reason to believe that that level can be sustained following the introduction of the GST in the middle of next year.

This point has not been lost, either, on a number of independent commentators. I note particularly the following comments of Saul Eslake, who is an economist from the ANZ Bank—

"... the building boom was running so strongly that the chance of a post-GST drop in housing starts had increased significantly."

That is of real concern. In fact, Mr Eslake went on to state—

"The slump would only be worse because of rising interest rates expected around that time."

That leads me to my next point. It was with some dismay that I saw the Federal Government and the Reserve Bank increase interest rates, ostensibly because the economy was showing significant signs of growth. We had national decisions being made on monetary policy reflecting what was happening in the pre-Olympic New South Wales State economy and having no reflection whatsoever on the situation prevailing elsewhere in the country. Even though we have seen some growth in housing approvals here, Victoria, for example, has seen negative growth. Those increases in interest rates, coupled with the GST, will have a very serious impact indeed upon housing right across the nation next year.

Education Department

Mr QUINN: I refer the Minister for Education to the Queensland Public Service Union's extraordinary vote of no confidence in his director-general on Tuesday, and I ask: can the Minister confirm that the salary overruns in his department, highlighted by the QPSU, are now approaching \$40m, equivalent to the cost

of building seven or eight new schools? Can the Minister advise the House how these overruns are to be funded?

Mr WELLS: The answer to the honourable member's question is: no. I would like to add that, yesterday, we discussed this matter. However, it is good to hear from the honourable member again.

The honourable member never asks a question about education. I do not know whether members have noticed this, but he asks questions about managerial matters, management consultants, planning—all kinds of things like that—but never about education. What about the great issues of education that are going on at the moment? The question of literacy, the question of numeracy, the question of differentiation in schools and the problematical outcomes in boys' education. What about all the issues that were raised in the 2010 consultation? We do not hear from the honourable member about any of these things. It is as if the honourable member is not actually interested in education.

Mr Schwarten: Well, he wasn't when he was Minister.

Mr WELLS: The Honourable Minister is right. On the way into Parliament, I was listening to the radio and I heard a song that could be the member's song. It went something like this, "Don't know much about history, don't know much biology, don't know much about the science book, don't know much about the French I took." I would like to say that the words of the chorus should be changed slightly to highlight the honourable member's lack of interest in those things that this Government has addressed and go something like, "But I do know that one and one is two and I know that if you knew it, too, what a wonderful world it would be."

Disability Services

Mr PEARCE: I direct a question to the Minister for Disability Services. Given that tomorrow is the International Day of People with a Disability, can the Minister outline what steps the Government is taking to address continuing unmet need for disability services in Queensland?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for his question. His commitment to the people in his area who have a disability is well known. Honourable members will be aware of the significant contribution that our Government has made towards addressing the unmet need of Queenslanders with a disability. Since taking office, we have

allocated an additional recurrent \$30m in the Budget to address this issue.

One of the major initiatives that we have implemented with this funding is adult lifestyle support. This funding is about giving individuals choices. It is about providing support to people with a disability to stay in their own homes and to actively participate in their communities. But more importantly, it is about giving them control over their lives and it is about driving reform by putting the power in the hands of the consumers.

The funding is tied to an individual. So if they want to move from Brisbane to Mount Isa, they can take their funding with them. If they are unhappy with their service provider, they can take their funding to another service provider. If their needs change and a different service is required, they can take their funding to that different service. This is a revolution in disability services. Prior to this initiative, funds were provided to organisations in block—as block funds—and individuals had to stay with those funds.

Lifestyle support allows people with disabilities to tailor services to meet their needs. It is about fitting services to people instead of fitting people to services. To date, almost \$13m has been allocated to adult lifestyle support. It means that approximately 400 Queenslanders have been given a better future. More than 400 Queenslanders are going to receive a service that they would have otherwise been denied.

Today I have the pleasure to announce that a fourth funding round for adult lifestyle support services will be advertised in metropolitan and regional papers this Saturday. An extra \$2m in addition to the \$30m election commitment has been allocated and I anticipate that a further 67 Queenslanders will be funded in this fourth round.

There is no doubt that Queensland has done and is continuing to do its share to address unmet need. In my view, and in the view of my colleagues in other States, the time has come for the Commonwealth to also pull its weight. The unmet needs of people with a disability in Australia is an ongoing shame and the Commonwealth has to actually deliver some leadership on the issue. Last Friday I met with other State and Territory Ministers. Although we are pleased to see that the Commonwealth has made funds available, we are very, very concerned about the parameters that they are putting around this offer. The Federal Minister, Jocelyn Newman, has said that the funds can be used only for people

who have a carer who is over 70 years of age. The system that we have put in place is based on need, not on age. I am not prepared to tell people who have been caring for someone for more than 20 years and whose circumstances change—for example, their partner has had a heart attack and has become someone who also needs care—that they might have to wait until they are over 70 until they can expect any Government assistance. It is not fair, it is discriminatory and it does not go to Queenslanders in need. I urge all members to lobby their Federal counterparts to put some more flexible parameters around this offer.

Boating and Fisheries Patrol Officers

Mr COOPER: I refer the Minister for Primary Industries to advertisements for this year's recruitment of Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol officers, which stipulate a mandatory requirement that applicants hold an associate diploma in marine resources. Why have graduates of the pilot course, Certificate IV Fisheries Resource Protection, developed by Gateway TAFE at DPI's request, been ruled ineligible to apply for these jobs after previously being advised by his department that the certificate course was appropriate qualification for entry to the patrol?

Mr PALASZCZUK: I thank the honourable member for the question. He has raised a very important issue. I would like to inform the House that I am very aware that there have been complaints by TAFE students about the entry requirements for people wanting to join the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol.

The member is right. The advertisement was a little misleading. However, I am informed that this matter has been investigated and addressed by the Boating and Fisheries Patrol and letters have now been sent to four of the students involved, indicating that the consultants handling the engagement process will be making a fresh round of offers. So it is good news for those people.

Tourism Industry

Ms BOYLE: I ask the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing: will he advise the House of any new research that outlines how the GST, the Olympics and the so-called millennium bug may affect the Queensland tourism industry?

Mr GIBBS: I thank the honourable member for the question, because this is part of a very extensive report that has just been carried out by Queensland Tourism. It has just released the first of four national surveys that it will conduct over the next year to provide up-

to-date snapshots of consumer intentions for the tourism industry.

The findings of the first Queensland 2000 barometer show that the community already has concerns about how the GST, the Y2K bug and the Olympics may affect our tourism industry. The study reveals that Australian consumers will take these factors into account when planning their holidays for the year 2000. In relation to the GST, 22% of the 1,086 respondents said that the GST would impact on Australians, while a further 24% said that the GST would affect their holiday plans. Twenty per cent said that they were more likely to holiday overseas because of the GST, while another 18% planned a holiday closer to home to avoid increased transport costs as a result of the tax itself. The most worrying thing shown by the research is that most Australians are not yet considering fully the impact of the GST on their holiday plans. This means the forecast negative effects of the GST may well increase as its introduction draws nearer.

In relation to the millennium bug, 12% of respondents believe that it will impact on Australians, while a further 14% said they will not be holidaying over the New Year's Eve period because of the perceived impact of the bug. In relation to the Olympics, 37% of respondents believe that the Sydney Olympic Games will impact on Australians, but only 3% actually intend going to the Olympics. A further 13% intend to take time off to watch the Olympics, while 23% plan to holiday overseas during the Games to take advantage of cheaper deals.

In overall terms, the survey found that domestic tourism to Queensland would drop by 0.3%, or 37,000 visitors, and \$22.3m in income as a result of the GST, the Y2K and the Olympics. The good news for Queenslanders is that the Olympics is expected to offset those losses by bringing in 50,000 additional international tourists and \$86.6m in revenue. I will keep honourable members abreast of updated forecasts for the next Queensland 2000 barometer that will be released in February.

Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care and Minister for Disability Services

Mr FELDMAN: I refer the Premier to question on notice No. 1611 in which the member for Hervey Bay specifically asks the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care for a copy of a document which contains offensive, extremist and sexist comment emanating from the Hervey Bay office of her department, and I ask: is the Premier aware of

a subsequent memo from Minister Bligh wherein she instructs staff to destroy all copies of the offending document? As her memo is a reaction to a form of complaint acknowledged in that memo, is this another Shreddergate in the making; and does this Government have sufficient shredding capacity to meet its obvious needs?

Mr BEATTIE: I take all questions by members of this House seriously because they represent a constituency and they are entitled to get an answer, and they will get an answer. The answer is that I have no idea what the member is talking about.

Mr FELDMAN: I rise to a point of order. I will table the memo from the Minister.

Ms Bligh: Ask me, I'll tell you.

Mr BEATTIE: Just wait your turn! I will have my own bit of fun here, thank you very much.

Clearly the member is concerned about this correspondence. He has tabled it in the House. I will examine it. If he wants to provide me with any additional material, I will examine that as well. I do not think that the honourable member would seriously expect me to be aware of that level of detail. I am prepared to examine it. This Government is one of the most open Governments in the Western World. I do not want to lay it on too thick, but this Government is one of the most open Governments that honourable members would find anywhere. We do not have any—

Mr FELDMAN: I rise to a point of order. In light of previous comments made, I did not want to go fishing for this document in the Premier's bowels or in the bowels of the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care.

Mr BEATTIE: This has turned out to be a very earthy question. This Government is a very open, very transparent Government. We know from time to time that, through the use of FOI and other means, documents are provided that can cause their 15 seconds of embarrassment, not because we have done anything wrong, but because the Opposition has put a bit of a slant on these things that are untrue.

We will continue to be open. We will continue to make certain that the people of this State have access to the information they are entitled to. To respond in detail to the member's question—and I always endeavour to answer his questions fully and with great detail—we will examine the material and either the Minister or I will provide an appropriate letter of response. Is he happy with that?

Mr Feldman: Thank you.

Mr BEATTIE: He could not ask any more from a really feeling, warm, caring Government than that, could he?

International Business Cadets Program

Mr HAYWARD: I ask the Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade: can he outline the achievements of the inaugural round of the international business cadets program set up by the Government?

Mr ELDER: I certainly can, because this program is all ours. This was a program that was supported by us in Opposition. As we came into Government, we actually put it into place. This is all ours. I can outline to the House how successful that has been in relation to our first four business cadets overseas: Angela O'Dea, David Bridge, Jack Josephson and Belinda Finch. I know that members opposite are not interested in young Queenslanders seeking opportunities overseas. I expect them to take it as flippantly as they do, but I will now provide those who do have an interest with information on what those young students are doing and where they are now placed.

Angela O'Dea was placed in the Shanghai office to investigate the potential to export water pumps from Queensland to China. She is now working with a trade and investment company Dragon Heart International, which specialises in the Chinese and Vietnamese market. She is also doing work for an associated company called Queensland Network Marketing International, which is responsible for conducting feasibility studies and marketing. This is someone who is starting her career in international trade and whose experience and contacts will benefit her and Queensland businesses in the future.

David Bridge spent five months in the Tokyo office researching opportunities for Queensland aged care and the health industry generally. David is now working for the Saitama Prefectural Government. He is working with Saitama as a coordinator for international relations, and that involves receiving official and business guests from Australia, translating foreign publications into Japanese and interpreting at various events. He also participates in and gives advice on planning and implementing international exchange events. David is particularly involved in working on the sister-State relationship between Queensland and Saitama.

Jack Josephson spent his cadetship in Los Angeles. He is exploring the opportunities

for rubber recycling technologies. He is now working for his industry sponsor, Common Logic. He is continuing his pursuit of research into rubber recycling technology and he is looking at new markets for the group in Europe and the United States. Jack has also identified opportunities for himself and is looking to establish a new business—his own business—to supply adhesives in rubber recycling in those markets.

Belinda Finch was in the Hong Kong office and she was investigating export opportunities there. She is currently working as a project manager for the Collaborative Health Informatics Centre, which works closely with health care companies to improve health care outcomes. Again, that is a new, competitive services industry in the international market.

This shows that that program that we have put in place to give young Queenslanders an opportunity to develop their business expertise overseas and to develop the opportunities to link Queensland businesses into those export markets is not only paying off for the State of Queensland, but is paying off handsomely for those people and for the companies that they represent—another successful outcome for the Queensland Government.

Time expired.

Regional Summit

Mr HOBBS: I refer the Minister for Local Government, Planning, Regional and Rural Communities to the implementation plan from the outcomes of the regional summit as expected before the end of this month, and I ask: what communications and actions has his department put in place to assist and complement these initiatives for rural and regional Queensland?

Mr MACKENROTH: My department through me asked the Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister Assisting the Deputy Premier on Regional Development—

Mr Hobbs: Just answer it; be positive.

Mr MACKENROTH: Just hang on—to give us a report on the summit but, unfortunately, the Opposition would not allow him to go. We will have a look at the outcomes of the summit and I will give the member a report in due course.

Prize Promotions

Mr MUSGROVE: I ask the Minister for Fair Trading: could she inform the House how the law relating to the offering of prizes is being enforced?

Ms SPENCE: I would like to briefly tell the House about a recent prosecution on the Gold Coast which highlights the law relating to the offering of prizes. On the Gold Coast, a Mr Alfred Ernest John Lakin issued a large number of promotional flyers throughout 1998 promoting his fun runs. Participants paid \$10 per entry and were given the right to a key which they could use to attempt to open a padlock to a new car, which Mr Lakin offered as a major prize.

A woman who was so motivated by the offer to win the car entered five fun runs. On 26 October at Sanctuary Cove, one of her keys opened the padlock to the new car, but this car was never provided to her. Mr Lakin came and saw the woman a few days later, saying he wanted to make a deal about the car. He offered her cash instead of the car. The cash was less than the value of the car, but the woman accepted it. However, no cash was ever received. Inquiries by investigative officers found that Mr Lakin had entered into a deal with a Toyota dealer who agreed to let him have use of a car until the draw, whereupon Mr Lakin would pay out the cost of the vehicle to him. This did not happen.

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

PROSTITUTION BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 1 December (see p. 5748).

Mr KNUTH (Burdekin—IND) (11.30 a.m.): Debate on the Prostitution Bill has now started. While I realise I am probably just wasting my breath talking to members opposite, I do so on behalf of my constituents who are overwhelmingly against this curse that will be befall our State. How a person, let alone a political party, can support a young girl being lured into a life of indecent abuse is beyond me. Having witnessed the pain, the hurt and the abuse suffered by these women who have had their lives renewed through Christian churches, their testimonies bear witness to the hell that they have had to endure. No doubt many members opposite have been sent literature relating ex-prostitutes' stories—stories of shame, sadness and abuse. Many have become drug addicted to hide the shame and hurt inside in order to try to escape reality.

Is this the sort of legislation a member with some sort of conscience wishes to support? I have spent a great deal of time looking at information across the globe into the effects of legalised prostitution and boutique

brothels. Nowhere has it been successful in stopping prostitution on the streets. I challenge any members opposite to bring forward any information which proves that prostitution on the streets has stopped due to boutique brothels. If members opposite can show me that it has stopped, then I will put this speech away right now.

Mr Reeves: Even if we did, we wouldn't.

Mr KNUTH: That is the attitude of the member for Mansfield. Even if he had the information, he would not make it public. That is the attitude. That is what I am up against.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mr KNUTH: You said it, buddy.

Mr Musgrove interjected.

Mr KNUTH: And did they compel—

Mr REEVES: I rise to a point of order. I find the words of the member for Burdekin untrue and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr D'Arcy): The honourable member for Mansfield would be aware that that is not a point of order and it cannot be withdrawn in that terminology. I ask the member to put it in the correct terms, please.

Mr REEVES: I find the words offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has asked for the remarks to be withdrawn.

Mr KNUTH: I will not withdraw the remarks because he just said them to me across the floor. He admitted that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member will withdraw under Standing Orders.

Mr KNUTH: I will, under Standing Orders, withdraw those comments. I have spent a great deal of time looking at the information across the globe on the effects of legalised prostitution and boutique brothels. Nowhere has it been successful in stopping prostitution on the streets. I reiterate that because members opposite, no matter what they say, cannot produce the information to contradict what I am saying. As a matter of fact, it has had the opposite effect and has encouraged it. One of the reasons for this is that girls working the street offer a cheaper price to draw customers away from brothels while pocketing more profit themselves. Regardless of this, we must consider the morals and ethics of what we are considering in this Chamber—that is, the dreadful sale of human flesh.

That is right, and I use that phrase because that is all it is—profiteering from the abuse of young women. Some members may

say that it is the oldest profession in the world. That does not make it right. Drug dealing, contract murdering and the Mafia are all old professions. It does not mean that any of these are right. Some might ask, "How else do we stop it?" We can all minimise it by not supporting it.

Mr Gibbs: Keep away from them.

Mr KNUTH: I have kept away from it. I can stand in this House and say that I have never been to a prostitute. I can proudly say that I am one of the morally few debating this issue. That is the least we can do as a Government. If this Bill is passed, where will it stop? Will we see the recruiting of jobs at Jobsearch for young girls and boys leaving school and looking for work? What about articles saying, "Positions vacant—boutique brothels—earn big dollars"?

A Government member: Rubbish!

Mr KNUTH: Do not say it is rubbish. I can tell members right now that that will happen in 20 years' time. Members will see. It will probably be even less than 20 years. I guarantee it.

A Government member: Read the Bill.

Mr Mulherin: Have you read it?

Mr KNUTH: Yes, I have read the Bill. The Bill will not stop the continual spiralling effect—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Burdekin will address the Chair. If the member does not have a speech prepared, he should not go fishing for interjections.

Mr KNUTH: If this Bill is passed, it will open a Pandora's box to an age of sin and depravity not witnessed before in Queensland. What will be next? I will tell this Chamber that it will be the age of consent that will be targeted next. Then we will see young boys and girls aged between 12 and 14 years being abused for evil whore mongering. Do not say it will not happen. Our media has been full of perverted pushers for consent ages to be dropped. Do not dare tell me that it cannot happen, because anyone who looks in Hansard will see that 20 years ago members on both sides were saying legalised prostitution would never happen in Queensland. Well, haven't we changed! Haven't we reached an age of enlightenment? Haven't we progressed from those dark ages of family values and respect for godliness and righteousness?

Many churches and church people have written to me—whether they be Baptist, Anglican, Catholic or Pentecostal. They are all united against this proposed legislation—the

illicit sale of human beings by whore mongers who do not care whose life is destroyed as long as they grow rich in profit. Before this Government could pass such anti-family legislation, such as legalised prostitution, I would like each member to consider the following, listening to their consciences: if it were their daughter or son being recruited into this lifestyle, would the member be so keen to support this Bill? Members can say that it will never happen to us, but I can tell members now that, sooner or later, as sure as I stand in this Chamber, it will happen to one of us.

Would the Premier of this State openly let this Chamber know that he would approve of one of his children being exploited sexually for profit? If he will not comment on that, what right has he got to pass legislation that will allow someone else's daughter or son to be recruited for prostitution? This Government is fast becoming the most depraved Government ever to govern this State. As the word of God says, "Be not deceived, for God is not knocked, for so whatever a man soweth, so shall he reap."

Are there any members of this Government who have any financial interests in prostitution parlours? If so, I would ask them to display their expressions of interest and to table those expressions of interest in this Chamber now, because I would hate to know that any member of this Government is pushing this legislation for their own financial gain. If members are and they have put their interests in another name, members will be found out, and I hope that those members rot in jail when they are found out. I was disgusted to hear that big business and profiteers were scrambling to secure licenses when this Bill was being tabled. How disgraceful! The bidding has started. Slavery has resurfaced.

How many of these recruits will still be alive in 20 years? How many will die owing to drug abuse, AIDS and hepatitis? How many wives will suffer because of husbands being lured into these dens of iniquity? How many children will suffer because of parental break-ups relating to prostitution?

Mr Sullivan: So none of this is happening now up in the Burdekin?

Mr KNUTH: We do not approve it.

Mr Sullivan: So it is not happening?

Mr KNUTH: No, we do not have any prostitution dens in the Burdekin. I am standing up for my electorate. My electorate is against this. Many years ago a prostitute did come to the Lower Burdekin. The people of the Burdekin pushed her out of that town. That

is how harshly the people of the Burdekin view prostitution.

We know that the results I mentioned will occur because history shows us that they have occurred and continue to occur. That is why our forefathers made prostitution illegal in the first place. It was not something brought in by a bunch of old cronies who did not have any respect for people's lives. They saw these effects in the past and they did something about it. Hopefully in years to come, after the Labor Party has learnt its lesson—after the destruction of so many young lives and families—this issue will be brought back before the Parliament and prostitution will again be made illegal.

The Premier announced that he would give his members a conscience vote if the issue of abortion ever came before this House. Why can he not give them a conscience vote over an issue as contentious as prostitution? No doubt this legislation will result in numerous abortions, too. Members cannot say that will not happen, because it will.

To support this legislation is to rebuke God's law. The Premier stated in the Courier-Mail that Jesus forgave Mary Magdalene, the prostitute. But the Premier failed to mention that Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven. Go and sin no more. So she took up her cross and followed Jesus to the end of her days."

The Government claims that the Bill has safeguards. All of the other States that legalised prostitution said that they had safeguards, too. What happened to the safety of prostitutes in those States? It is a joke. These prostitution parlours have become dens of corruption, drugs, AIDS, venereal disease, Mafia-style activities and abuse.

Mr Musgrove: Tell us about Russ Hinze.

Mr KNUTH: I know nothing about Russ Hinze. I was not in his party. If the member wants to talk about Russ Hinze, he should go and ask him himself.

All of this is a chance for the Lefties in the Labor Party to get their way, even if it means destroying the conscience of some of their fellow members—even if it means cutting at their very hearts, souls, beliefs and religion. I call upon the moral members opposite not to support this Prostitution Bill. If they support this Bill, they do so by failing God's word. The Bible says that heaven and earth will fade away but God's word abideth forever. The authority of man and political parties is subservient to God. So members will not be failing their party; they will be failing God.

The Labor Party forefathers would be turning in their graves if they could see the so-called Labor Party today—

Mr Barton: Like your grandfather.

Mr KNUTH: The member for Waterford just mentioned my grandfather. He knows damned well that my grandfather, whom he worked with, would never have supported this Bill. That was the old Labor Party. I support the battler, the small businessman and the worker. I challenge any Labor Party member to prove that I do not.

Mr Mickel interjected.

Mr KNUTH: The member for Logan is interjecting from a seat that is not his own.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the member for Burdekin did not take the interjection. Is the member telling me how to do my job?

Mr KNUTH: I am just saying that the member is interjecting from an incorrect seat.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Logan will interject from his correct seat. The member for Burdekin does not have to take the interjection—he knows that—and he should not tell me how to do my job.

Mr KNUTH: I was brought up under the bounds of agrarian socialism, but I could never support a party that is blatantly destroying the moral fabric of our society. I call on the members opposite to pray in relation to this matter and to ask their Premier for a conscience vote.

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—IND) (11.44 a.m.): The fact that we are here today debating legislation to legalise brothels in Queensland is to me a great tragedy. Prostitution has been around for centuries—no-one can dispute that—however, to further legitimise an activity that is destructive to the individual, to the family and to society is, to me, contrary to the role that we play as representatives and decision makers.

For decades Governments, not just in Queensland and Australia but across many parts of the globe, have planned, educated and expended enormous energy and dollars to raise levels of genuine respect for women, their right to dignity and general acceptance that each individual is of equal and inestimable value, irrespective of gender. Prostitution is to many people—I hold this view also—a degrading and dehumanising lifestyle. I can think of few activities that degrade and lower the self-esteem of an individual more than selling oneself. The legalisation of brothels flies

in the face of all the work done to raise the value of women and girls.

The statistical basis of much of the community support was garnered from the Queensland Police Service survey of public attitudes on prostitution. To be fair, this survey was initiated under the previous Police Minister. However, I am always suspicious of surveys unless the questions asked, including the accurate form of words, are available. Question 9 states—

"At what level do you believe prostitution exists in your town, city or rural community? Is it—Widespread? A moderate amount? Hardly any? Don't know? Refused."

The results can be assessed clearly and can be represented honestly. 18.8% said that it was widespread; 51.3% said that there was a moderate amount; 19.7% said that there was hardly any; and 10.2% did not know what level it was. However, not all of the questions were that clear-cut. The one that I found most offensive in the replication of results was question 14. The question itself states—

"Despite whether or not you believe prostitution should be legal, if prostitution-related activities were not against the law, what do you think the minimum age for starting work as a prostitute should be? 16 (age of consent). 18 (adulthood). 21 years of age. Some other age (please specify). Don't know. Refused."

The report of the summary of results gave no indication of the qualification in the question for the respondent to suspend their personal values. It just said that 42.5% believed that if prostitution was not against the law the minimum age for starting work as a prostitute should be 21 years or older and that another 42.5% believed that the minimum age should be 18 years. I can only wonder at how many similar omissions occurred as data was collected or at the manner in which those perspectives were presented.

On 1 December 1998, Minister Tom Barton met people from my community to discuss the prostitution proposal. Overwhelmingly, the group was opposed to the broadening of access to prostitution. This was expressed by people of all ages. There are those who say that if one opposes the legalisation of brothels one fails to acknowledge their existence. Only the most naive person would deny that prostitutes are alive and working in modern Queensland—male and female, child and adult. That is the tragedy of it.

Private single worker prostitution laws have not stopped the streetwalker. Neither will this legislation. However, this legislation further legitimises the act of prostitution and reinforces to our community, particularly young people who currently see the growing gap between socioeconomic classes, that selling one's body is a sanctioned means of earning an income.

I asked the Minister whether there have been any legal challenges in other States to confirm that prescriptive constraints on advertising for prostitutes will stand the test of a court challenge. I am advised by staff in the Minister's office—I thank the officers for the help they have provided—that they have advice to the effect that they will withstand an anti-discrimination challenge, but it is my understanding that there has never been a test.

It has been indicated that the limits on advertising for prostitutes, either through paid ads or recruitment through employment services such as Centrelink, will effectively contain the activity. Irrespective of where these brothels are sited, I believe that they will develop their own identifiable character. They will not need to advertise. Word of mouth and observation will do the job well enough. The veneer of adult shops and strip clubs confirms that. They develop their own sleazy decor.

We who oppose prostitution are accused of moralising and are told not to impose personal moral values on the community. A person with no values has no absolutes. They would appear to be available to any individual or group in the community who is the highest bidder. They will have no framework within which to consider proposals. Yes, we may be conveying a personal value; however, the feedback I have received from my community overwhelmingly indicates that those values reflect community values. People do not want the fabric of society further unravelled. They want their children and grandchildren to grow up in a society where honesty, integrity, moral values and the family are highly valued.

It has been said that legalisation of brothels will assist with the health of prostitutes. The Government has said—

"Health risks associated with the sex industry are a serious issue, particularly in relation to sexually transmitted infections including HIV. Through adoption of safe sex practices, risks can be minimised and a properly regulated industry provides the best vehicle for the implementation and monitoring of appropriate practices and standards. The proposed framework will ensure that the health status of sex

workers is regularly monitored and that health risks to workers, their clients and the community are minimised."

I ask the Minister how police and health staff will actually monitor those activities on a day-by-day basis. It would have to be on a client-by-client basis as that appears to be the only way safe practices could be assured. An article titled "Report has sex diseases on the rise" states—

"Nightclubs in which gay men have sex on the premises have been singled out as the source of an increase in diseases such as hepatitis A and shigella, public health researcher Dr Valerie Delpech said.

Dr Delpech has identified a marked increase in gonorrhoea in Sydney this year: about 40 cases a month are being notified compared to 26 cases a month last year.

...

'Gonorrhoea has been on the rise since the beginning of the 1990's, indicating that sexual behaviours may be getting riskier as well as surveillance getting better,' she said.

'Inappropriate condom use is more likely to happen in such places (sex venues),' she said."

This Bill does not specifically deal with same sex issues; however, that article highlighted to me that organised access to sex does not ensure control of health issues.

The Prostitution Advisory Council is to monitor the social and health impacts of the prostitution industry. What will happen to the data it collects? The Bill appears to indicate it monitors—end of activity! What of the information collected? What of the indicators identified? What of the concerns generated? Does it pass them onto Queensland Health or to the police? I again quote from the Premier's comments—

"It is generally acknowledged that street workers battling drug addiction and other problems are more likely to be persuaded to engage in unsafe sex practices."

This Bill does not appear to contain specific provisions to address these addictive behaviours. It specifically addresses the sanctioning of brothels. The Premier then goes on to say—

"The Government is committed to discouraging street prostitution through tough enforcement measures coupled with support and diversionary strategies."

The word "discouraging" is of great concern. My impressions gleaned from the statements made since this Bill was first mooted were that "boutique brothels would eliminate street prostitution". Indeed, that was one of the stated reasons for legalising brothels. Street prostitution was socially and governmentally unacceptable. It had become difficult or impossible to control. Brothels would provide the alternative and should therefore be introduced. That position has now been softened to—

"... the Government is committed to discouraging street prostitution."

Further health concerns present themselves. The brothels are to be limited to five beds with a maximum staff level of 10. Some months ago a nuclear submarine visited Gladstone. I had the opportunity to visit the ship and the captain showed us through the vessel. On board they have half the number of beds of the full ship's complement. They have what are affectionately called "warm bed changes". I suspect in some areas of prostitution that principle will apply. It does not sound very hygienic to me. Warm bed changes—will the time be taken to change the sheets between clients? The clients will not know. Who will know and who will monitor?

Australia's biggest brothel owner is quoted in the Courier-Mail in June this year as saying—

"In Victoria the limit on legal brothels that opened after the legislation was enacted is six beds, and they are barely viable,' he said. 'Their overheads are just as great as larger businesses but they have this limit on beds while the illegals just continue profiting outside the law. Most of the six-room places are struggling.'"

I ask the Minister: what will this Government do when their approved brothels deteriorate to the point of being non-viable? The article continues—

"Mr Trimbole estimates the number of illegal brothels operating in Victoria outnumbers the registered businesses by as much as three to one. The Prostitution Control Board has 80 registered brothels and estimates there are 100 others operating outside the law."

The article then continues—

"Victoria legalised prostitution and licensed brothel operators in 1984 in an attempt to thwart organised crime, drugs and money laundering. But in the autumn session of Parliament the Kennett

Government passed new legislation to combat multiple ownership of brothels, tax evasion and underage prostitution."

The problems have not been solved.

Concerns have been expressed to me by the medical profession that treatment of the issue of health during the public consultation on and debate about the legalisation of brothels was superficial. Newspaper articles have been either selective, dishonest or incompetent. Neither abortion, disease and pregnancy nor the cost to the community of health care have been honestly discussed. The statistics are disturbing: 50% of the population have HPV—wart virus—while 30% of men use a prostitute some time in their life. The victims are not coming forward. When use of a prostitute contributes to broken marriages, they keep quiet, but the users of prostitutes and their wives and children are the victims. That has not been costed. Articles have failed to present all sides of the story. Little was presented of the previous life experience of those who go into prostitution nor of the physical, psychological and emotional aftermath of prostituting oneself. There has been no mention of either prostitutes or clients who were married and brought home a disease to the innocent partner.

This appears to be a police Bill. However, my information indicates that the health aspects and the cost of their provision have been handed on to Queensland Health. Who will pay for the additional health inspectors required to oversee the brothels? Will licence fees be sufficiently high to fully fund those positions or will local councils or the State Government be obligated to contribute? When there is not enough money in the Budget, what happens to those controls?

Health certificates given to sex workers appear to be misleading. I ask the Minister to please correct me if I am wrong. It appears that doctors write a certificate to say that the prostitute has been tested for STDs and HIV; however, they do not state what are the results of the tests. It is up to the sex worker to collect the results and to advise the brothel if there are any health problems. What are the checks and balances on a prostitute who receives a report that he or she is HIV positive but fails to inform the brothel owner? There may be fines and other penalties, but that infected person may feel that they already have a death sentence and decide to continue working for all sorts of reasons: income, family responsibilities, etc. I can only assume that

clients will not be required to be tested. How will that situation be monitored and addressed?

In 1997 Victorian sex workers stated that they had had a health worker drop in for only about half an hour since the Victorian legislation had been in place. That means that there is no continued contact nor the building of a rapport with workers who may wish or could be encouraged to exit the industry. The Prostitution Advisory Council is responsible for promoting exit programs for sex workers; offering alternatives through training, education and employment outside the sex industry. Where will the guarantees come from for continued funding for exit programs for sex workers? So many worthy programs struggle for Treasury allocations. Disability services, mental health services and drug rehabilitation all vie for dollars. Where will exit programs sit in Treasury priorities? Where will they sit in Health programs? Will they be Queensland Health responsibilities or the responsibility of the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care. Will those budgets bear the brunt of this legislation? If so, why has the Health Minister and perhaps the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care not had greater opportunity to contribute to this debate? Cost is a critical issue. Page 9 of the Review of Prostitution Laws in Queensland states—

"The cost to QPS of its two dedicated prostitution units averaged \$1,067,500 per annum over the two years 1994-95 and 1995-96.

This does not represent the total cost to the QPS because police in the regions are also responsible for enforcing prostitution laws. However, it is impossible to dissociate the cost of such enforcement of such laws from overall regional police costs."

Is this legislation an opportunity to shift costs? Are we merely seeing the cost of prostitution moved from the Police Service to Health? For the Health Minister's sake, I hope such a cynical prospect is not true. A further goal of the prostitution legislation reform proposal is "ensuring quality of life for local communities". The Government's press release states—

"The Government believes that the operation of brothels should not be an intrusion into the day to day lives of members of the community who do not want to be exposed to the nuisance of brothel activity or advertising."

A lovely old lady contacted my office concerning the existing legislation. This woman lived next door to a single operator prostitute. Men would regularly mistake this old lady's home for the prostitute's home. She relayed frightening experiences. For example, when the old lady would not answer her door late at night, John would run up and down the side of her home with a stick, creating noise and terrifying this poor old woman, whose only mistake was to live next door to a single operator prostitute. She was a captive in her own home and she deserved better.

In a southern State where prostitution started in a light industrial area the prostitutes complained about their safety after hours, when all of the businesses in the area closed. What will happen to them? To where would they get moved? They are operating legally. Two hundred metres is not far. For a man it is about 220 steps. If I were raising small children, I would not want a brothel 220 steps from where my children lived. To many in our community, quality of life means no brothels, not more brothels. Under the heading "Protection of Minors" the Government's press release continued—

"The authority will have responsibility for ensuring that minors (persons under 18) are not drawn into the industry. Licensees found to have employed minors will have licences automatically cancelled for life and will be subject to heavy criminal penalties."

I simply ask: how will this be policed?

Roslyn Phillips, a research officer with the Festival of Light, South Australia, stated—

"Experience in Victoria and elsewhere shows that legalising the prostitution trade, no matter how tough the controls are supposed to be, always leads to more prostitution (legal and illegal).

The United Nations opposes legal or 'regulated' brothels because countries which have them also have more exploitation and degradation of women. Child prostitution rates also are higher in those countries which accept adult prostitution.

Premier Peter Beattie should think again."

But what of our kids, not only those who choose to become involved in prostitution but also those who are forced to become involved? Lois Lee, who founded Children of the Night, a recovery and treatment program for street kids in Los Angeles, says child

prostitution in the US began to escalate in the late 1980s shortly after laws were passed making it more difficult for officials to detain such children as "runaways". Paddy Lazar, a former prostitute who now works with the Council for Prostitution Alternatives in Portland, Oregon, stated that the 400 women and girls her organisation sees each year are getting younger and younger. At a conference in Reno, several working prostitutes argued that strictly regulated legislation would result in safer circumstances. However, most former prostitutes disagreed. Norma Hotaling, the executive director of SAGE, stated—

"It makes no sense. It does not get rid of pimping, it increases it ... It doesn't get rid of child prostitution, it increases it. It doesn't get rid of trafficking, it increases it. It's absolutely ridiculous."

Experts warn that the problem will not be solved until prostitution is seen as an attack on basic human rights and until many men change their attitude towards women. Our own sex industry workers have said that it is unworkable because it relies on the police force and will force sex workers underground. People in the sex industry are not opposed to the concept of prostitution. However, of concern is the fact that those within the prostitution arena can see problems with this legislation before it has even commenced. In reality, we are legislating for problems. This Bill does not address the problem, only the symptom. Why are women and girls involved in prostitution? A small minority may choose to join. Most join because they need the money. If they do not have a drug habit before they join, they develop one. Those who frequent prostitutes, both male and female, must bear equal responsibility for the societal cost. Perhaps we could take a lesson from San Francisco, where first-time customers of prostitutes are attending a "school for johns".

Time expired.

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—IND) (12.04 p.m.): In speaking to the Prostitution Bill, I acknowledge that, before it introduced this Bill into the Parliament, the Government continued the review of the State prostitution laws commenced by the previous coalition Government. I am pleased that this Government has legislated expressly to ensure that there can be no doubt that street soliciting will remain illegal in this State. Notwithstanding that and other initiatives in the Bill, I am unable to support it.

I believe one of the outcomes of this Bill, if it is adopted in its current form, is that it will expand the prostitution industry in this State by

enabling new operators to become involved in the industry while current illegal operators who are unable to meet the approval requirements under the Bill and who wish to stay in the industry will just vary their methods of operation in light of the changes to police enforcement practices. I believe that, instead of legislating and giving credibility to prostitution, we should be providing options for women who, for whatever reason, find themselves in this sordid and squalid industry and we should be giving the police and the courts real powers and resources so they can wipe out the pimps, parasites and criminals feeding off this industry.

In light of all of the issues that have been canvassed by honourable members on both sides of the House, I do not propose to prolong the debate on the Bill. However, I urge the Minister and the Government to defer voting on this Bill and reconsider its contents in the light of the matters raised in this debate both yesterday and today.

Mr PURCELL (Bulimba—ALP) (12.06 p.m.): I do not need to tell any honourable member that the issue we are debating today generates strong emotions. I hold very strong views about prostitution and I have expressed those views in the process that has resulted in the Bill we are considering today. In common with many people, I would like to live in a perfect world where prostitutes do not exist, just as I would like to live in a world where there were no wars, poverty or hunger and coalition Governments were honest. My views are a result of my upbringing and experience. I happen to believe that nobody should have to work as a prostitute. But they do and they will continue to do so. I happen to believe that nobody should use the services of prostitutes, but they do and they will continue to do so.

We and Parliaments all over the world pass laws on prostitution, just as we pass laws on drugs or drink-driving. People still peddle and take drugs. People still drink-drive. I do not think that anybody would pretend that this legislation answers all of the questions that many of us have about how to handle this issue. I do not know of any Government that has produced legislation that answers everybody's concerns. As everybody recognises, this is an issue that has been around for hundreds and, some say, thousands of years. My concern is that we should not do anything that could be seen to encourage young women or men to enter prostitution. We should not make that type of work seem more attractive. I am assured by the Minister that this legislation is not designed

to do that. In addition, I am pleased that my major concern has been addressed by the Minister.

The Bill provides support for those choosing to break out of prostitution. This is a fundamental principle that should be supported by everybody in this Chamber. It is also in line with the United Nations resolution calling on Governments to do whatever they can to reduce the slavery and exploitation of prostitutes. I know of examples of women who are hooked on prostitution for money or drugs. It is up to our society to extend a hand to support them if they choose to get out of that downward spiral. I doubt whether anyone inside or outside this Chamber believes that prostitution is a glamorous or lucrative occupation.

The movie *Pretty Woman* was not a documentary. We all know that people enter into prostitution for a range of reasons. The main one is money. That comes through loudly and clearly when we talk to anybody involved in prostitution. I agree with the member for Archerfield that part of the answer is to widen the opportunities for women to take up occupations other than prostitution. That involves providing greater employment opportunities, better job security and better wages. I recognise the Government's efforts in that direction. It is no secret that I have reservations about whether this legislation will achieve its stated outcomes. However, I am assured by the Minister that this legislation is the best way to go.

Some Opposition members may try to make mischief about my attitude. Let me just repeat that I have had my say on this legislation. I had my say with the Premier before the legislation was considered by caucus. I have had my say directly to the Minister. I have had my say in caucus, along with all other members on this side of the House. I have had my say here today, and I accept the majority decision of caucus.

We all have to accept the decisions of this Parliament. Acceptance of the majority decision is the basis of our system of democratic government. The Minister has had to take into account a wide range of views in drafting this Bill, and I did not envy him his job. I have to be honest and say that I still hold reservations, but I am prepared to give this legislation a go. I sincerely hope that my concerns are proved groundless.

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (12.11 p.m.): This legislation is a great disappointment. The Premier promised to change the current situation by removing

single sex operators from our suburban streets and, therefore, remove the problem from our suburban residential areas. Instead, single sex operators who are currently legal in our suburban streets will continue, and the disturbance that this brings to a neighbourhood will continue. People calling at the wrong address at all hours of the day and night will continue. The ability to set up a business as a single sex operator next door in a residential suburban street will continue. In any case, it is an accepted fact in the sex industry that the illegal brothels will continue to flourish because of the high level of operational costs and the significant requirements associated with brothels under this particular legislation. Again, this legislation is flawed, as it will not stamp out illegal brothels—as the Premier has indicated. And as for those legalised brothels which this legislation will allow, it needs to be stressed that this will do little to stamp out illegal prostitution, and certainly not street prostitution, whether by adults or children.

Although the Government says that organised crime will be kept out, members would be well aware that there is more than one way to hide behind a front organisation. The fact that these brothels only need to be up to 200 metres from a residential area means major problems for residential neighbourhoods. The result of these changes will be an explosion of prostitution—not less prostitution—in our residential suburbs and streets. Again, the Premier indicated that the converse would be the case.

So who is going to get the licences—Queenslanders or crime bosses and the institutional sex industry of southern States? I understand that brothel owners from southern States, where there is an oversupply of sex workers, are already in Queensland looking at a range of locations. Should these be approved, the community will see a large number of prostitutes coming to this State from interstate. Many of them, of course, have a drug problem, which will mean a resultant increase in the drug problems in this State; and the numbers of sex workers likely to be involved will double or treble within a short period.

It is little wonder that we have witnessed opposition to this legislation by the sex workers themselves and other people within the sex industry in Queensland. They have indicated on a number of occasions, and in a number of aspects, how this legislation is flawed. We should not forget that sex workers and their organisations have spoken out strongly to

date, as they believe that this is the wrong model of legislation. This model is flawed.

As for young people under the age of 18 years, particularly those on drugs—how is the Government going to keep them off the streets? Those young people need money to feed their drug habits, for which they prostitute themselves. Larger fines will only mean that they will become even more hopelessly entrapped in prostitution, in drugs and in crime to pay those fines. And of course, if they do pay those fines, they will become more entrapped in prostitution, just as they will to pay for their drug habits. That will lead to more crime and more robberies.

I have challenged the Government previously on this issue, yet all the community gets from this Beattie Labor Government is that the fines will be stiffer and that that will solve the problem. But I have news for Premier Beattie: this will solve no problem whatsoever. It certainly will not solve the current problem and, as I have indicated, it will make it worse.

The community is crying out for a proactive approach that tackles the causes of young people being on the streets in the first instance, treats those young people, assists them so that they will not end up on the streets again in the same situation and gets them off drugs and away from their street crime and, of course, away from prostituting themselves on the streets. There is nothing in this legislation that tackles the causes of those particular issues and problems that lead to young people getting on the streets in the first place. Imposing stiffer penalties on those young people will do nothing to tackle these causes but will add considerably to the problems of young people needing to prostitute themselves further and committing robberies to pay those penalties.

Of course, street prostitution already is illegal—whether it be for children or for adults. Again, even in relation to adults, we are not going to see adults being taken off the streets because of this legislation. And stiffer fines will mean that they will need to do more prostitution on the streets to pay those fines and to pay for the drug habits that so many of them have.

It is clear that this model is flawed. A range of recent incidents involving children prostituting themselves on the streets has received coverage in the media. But, despite all the laws that protect those children from being identified, and the circumstances surrounding those situations from being identified, it is apparent that the numbers of children who are involved in those situations is

quite significant. The causes are clearly far too hard for this Beattie Labor Government to tackle.

It is worth while noting that there has been little reference to the fact that certain exemptions from the FOI legislation are covered in this legislation. I think it is clause 137 in the Bill. When I read the Explanatory Notes on the Prostitution Bill, I noticed that all they say is that the Freedom of Information Act 1992 does not apply to documents given or produced by the authority. They provide no explanation or reasons. In fact, it is fair to say that there is no explanation at all. I believe that shows that a fairly slipshod effort was put into those Explanatory Notes, because they ought to have covered this significant issue in detail. It is significant that that freedom of information exemption has been granted and that these matters are not covered under the FOI legislation.

In conclusion, I believe that there is clearly a need to address problems in the current prostitution laws. Unfortunately, this legislation—this model—does not do that but creates additional problems.

Mr VEIVERS (Southport—NPA) (12.17 p.m.): As the member for Southport, I speak for many people in my electorate who have deep-seated moral and social concerns about the legalisation of the so-called sex industry. One of their great fears is that young, impressionable members of their families—and young people in general—will be recruited by entrepreneurs promising a huge remuneration for their services in that very unsavoury business. However well vetted those entrepreneurs may be, under this proposed legislation their prime objective is still going to be to make money by employing the appropriate staff according to the needs of their industry.

I have here advertisements from a newspaper in Melbourne. We all know that prostitution has been legal in Victoria for a number of years now. This advertisement quotes as much as \$1,000 an hour for the services of a woman. Prices from the so-called exclusive establishments start at \$200 an hour, and the most exclusive offer services at \$1,000 an hour and \$10,000 a night. How does a father or a mother—or a husband, for that matter—cope with a situation in which a young woman comes home and says, "Hey, I've been offered a job where I can get \$1,000 an hour"? What is that likely to do to the fabric of our society in general?

The thrust of this legislation, ostensibly, I do believe—and I have to say that the Minister

is probably trying to do the best he can—is to get the criminal element out of prostitution and to protect the so-called sex workers' health and safety. That is all very well, but where are the so-called sex workers going to come from? Are there going to be vocational guidance seminars conducted in high schools at Year 12 level? Are we going to have madams going around schools checking out the girls to see if they can find good workers? What are the criteria going to be? What sort of prerequisites will there be? How does a girl rise from being a \$200 an hour sex provider to earning \$1,000 an hour? How is she going to be assessed on her performance, and by whom? Will so-called sex workers be able to file suits for discrimination on the grounds that they are being denied proper remuneration because they are fat, skinny, cross-eyed, freckled, albino or whatever? No-one has answered these questions, and members should not kid themselves: it will be on. Will we introduce courses in our tertiary education institutions for sex workers?

The legislation does not address any of those issues at all because, frankly, it is all too unsavoury, really, to think about. These are the things that should be covered if we are bringing legislation into the House, no matter what the legislation. What happens to all of these women when they reach their use-by date? The dreadful philosophical and moral problem of this legislation is that it suggests that prostitutes are born, not made, and that in the female context, all women are whores and it just depends on the price. I do not agree with that. That is what disturbs the people whom I represent and that is what disturbs me, as I just said. This legislation is a formal, legalised denigration of all women. I have to tell members that I deplore and despise such a proposition, as would most, if not all members in this House. I deeply love, honour and treasure my wife Betty, and I also deeply love and admire my daughter, Shan. I consider those two human beings to be the epitome of sacred womanhood. This is personal. Call me an old-fashioned Catholic boy—

A Government member: We'd never do that.

Mr VEIVERS: Members can do that. They can call me a bible-basher if they want, but I am not really that. I think that the member for Bulimba would know that. However, I would have a great problem with a situation in which any young lady came to me asking advice about becoming a prostitute. Without even pausing to think, my response, as would be

the response of many in this House, would be, "Please don't do that."

I know that I am going to be crushed by the weight of numbers in this particular scrum and by the weight of the hastily written editorial comment from local press, which has no social conscience at all and whose fleeting comments ignore the long-term ramifications of legislation that we legislators have to pass in this House for the protection of people in general. However, according to my own conscience and the conscience of many people whom I represent, I must strongly register my opposition to the Bill.

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (12.22 p.m.): Despite the expressions of moral outrage that this House has heard from members of the Opposition and Independents, the fact is that moral outrage, expressed over many centuries, has not worked. Expressing it further today will not change the fact that, regardless of the Beattie Government and all honourable members of this House, prostitution does exist, has existed and will exist well into the future. It is as though there is a wish for prostitution to disappear, as though if the Government adds to the voices of moral outrage by refusing to legalise prostitution via brothels, then somehow our moral stand will make a difference in a way no society in modern history has been able to make a difference. It is as though they wish us to place this moral outrage, as hopeless as it is in conquering prostitution, ahead of our responsibility to do all that we can to prevent harm to those who work as prostitutes as well as to their clients, to abrogate our responsibility to protect the health and wellbeing of all involved in the sex industry, to do what we can to minimise the associated crime, to limit where such operations take place, and to do the best that we can to decrease the likelihood of disruption and offence to those members of the public who are not in any way engaged in the sex industry. If we do not set those parameters and instead adopt the simplistic attitude of moral outrage, then we have no controls. That is the bottom line and, for that reason, I support the Government's attempts to impose some proper controls over the sex industry and prostitution.

However, I would like to make some points. Religious standards and moral outrage have not worked against prostitution. I am bothered by the punitive and holier-than-thou attitude of many members of this House, particularly those opposite. The implication is that they themselves are and have always been without blemish. Oh, that it were so. I am bothered also by the demonstrated lack of

humanity, particularly on the part of the members of the One Nation team, as though this false division that exists between good people and some others who are somehow bad can somehow be remedied by these punitive expressions of outrage.

When we talk about the sex industry, we are really talking more about a sad industry. We cannot consider the issue of prostitution without talking about the broader issue of human sexuality. We need to recognise the power of the sexual drive. It is not just a powerful drive for the purposes of reproduction, we are given by God bodies through which we can enjoy intense feelings of pleasure and of closeness to other human beings. These workings, these needs and these capacities are God given. Modern history shows that religious imperatives in the name of God to set sexuality aside for exclusive expression in a legally and religiously recognised marriage between a man and a woman have failed. At this time, our society is having the courage to face the distorted and dysfunctional sexual behaviour that has occurred behind closed doors and for too long has been destructive and for too long has been denied. Much of this behaviour is much worse and much more damaging than prostitution which is, in effect, the sexual act of consent between adults, albeit involving money. Of course, the behaviour I refer to is paedophilia, sexual assaults on children and abuse of children, a significant proportion of which has occurred within a church-related framework. I also refer to rape, both as a single event of violence, repeated rape in the context of marriage and rape frequently associated with violence and alcoholic excess. That type of behaviour is much more damaging to human beings than prostitution which is controlled, regulated and set aside for those who feel a need to use it.

Oh, that it were so that we all had satisfying and intimate relationships that allowed sexual expression and fulfilment and that, therefore, none of us needed to ever think of the sad second best that is prostitution. However, when the powerful sexual drive will not be suppressed or repressed, prostitution is a better choice than violence, abuse, or forced sexual acts perpetrated against children or adults. It is a better and a safer society that allows for prostitution controls and regulation, thereby minimising the risks of violent abuse, harm and disruption to others.

I wish our society could find the way forward so that we all enjoyed appropriate, intimate and close relationships and that

prostitution would, through a lack of need and, therefore, lack of custom, disappear. Moral outrage will not make that happen. As parliamentarians, the best that we can do is to do the best we can to control, to protect, to regulate, and to minimise the disruption of the broader society caused by prostitution.

Mrs PRATT (Barambah—IND) (12.28 p.m.): I would prefer that this House debate the future of our children and their children, or our unemployed, or projects to address those issues. Instead, we are debating an issue that reflects the continual eroding of our social fabric. We are debating the symptoms, not addressing the problems.

The arguments for the legalisation of brothels are convincing and they are espoused by many politicians, police officers, public health experts and even some ministers of religion. As society becomes freer and more progressive—and that is a definition of the new age social engineers—activities such as prostitution and drug taking are intruding more and more into our everyday lives. Those who oppose the new morality are branded reactionary and are ridiculed in the public forum. Life can be very difficult for those who endeavour to resist these new forces. All who oppose this legislation are not suggesting that the needs of those who wish to exit the industry should not be addressed; we do not suggest that they do not need or should not get assistance to do so. No-one suggests that the health issues should not be addressed, because they should. No-one would deny to anyone what is fundamentally basic humanity.

I cannot help but smile when I hear prostitution described as the world's oldest profession. Professions are something of which those who work in them can be very proud—doctors, lawyers, architects, botanists—name any profession and those involved will tell you that they are proud to tell the world of their profession. Recently I was contacted by a prostitute. She prefers to be called a "sex worker". As we spoke on the phone, I heard a young child come running up and start talking to her. Afterwards she apologised and said, "Sorry about that. I don't want the kids hearing. You understand." Yes, I understood. She did not want her children to know her occupation. She definitely was not proudly standing up and telling the world of her choice of career.

A member of the world's oldest profession was once known as a "prostitute" and is now known as a "sex worker". Militant feminists and the politically correct have given this description to women and men, girls and boys

who are selling their bodies in an endeavour to give some acceptability and respectability to the practising of what at the very best could be called a dubious occupation. Those who promote the industry using slick and clever language cast prostitutes in the roles of marriage counsellors, therapists, confidants and virtual psychologists; they never ever use the word "prostitute". The politically correct terminology today is "sex worker".

Let us look at another definition of the role of a prostitute. This is from a UN statement. It states—

"Prostitution and the accompanying evil of the traffic in persons for the purpose of prostitution, are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and endanger the welfare of the individual, the family and the community."

That is not my definition, although I agree with it; that is the definition of "prostitution" endorsed by the international community through the United Nations Covenant on Trafficking in Persons and the Exploitation of Others Through Prostitution 1951. Australian leaders obviously agreed with that UN covenant because Australia is a signatory to that covenant.

Yes, prostitution has been with us since early times, but so has murder, abuse, paedophilia, bestiality, theft, discrimination—in fact, all forms of human rights discrimination. Article 6 of the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which was signed by Australia in 1981, states—

"... prostitution, even when willingly engaged in by a prostitute is a violation of the Human Rights of all women. It is a predatory, exploitative vice, which preys on the vulnerability of others with serious social consequences."

So will this Labor Government, after forcing this brothel legalisation legislation through and endorsing the proliferation of prostitution onto the people of Queensland, then move to have murder, abuse, paedophilia, bestiality, theft, tax avoidance or discrimination legalised? Honourable members are right, of course; murder is taking things a little bit too far and we certainly must prosecute the tax evaders!

Where will this Government draw a line? After all, what we are looking at here is only a difference of opinion as to what is socially acceptable sexual behaviour. For many reasons which have been addressed here today, I do not regard prostitution as acceptable. This Labor Government does and

has recognised that by the introduction of this Bill. I do not think that paedophilia is acceptable. I do not believe bestiality is acceptable but, in both these instances, there are those in our community who do. What will happen when people of those views enter Parliament as MPs and obtain the office of Minister? Will a Bill then appear before the House making those practices a little more acceptable?

Shooting galleries and the use of drugs were once totally abhorrent to the average person. Is there an agenda to desensitise the general populace to all things often described as alternative? In relation to prostitution, we have become familiar with the terminology. We have had the legalisation of prostitution for a single prostitute operating from a private dwelling. We have become helpless to protect our own because we virtually have no rights to save our children from themselves.

Girls and boys as young as 12 walk the streets, pose for pornographic material, are intimidated by their peers, they may need money for drugs and then they are trapped in a way of life that they cannot escape. This opens up the possibility of paedophilia and other abuses for the child. We should be fighting the drug problem with severe measures, fighting to keep our children out of this kind of lifestyle, not encouraging them into prostitution by taking away the stigma. I am not sure which member said it, but there is the perception in the community that, if it is legal, it is okay. It is not okay for my grand-daughter and grandsons.

We should be fighting for job creation of a kind that our communities would be proud to endorse and welcome into their towns. In good times when unemployment is low, the economic pressures that encourage a lot of people into prostitution are virtually non-existent. In Third World countries, prostitution is part and parcel of the everyday economy, providing a living for participants and their families. Of course, even in good times, vice follows dollars irrespective of race, colour or creed.

The 200 metre limit of brothels from schools is really a joke. Many children in our area walk well and truly more than 200 metres to school. Are our children going past these brothels on the way to and from school? Are they going to be targeted as future employees? Is the cute little blonde with the big blue eyes going to be offered \$50 or \$100 to just come in and be "nice". Honourable members should never underestimate the

power of peer pressure, never underestimate the power of temptation to do something that mum and dad would not approve of, never underestimate the thrill of doing something thought of as a little bit wicked and never underestimate the power of having a child's peers being envious because the child has more cash than they have. They should not say that it will not happen; it will. It happens now and the only difference is that soon working brothels will be legal.

This Government will be remembered for discarding the will of the majority for the perceived depravity of the minority. Homosexuals are a minority group and Labor forced their will to be legitimised onto the people of Queensland. Prostitutes are a minority group. Labor is fighting for them to expand from home operation to legalised brothels. Paedophiles are a minority group. The Government should not be surprised if I do not believe that it will not draw a line and fight for their sexual freedoms, too. It has been my belief that the Government should fight for all and the majority view should be the accepted view. Once again, this Government has got it wrong in believing that this is what the people want. As with homosexuality, the community lives with it. We live with prostitution, but the majority does not want Queensland to legitimise brothels, especially not in their own towns.

Prostitution is often described as victimless. It is not victimless. Those people should say that it is victimless to the people who contract AIDS, their wives and children and the prostitutes who were beaten and raped and murdered. This Bill will not stop any of that happening. Those people should say that to those who cannot pay their bills because dad or mum has been to a prostitute; they are not cheap. They should try telling mums and dads that prostitution is victimless when they find out how their kids are making a living. Society as a whole has become a victim.

Prostitution has been with us since early times. No-one argues with that point, but no amount of public relations can conceal the fact that it is all about human weakness, poverty, disease, drug abuse, greed and lust. When people sell themselves for whatever reason, they are demeaning themselves by allowing their bodies to be used as chattels.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mrs PRATT: There is no love in the cold, commercial coupling of a prostitute and customer.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mrs PRATT: As Australia loses more and more of its manufacturing base overseas, it limits the employment opportunities of those Australians willing to work at any reasonable job. The lack of any single national development project means that these opportunities are further limited. The increasing division between the city and bush and the slow strangulation of our flourishing provincial centres push more and more Australians off to the cities in search of the dream which often turns into a nightmare for them and their families. Like homosexuality and drugs and because the Government is prepared to put forward legislation such as this, prostitution seems more likely to flourish than wane in the short term. Until the general community becomes concerned enough to let their objections be heard—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr D'Arcy): Order! It is obvious that the member is not taking interjections. She should be heard in silence.

Mrs PRATT: Until the general community become concerned enough to let their objections be heard loud and clear by their MPs, nothing will change. This Government has the numbers and can force this Bill through, and it will. I have heard many call on the Premier to allow members of the Labor Party to have a conscience vote. Some of the Labor members have stated that they are free to make that choice. Forgive me for not believing them, but until one of them who has made it very clear that their constituents oppose this Bill, until one of them stands up and puts their constituents before the party, until one of them eventually crosses the floor, I will remain sceptical.

While ordinary Queenslanders continue to vote for parties, this abuse of power will continue to the detriment of society. Our future is in the hands of the people. I respect the worth of women. I respect the worth of men. I respect the worth of girls. I respect the worth of boys. I will not endorse any Bill which encourages their exploitation. Labor has always pushed for the advancement of the status of women. I find it difficult to equate that view with the promotion of this Bill by Labor members. This Government has failed to listen to those in the industry who believe this Bill will not work. This Government has failed to listen to the police, the ones who will endeavour to enforce this Bill, who say it will not work. This Government has failed to listen to the people of Queensland, the majority of whom do not find this Bill acceptable.

It has been said by the member for Mansfield that this is a brave Government for tackling this issue. No-one disputes that. This is a difficult area to tackle. But, again, it is not an issue to be rushed. The Minister has spent over a year on the issue. A year is not very long. A year is nothing when we acknowledge the workload of individual Ministers. I do not know if "brave" is quite the right word, but I think perhaps it is a little foolish of the Government not to recognise that there is a need to protect society as a whole. It is better to raise the minority to the level of society than to drag society to the level of the minority.

I believe that everyone recognises the hope contained in this Bill, but that hope is reliant on the human factor, and we all know that human beings are fallible. I recognise the hope in this Bill, but I also believe it is an issue that needs a lot more attention. I would ask the Minister to allow more time to address the concerns of all affected by this Bill—prostitute and public alike. I cannot support this Bill.

Mr LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (12.41 p.m.): Today I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Prostitution Bill 1999. Frankly, I would have preferred to see a situation where Governments did not have to deal with the issue of prostitution, because in an ideal world it would not exist. But the problem is that we do not live in an ideal world—now, in the future or the past few thousand years—and prostitution still exists. Indeed, it is trite but true to say that prostitution is one of the oldest professions, nor indeed is prostitution something that is new or strange to Queensland. What Queenslanders could forget the late National Party senior Minister Russ Hinze stating pre-Fitzgerald that there were no brothels in Fortitude Valley. The Courier-Mail cartoon portraying Hinze as a blind man walking through a street of glittering brothels was one of the abiding political comments on the Bjelke-Petersen era.

Many in this Chamber would remember then Premier Bjelke-Petersen proclaiming long and loud his moral and ethical superiority, and that of his Government, whilst at the same time presiding over a regime that saw the jailing of Cabinet Ministers, including Austin and Harvey, and the jailing of Police Commissioner Lewis. We heard allegations of brown paper bag bribes taken to the Premier's office, allegations that resulted in Bjelke-Petersen being prosecuted for perjury. We then recall how he went to Tasmania in exile. What an irony! Had he gone to trial in Tasmania for perjury, by all accounts he would have been convicted on a majority verdict, notwithstanding the presence of another

National Party identity on the Joh jury, Luke Shaw. So the Leader of the Opposition and shadow Minister Horan should not come in here and lecture us about political morality.

True Government of the people and for the people is about making hard political decisions, facing unpalatable realities, weighing competing interests and acting decisively in the interests of the State. True Government is not the low grade, shrieking, carping, hysterical scaremongering tactics we see from the Leader of the Opposition. One of the reasons why Premier Beattie has such a high approval rating is the extraordinary contrast in his leadership style to that of Mr Borbidge—a style based on not only consultation but also firm Government, Government prepared to take hard decisions.

I would be delighted to have a state of affairs exist where this Parliament could pass a four-clause Bill known as the Prostitution Eradication Bill. The first clause would be the short title; the second the commencement of the Act—immediately; the third being the purpose of the Act—to eradicate prostitution now and forever; and the fourth being a declaration that all prostitution is immoral, illegal and ceases to exist. But this is the real world! By their arguments, that is what the Opposition is seeking to sell to the Queensland public. What a sad, pathetic bunch who again demonstrate by their actions that they are unfit to govern.

I have had a number of people of goodwill and honest concern about prostitution and its effects contact me to express their concerns about the Government's legislation. I do not propose to name them in Parliament as I do not have their permission to do so, but I will say that I carefully read their correspondence and appreciated the personal discussions I had with a number of them. They expressed to me their concerns with and their abhorrence of prostitution. I can only agree. With respect, the difference is that in Government we do not have the ability to merely express a concern and then hope the matter goes away. For me to say that to my constituents would be to treat them as fools, which they certainly are not, and not be true to my oath as a member of Parliament.

I am sure I could come into this Chamber and make an emotive, blistering speech about the evils of prostitution and get a big cheer from some people. But that cheer will soon ring hollow when the incredible problems that we currently have with prostitution get worse. The "do nothing" option is just not an option. As I said earlier, prostitution has been with us

on this planet for time immemorial. No-one in Government, the churches or society have yet found a way to eradicate it, although as an aside I would heartily adopt the sentiments expressed by the member for Kurwongbah, Mrs Lavarch, in her excellent contribution to this debate—that is, the best prevention is strong family values, values which can only be taught by example, not legislated.

Even in Queensland, and putting aside the corrupt Bjelke-Petersen illegal brothel trade, this State itself had legal brothels for a period of this century. It is my understanding that during the Second World War a legal brothel existed in the city in Albert Street. It is not, with respect, anything new or indeed systematic, as many on the other side of the House say, of the views of the chardonnay drinking trendies, a group which I do not admire nor aspire to.

The issue of prostitution has been one that has occupied a considerable amount of public interest, comment and time since the period immediately before the Fitzgerald inquiry in 1987. I will not canvass the issues in detail at the time, as others have done that. What I do note, however, is that this current Bill is the culmination of some two and a half years of work of the former coalition government and over a year of work from the Beattie Labor Government.

Labor came to Government in June 1998 with a commitment to continue the review of Queensland's prostitution laws commenced by the former coalition Government under the ministerial supervision of Russell Cooper. The former coalition Government released to the Beattie Government documents, including public attitude surveys carried out in 1997, and a working paper prepared by the coalition. These documents were used to build on the work of the former Government which allowed the current Government to release the discussion paper in November 1998 followed by one of the most extensive public consultation processes in the history of this State. Consultation took place in November/December 1998 and again in June/July 1999. This legislation is not "brave new world" social experimentation; it is conservative, measured, sensible and has broad public support.

The framework for regulation of prostitution in the Bill has the guidance of five principles: ensuring quality of life for local communities; safeguarding against corruption and organised crime; addressing social factors which contribute to those involved with the sex industry; ensuring a healthy society; and,

promoting safety. The new legislation will pose a number of restrictions on the establishment of brothels, including a maximum of five working rooms for prostitutes; a maximum of between two and 10 workers at any time, including sex workers and staff such as receptionist, cleaners and other employees, including contractors; no street signage identifying premises as a brothel; no liquor on brothel premises; not to be in any place other than a building; rigid financial and character checks on persons entering the industry; and, not within 200 metres of homes, schools, hospitals, kindergartens or other places frequented by children.

In my relatively short time in this place I have devoted a significant amount of time to observing the older hands of both sides of this Chamber. There is much to learn from them, both positive and negative, and I must say that by far it has been positive. I do not agree with all of his philosophy, but I can say that I admire the member for Crows Nest as a parliamentarian. This is probably why I am so disappointed in his opposition to the Government's legislative reforms. When we were in Opposition I was fortunate enough to represent the then shadow Police Minister, Mr Barton, and accompanied Mr Cooper on a number of consultation trips in regional Queensland over the Police Powers Bill. What impressed me about Mr Cooper at the time was his willingness to embrace principles and propositions that would not have enamoured him with some sections of the National Party but were clearly compelling conclusions of logic based upon the observed facts.

I can only express my disappointment at the smart alecs and the spivs, the time servers and the non-contributors on the Opposition benches who have taken the low-grade political decision rather than one that I would at least expect some of the more principled on the Opposition side to take. I could not put it better than to quote Mr Cooper himself whilst Police Minister from the Courier-Mail on 13 November 1997 when he said—

"It is time that most people pull their heads out of the sand and realise we have an issue here we can deal with, never get it right, never be perfect, we are only human but we can at least do a lot better than what we are.

It is something we all have to come to grips with and deal with, I know we can, as long as people are sensible and rational."

The Leader of the Opposition has berated members of this House about issues of

conscience. If there was one issue of conscience that the Leader of the Opposition ought be worrying about, it would be to allow members on his side of the Chamber like Mr Cooper to look at their conscience. I am sure that, deep in their heart of hearts, people of similar standing to that of the member for Crows Nest understand that there is really only one alternative, and that is to support the Government's legislation.

For the sake of completeness, I refer to the contribution of another member of the other side of the House. This person is again someone who is no political novice or dill and who prides himself, to an obsessive degree, with the content and the detail of his numerous contributions to debate in this place. I am referring to the member for Clayfield, Mr Santoro. In his report on prostitution as a member of the Parliamentary Criminal Justice Committee, on 12 November 1991 he said—

"From the outset I state that I personally believe that brothels and acts of sexual prostitution are morally abhorrent. I totally reject any claim to moral legitimacy by any of the operatives within what could be loosely described as 'the sex industry'. I regard the issue of prostitution as being basically a moral issue. Although the law can bolster the morality, it cannot create or legislate for morality without the broad-based support of the community.

Laws and the community's concept of morality must be in step with each other. If this is not the case, laws aimed at enforcing broadly unacceptable moral views will simply not work. After much and careful consideration, I have decided to support the regulation of the prostitution industry in Queensland as recommended in the CJC Report titled 'Regulating morality? An Inquiry into Prostitution in Queensland'."

At page 8 of his report, and on the issue of locations of legalised brothels, he states—

"Any regulatory framework must ensure that brothels are not able to locate within or in close proximity to residential areas, churches, schools, community facilities and certain types of businesses."

I am not quoting the previous contributions of the members for Crows Nest and Clayfield to be smart or glib but to indicate that when one is prepared to sit down and dispassionately examine the issues, given our opposition to the principle of prostitution itself, one realises that the only logical way to deal with prostitution is a tight and strict regime of

regulation so as to create a state of affairs where it simply is not practicable for the crooks, the spivs and the hangers-on to have any substantial role in prostitution in this State.

Mr Horan: Why don't you quote what Mr Beattie said in 1991 when he opposed prostitution? You are being very selective.

Mr LUCAS: In this legislation local government has a very important role. Mr Greg Hallam, the chief executive of the LGAQ, said on ABC Radio on 8 November 1999 in relation to the Government's legislation—

"Well, certainly we are happy. We have been through an extensive consultation process. I mean we have been very, very delighted with the amount of feedback, the ability to look at legislation as it has been developed, and we raised some 21 matters and all of those have been resolved in our favour so to that extent we are as happy as we can be."

I am glad that the member for Toowoomba South has decided that he would like to make a contribution in the middle of my speech, because I did not hear a worse contribution to the debate than his—not in terms of its content or the policy position it argues but in terms of an absolute lack of preparation and inconsistency of argument. It is as if his speech was prepared on the back of an envelope on a Saturday afternoon whilst listening to the races. On such a serious issue it ill behoves the member for Toowoomba South to come into this place and make a contribution such as he made yesterday.

The strict regulation outlined by the Minister in his contribution also requires strict and tough policing. To be allowed to operate in the legal sex industry, people will have to abide by very stringent provisions. Those who breach these provisions or operate illegally will be harshly dealt with under the law. Penalties under this model are high. I will give some examples of maximum penalties applying to some offences. Forcing persons into prostitution has 200 penalty units, or \$15,000, or seven years' imprisonment. Continued operation of a prohibited brothel has 200 penalty units, or \$15,000, or three years' imprisonment. Having an interest in more than one brothel has 200 penalty units, or \$15,000, or five years' imprisonment. Allowing a prostitute to work in a brothel while infective with a sexually transmitted disease has 120 penalty units or \$9,000. A prostitute or client engaging in unprotected sex has 100 penalty units or \$7,500.

We have learned from the Victorian experience. That State saw an increase in the number of illegal brothels but police were hamstrung in closing them down because normal evidentiary provisions made it difficult to gather evidence. It is very rare for a client to provide evidence to police about illegal services accessed—rarer still for prostitutes or massage providers to provide evidence of illegal activities. Our Queensland legislation has a number of provisions which will assist police with the task of gathering evidence and prosecuting illegal operators. It will allow a much more effective response against those who cannot or will not work within our restrictive legislative framework. These provisions are as follows.

In relation to applying a civil onus in a criminal proceeding, a magistrate can declare premises to be a prohibited brothel if satisfied on the balance of probabilities that a prostitution business is being carried out unlawfully on the premises. Once a premises is declared a prohibited brothel, it is an offence to be found in, entering or leaving the premises. The overriding policy objective that justifies the lower standard of proof is the need to ensure that when an unlicensed brothel is identified and closed the operators of the business cannot benefit commercially by immediately reopening the premises.

In relation to personal supervision, clause 80 requires a licensed brothel to be personally supervised by the licensee or an approved manager at all times when open for business. The defendant must prove that he or she did not know that the brothel was not being personally supervised. The rationale is to ensure that brothel licensees are made personally responsible for all activities in licensed brothels such as the presence of minors, drugs or liquor. Without this reversal, police would have to conduct more intensive investigations—for example, by using covert surveillance to gather evidence. If brothel licensees and approved managers knew that it was difficult for police to get evidence they would be less likely to take personal responsibility for activities on their premises.

In relation to prostitutes working while infective, it is an offence carrying 120 penalty units for a licensee or an approved manager of a brothel to allow a prostitute to work at their brothel if the person knows that the prostitute is infective with a sexually transmissible disease. The licensee or manager is taken to have known that the prostitute was infective unless they can show that they reasonably believed that the prostitute had been regularly undergoing medical tests or examinations to

determine whether the prostitute was infective and that the prostitute was not infective with an STD. This reversal of onus is justified by public health imperatives. It takes into account the extent to which the manager may reasonably be expected to be involved in the maintenance of health standards in a brothel.

I now refer to immunity from prosecution for undercover "stings" on street prostitutes. Street soliciting is to a large extent the public face of prostitution and it carries the greatest level of health and personal safety risks. This Bill allows an undercover police officer to solicit for prostitution, which otherwise would be an offence, if acting in accordance with written instructions for a particular investigation by a commissioned officer. This will allow police to respond effectively to complaints about illegal prostitution. Similar provisions exist and have proven to be effective in other Australian jurisdictions.

Today I hope that I have been able to demonstrate to the House that solutions for prostitution, which has existed since time immemorial, are not simple. I only wish they were. What we are debating today is not perfect. It probably can never be, but that is why we will also have our three-yearly review by the CJC. What is manifestly less perfect—indeed moribund, dangerous and absurd—is the do-nothing, play-the-politics attitude that has characterised the Opposition debate. The Leader of the Opposition has dragged down parliamentarians of ability and character such as the member for Crows Nest and the entire parliamentary Liberal Party, as it has been so often before, into the murky sewer of political expediency. Who wants prostitution to be made illegal? Besides those people of goodwill, there is one other group—organised crime, who can only flourish under a climate of illegality.

So often can we learn from the mistakes of others. One of the reasons that organised crime is so pervasive in the United States is the toehold it got in the twenties. In the time immediately before prohibition, many Americans—moral people, people of goodwill, decent people; church goers and non-church goers alike—saw the scourge of alcohol abuse and what it did to families. Their legislative prescription was prohibition. Nothing encouraged the proliferation of unsafe consumption of alcohol more than prohibition but, even far worse, prohibition introduced huge cash flows into the hands of organised crime in the United States.

I say that we all reject prostitution, but I say that I have a responsibility as a member of

the Government to act in the best interests of this State. Making difficult decisions is the privilege and responsibility of Government and it ought be the hallmark of responsible Opposition. Those on the other side of the House can never aspire to the former and, indeed, are totally incapable of practising the latter. This Bill ought to be supported. The challenge to all of us is to work over the next three years to finetune where necessary, be prepared to take further hard decisions and critically examine its operation and practice. That is responsible Government. It is what I was elected for.

Hon. T. A. BARTON (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services) (12.57 p.m.), in reply: I thank all those who spoke in this debate yesterday and today. While I think some members made a much more positive contribution than others, I thank all for putting forward their views. I particularly thank the Government contributors—the members for Kurwongbah, Archerfield, Mulgrave, Mansfield, Fitzroy, Bulimba, Cairns and Lytton—because it is very clear that not only have they studied the Bill very thoroughly but also they have a very good understanding of what the Government is attempting to do with this legislation and why it is so absolutely necessary. I am very confident that they, along with others, will get the support of this Parliament when this is put to a vote.

It has certainly been a very long road. I would like to thank all those people who have been of such great support to me, particularly my team. A significant number of people from the Queensland Police Service have been involved, and Inspector Dale Pointing is here today. I thank Sue Johnson, who got some accolades from the previous Minister yesterday afternoon. She deserves those accolades. Sue worked as part of my team in a similar way to the way she worked for the coalition under Russell Cooper. We did ask for and received the work they had done to date and we built on that. I think that is important.

I also thank my personal staff. All of them have carried some very heavy additional load while we have gone down this long, hard road. I thank particularly those who have been directly involved: my senior policy adviser, Louisa Pink; policy adviser Louise Foley; and senior media adviser Bill Ferguson. These people have been right at the cutting edge in this area, but all of my staff have carried an additional load because of this particular issue, which has been very time consuming and extensively discussed around the State.

I also thank the Premier, because he has been steadfast in his commitment to ensuring that we get appropriate reform of prostitution in Queensland. He has very solidly stuck to his position, which is consistent with the one that he expressed as far back as 1991-92, when as chairperson of the parliamentary CJC he played a major role. He and this Government have come forward with a model that is not too far removed from the CJC's model in 1991-92 and a model that he has consistently advocated. I thank him for that support.

Sitting suspended from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

Mr BARTON: I will discuss some of the issues that have been raised by various members, particularly Opposition members. That will help the clarification process at the Committee stage. One concern raised by the shadow Minister was that brothels would appear in our waterways and marinas. I refer him to clause 79 of the Bill, which says that a licensee must operate a licensed brothel in a building. That attracts a penalty of 200 penalty points or five years' imprisonment. It must be a fixed structure wholly or partially enclosed by walls and be roofed. Although a brothel may be established in floating premises, it must have a fixed location and address and must be the subject of a planning approval from the relevant council under the Integrated Planning Act. The proposed address must be advised to the Prostitution Licensing Authority prior to the consideration of a licence application. Even if the premises are floating physically, they cannot float off somewhere else. The brothel must be in a fixed location. It cannot be in a fixed location in a residential area and it cannot be within 200 metres from one of the other proscribed areas. It is a nonsense to suggest floating brothels will be floating all over the place. That simply is not possible under this Bill.

Another issue raised by the Opposition is that organised crime bosses will put individual sex workers in each of the six units in a typical suburban sixpack block of units and that that would be a very attractive option for them. No changes have been made to the current laws in regard to individual sex workers, except with regard to their being allowed to have personal security. If it has not happened already, it will not happen. Under this Bill, a person engaging in organising prostitution activity in that way is liable to a penalty of up to 14 years in jail. There is no basis to the claim that legalisation of brothels would result in the situation as claimed. No more incentive exists than has existed since 1992 when the existing legislation was brought in. The very significant

penalties for organising an illegal brothel provide a disincentive.

The issue of organised crime was raised by the shadow Minister and also by my predecessor. They claimed that every sleazy drug lord and opportunistic crime boss would be attracted to Queensland and that those persons would assist 39 of their friends with licences, which would result in organised prostitution on a grand scale. Absolutely nothing has been put forward in this Parliament to back up that claim. The proposed system in Queensland will be by far the strictest in Australia. We examined the issues in every other State and Territory. We considered what was being put forward in Western Australia and South Australia. Those States both spat the dummy and ran away from the issue.

Under clause 17, the suitability provisions for licence applicants state that the Prostitution Licensing Authority will consider the applicant's reputation, character, honesty and integrity. There is absolutely no capacity for those people to do what was suggested. Whether they have been convicted of an indictable offence or an offence under this legislation or charged with various offences of a sexual nature will be revealed when the Prostitution Licensing Authority considers their applications. It will consider whether they have any associates who have been convicted of a disqualifying offence. It is not just the individuals who will be under consideration. If they have 39 sleazy mates and we are aware of that, the Prostitution Licensing Authority will exclude the 39 sleazy mates from being considered for the licensing regime, because associates include those people as well as members of the family, a person in a business arrangement, the owner of the premises or the lessor of brothel premises.

The licences are personal to the licensee. They cannot hide behind corporate veils. We have put a lot of effort into those provisions, because in Queensland in the eighties under the coalition and under the National Party in its own right, prostitution was run by organised crime figures. We have been absolutely adamant about ensuring that we have the tightest and toughest provisions to prevent the 39 sleazy mates and their sleazy first-up mate from owning brothels in Queensland. Persons are entitled to only one licence. A person can have an interest in only one brothel. They cannot have any form of interest in any other. If they were to do that, they would be in breach of the law, and they would be operating an illegal brothel. If they were to

attempt to do that, the penalties in this legislation are most severe indeed.

The legislation provides for financial audits. The Prostitution Licensing Authority will consider whether people who seek to be licensed applicants have the necessary financial resources. An extension of the allegation that we will have every sleazy person in Australia flocking to Queensland is that people will be fronts for sleazy people. As a result of the probity checks under this legislation, the Prostitution Licensing Authority can reach behind the facade to examine whether money is coming from organised crime or other inappropriate people to fronts who may be cleanskins in their own right. The authority will consider whether the business structure is sufficiently transparent. If it is not transparent and unless we can be sure that the people involved are cleanskins, licences will not be issued.

We are absolutely adamant that we will not let the sleazy characters own small brothels in Queensland. Financial audit trails will be in place. A person can be involved in only one licence. They cannot be involved in any shape or form with a second or subsequent licence. Police may enter brothel premises at the request of the Prostitution Licensing Authority, inspect and photocopy documents and seize books or any other relevant document. The Prostitution Licensing Authority can do very thorough audits to ensure that what is contained in this Bill when it comes into force from 1 July next year is absolutely as strict as we can possibly make it.

Claims have been made that street prostitution will proliferate. Certainly, that will not occur. The Opposition Leader and the shadow Minister have made the claim that, with the legalisation of brothels, the two systems will be competing, resulting in a growth in street prostitution. I cannot understand the logic of members who make accusations without any backup at all. There is no evidence to suggest that this will happen. Contrary to this claim, that has not been the case in Victoria or the other States that take a balanced approach.

Under this Bill, we will also put in place much stronger law enforcement to crack down on street prostitution, and that enforcement will be counterbalanced by services and programs to deal with the underlying reasons for some sex workers, be they women or men, getting involved in street prostitution. SQWISI has been doing good work in recent years. We are now aware that many of those underlying reasons relate to homelessness, drug

addiction and so on. Through the body that will advise the four Ministers on the ministerial council, we will develop what we are confident will be effective exit programs to get people who have fallen into the trap of prostitution out of the industry and provide them with a strong support base, over and above even the HELP program, which was mentioned by my predecessor. We know full well that people get trapped into prostitution. If they do not want to be there, we will do our level best to get them out. This Bill provides for those types of programs to be developed.

We have also heard claims by the Opposition spokesman that the Minister can veto the decisions of councils with populations of 25,000 people or less not to have brothels. This might be using language that is too strong, but essentially the allegation was made that I would collude with the Prostitution Licensing Authority to force brothels into those small communities. I do not know how often we have to say this: we are absolutely adamant—and any clear reading of the Bill and the Explanatory Notes makes this clear—that there is no way for me to collude with the licensing authority, nor would I want to. We have conducted extensive consultation around the State. Small communities that do not want to have brothels should not have brothels forced on them. That is what this Bill provides for. Clause 64 gives local governments with populations of less than 25,000 people the power to refuse all brothel applications. There is only a requirement for the Minister to agree that applications refused by councils can be formalised in council decisions. Records of councils refusing brothels will also be maintained. This will prevent people coming back through the door and trying to inflict brothels on small communities that have already made an emphatic decision not to have them. This will ensure that the Prostitution Licensing Authority will not go down any dry gullies.

One of the most outrageous allegations came from the master of the half-truth and sleazy political spin—the Opposition Leader—who claimed that brothels are coming to a street corner near you; that there will be a proliferation of closely located brothels in many communities; that brothels will be like 7-11 stores. What a load of codswallop. The Bill makes it very clear that brothels will not be in residential areas. Brothels will not be within 200 metres of any churches, hospitals, schools or places frequented by children, such as playgrounds, railway stations, shopping centres, caravan parks, holiday units, public swimming pools and so on, even where they

are in commercial or industrial areas. For the benefit of the Opposition Leader, who either cannot read or chooses not to understand the facts of life, let me make it very clear and nail this furphy once and for all.

Mr Sullivan: Maybe they're the corner shops that he hangs around in.

Mr BARTON: Perhaps that is his problem. Perhaps he has hung around a few too many corner shops in his youth.

The Prostitution Licensing Authority must also refuse to grant a licence if doing so would affect the character of the locality, that is, create a red-light district. That is covered in clause 16(3). We will not allow red-light districts to evolve anywhere, be it a commercial or industrial area, and irrespective of whether in every other respect the criteria are met. The Prostitution Licensing Authority will be required to knock back applications so that we do not have inappropriate developments of red-light districts and enclaves of brothels. I want to make that clear for the parliamentary record. I hope the Opposition Leader is at least prepared to read the Hansard record and find out why he is wrong.

I should make one other point about this. Unlike 7-11 stores, brothels will not be allowed signage that is anything other than discreet. That will be clear after the Committee stage, because I intend to make some minor amendments with respect to brothel advertising and nail this issue once and for all. We believe it is clear the way it is. However, we will put this in the Bill in neon lights so that people cannot read it in any other way than is intended. Advertising and any signage will be very discreet.

Also, the Opposition Leader claimed that brothels will appear in or near Cavill Mall. Malls would be regarded as places frequented by children and thus no brothel could be located within 200 metres of either Cavill Mall or any residence, hospital, church, school and so on—something we have already made abundantly clear.

I do not wish to belabour the point, but the exit programs are very important. We have all heard stories about people who have fallen and been trapped into prostitution—mainly young women but certainly some young men also. Under clause 114, we will give the Prostitution Advisory Council certain functions, including promoting and coordinating programs to promote sexual health, to help prostitutes leave prostitution—the exit programs that we have spoken of—and also, probably more importantly, to divert minors and other vulnerable people away from getting

involved in prostitution in the first place. The Prostitution Advisory Council will also circulate information on the dangers of prostitution. These matters do not need to be specifically legislated for. That is why they are not spelled out in the clearest possible terms in the Bill. It is appropriate that they be allowed to be developed through the programs of the advisory council. These matters will also be the subject of regulation.

Both the Opposition Leader and my predecessor, Russell Cooper, referred to the HELP program, which was not included in legislation, either. It was a program administered under the previous Government. It was a very helpful and necessary program, which we supported while in Opposition. There is no more a need for us to enshrine in legislation the exit programs that we intend to develop than there was for the HELP program to be enshrined in legislation. The exit programs will provide appropriate and relevant alternatives, training and opportunities for those people who wish to leave prostitution.

Another furphy concerned the power of entry of law enforcement officers. The shadow Minister claimed that police will be unable to enter brothels without written permission even in the case of a fire, a serious assault or other emergency situations. I will explain the position for the shadow Minister. In relation to a routine inspection, the police should have the written permission of the Prostitution Licensing Authority, rather than running willy-nilly in and out of brothels. The police may enter any brothel premises at any time to investigate criminal offences pursuant to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. That is the principal legislation providing for police powers in this State. As the Parliament is aware, it was passed in late 1997 by my predecessor with my support as the then shadow Minister. It is an appropriate platform that gives the police the power to walk into any brothel to investigate any form of criminal activity or misdemeanour at any time without having to have permission or be invited.

There is no restriction on police or fire authorities or anybody else in responding to fire or other emergency situations. However, in monitoring this legislation, police will require written authority from a police officer of the rank of inspector or above if it is simply a normal inspection. We do not want a return to the old days of corruption. This is an important anti-corruption measure, because we do not want to revisit those corrupt days of when the National Party was last in Government in this State in its own right, when another one of my predecessors used to roam around the Valley

with his white cane and his dark glasses, ignoring the neon lights and the signs and the handouts, saying, "I don't see any prostitution down here." We are not going back to those days, because we are absolutely adamant that we are going to have the toughest regime on prostitution anywhere in Australia.

Comments were made by the shadow Minister with regard to resourcing for law enforcement to the effect that the Government's model will be too resource intensive. I make no bones about it. This is going to be a very tough law enforcement model; but it will also avoid the hundreds of hours of police time that are now being spent on surveillance and other intensive evidence-gathering processes. This Bill assists police to collect evidence and conduct prosecutions with regard to prostitution offences very effectively, indeed.

It has never been intended by the Government that the sex industry in legal brothels would be regarded as just any other industry. It is important to take a cautious approach and to strike a balance between guarding against a return to the bad old days of the eighties, which were rife with corruption, and a well-regulated, aboveboard, sensibly monitored industry.

As part of bringing this legislation to Cabinet—and I am not going to give any Cabinet secrets away—I can assure this Parliament that we had to put together a business plan in terms of what the costs are and in terms of the costs of enforcing this. But while we will be spending with one hand, we will be saving a lot of funds with the other. But we make no apologies for the fact that this model is a tough law enforcement regime. If we are going to relax prostitution laws, we are going to do it in a way whereby we make sure that there is very effective policing by the Queensland Police Service.

One of the other statements that I found quite intriguing was an allegation by the shadow Minister that there would be a slush fund that the Minister would be able to spend at his discretion without accountability. I immediately thought to myself, "Gee, I had better have a look at this provision." It did not sound right to me. Let me put this in its proper context. The fund is covered in clauses 123 to 126. The Prostitution Licensing Authority is responsible for the administration of that fund—not me, but the Prostitution Licensing Authority, an independent body of very high-powered appropriate people appointed by the Government. The Minister may give written directions about the purposes of expenditure

to make sure that the authority stays within some form of ministerial guidelines. However, the Prostitution Licensing Authority is required to report annually. It will report on the administration of its funds, together with any ministerial directions received.

That is no different at all from what happens now when I come in here year after year with the Police Service's annual report. I am also required to table—as is the Police Commissioner—any directions that I give to him. So there will be absolute transparency in terms of the funding arrangements. The Prostitution Licensing Authority has to have funds—the same as any other Government body—but there will be absolute transparency in terms of any direct involvement by the Minister and decisions by the authority, and the expenditure directions will all be tabled in this Parliament by the Minister at the end of that process.

I do not intend to comment on every statement that members opposite made, because in only 30 minutes I obviously cannot traverse the entire debate, which covered many hours yesterday and again today. However, I do have this view: this is good legislation. We have consulted as widely as we have on any legislation—certainly in the time that I have been involved in the Queensland Parliament, which covers most of the post-Fitzgerald period—so it is as good as it has ever been in terms of consultation. We believe that everybody has had the opportunity to be consulted and to express a view, and it is now time to make a decision and get on with putting it into place. That is why I am asking this Parliament to support this legislation today.

I probably should mention—because it did get mentioned by a few members—that a fortnight ago, the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee brought down its first report on this legislation and indicated that it wanted me to look at some aspects. It also drew some aspects to the attention of the Parliament. I have answered that report, and I think that those answers are in the committee's digest this week. The members of the committee have noted my responses. I simply make mention of that, because it is really up to the Parliament now to determine that. But from my perspective, no major issues were raised by the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee that would cause us to want to change our view. However, I flag that I have a small number of amendments—three or four—which I will move at the Committee stage and which have come out of the debate over the past few days. That is simply so that we can clarify even more

firmly the intent of several provisions, and I will cover them at the Committee stage.

Once again, I thank all members for their participation. In my response before lunch, I think that I thanked individually most members who have played a major role in this debate. It has been a hard road. This is not easy legislation, and many members have expressed that point of view. I remember meeting Jan Wade, the previous Victorian Attorney-General, who was responsible in recent years for that State's legislation. Pardon me for swearing, Mr Speaker, but she said to me, "Tom, this is a bloody awful industry, and it's a bloody awful thing to be involved with, but it has to be done."

And as Russell Cooper said yesterday, whoever the Minister is, they have to accept the responsibilities on behalf of their party and their Government and the public of Queensland and do what they believe is in the best interests of the public of Queensland. That is the stage we have reached. We do not believe that this will be the be-all and end-all. We know that a review of the CJC will take place in three years' time. But if we find that we do not have it quite right, we will be big enough as a Government to come back in here and make the adjustments that are needed. I commend the Bill to the House.

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

AYES, 42—Attwood, Beattie, Bligh, Boyle, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Clark, J. Cunningham, D'Arcy, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Gibbs, Hamill, Hayward, Lavarch, Lucas, Mackenroth, McGrady, Mickel, Mulherin, Musgrove, Nelson-Carr, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pitt, Reeves, Reynolds, Roberts, Robertson, Rose, Schwarten, Spence, Struthers, Welford, Wells, Wilson. Tellers: Sullivan, Purcell

NOES, 42—Beanland, Black, Borbidge, Connor, Cooper, E. Cunningham, Davidson, Elliott, Feldman, Gamin, Goss, Grice, Healy, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Kingston, Knuth, Laming, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, Malone, Mitchell, Nelson, Paff, Pratt, Prenzler, Quinn, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Springborg, Stephan, Turner, Veivers, Watson, Wellington. Tellers: Baumann, Hegarty

The numbers being equal, Mr Speaker cast his vote with the Ayes.

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Committee

Hon. T. A. BARTON (Waterford—ALP)
(Minister for Police and Corrective Services) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—

Mr HORAN (3.03 p.m.): In speaking to the short title, I want to briefly make a summary of

the Bill, which the short title encapsulates. A lot of members opposite have skated over the fact that there is legalised prostitution in Queensland now under the single operator system whereby prostitutes operate out of units, houses or presumably their own residences. This legislation means that we add another tier to the availability of prostitution. In Queensland, we have illicit street solicitation, illegal brothels and the legal prostitution system of single operators. Under this legislation, we will have that plus another system of legal prostitution called boutique brothels.

A number of people have spoken about prostitutes soliciting on the streets. Virtually everybody in this Chamber has agreed that another tier of available, legal prostitution is not going to affect the number of prostitutes who are working illegally on the street. That occurs because of drugs, homelessness and various psychoses. Streetwalking can be addressed only through social help programs and policing. So everybody has to be very clear that the Government is intending to increase the amount of prostitution and the availability of prostitution. Along with that will come all the bad things that are associated with prostitution—the drugs, the crime, the standover tactics, the money laundering, the use of people on work visas. Nobody is so naive to think that, even if a system has regulations, those regulations will not be avoided.

In his second-reading speech and in his reply, the Minister spoke about the regulations, their toughness and so forth. However, let us all be quite clear about the reality of life and the types of people who are involved in prostitution.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Dr Clark): Order! I remind the member for Toowoomba South that we are in the Committee stage and he should be very specific to the clause.

Mr HORAN: I am talking specifically to the short title of the Prostitution Bill. I am speaking to what this title encapsulates, and I said that I would give a brief summary. This Prostitution Bill widens the availability of legal prostitution in this State. It adds an additional layer to that which exists already—

Mr LUCAS: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is not speaking to the short title of the Bill. The title of the Bill does not relate in any way to the extent of the regulation of prostitution or otherwise in this State. The member is seeking to have a second go at the second-reading debate.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! My ruling is that the member really should not stray into the purposes of the Bill, he should stick to the title of the Bill. So I was really reminding the member—

Mr HORAN: I agree. I said that I would give a summary. I am telling the Chamber what this Prostitution Bill will do and what the additional level of prostitution will bring to the State. Dr Clark, I accept your direction. I have made my point. I wanted to make it quite clear that this Bill provides additional availability of prostitution in this State over and above what exists legally now. All that is associated with prostitution will increase as well.

Mr BARTON: This could go on for a long time. We have debated this Bill for nearly two days. The reality is that, for decades—well before the Goss Government's legislation of late 1992 that came into effect in 1993—single operators have been a feature in this State. I want to let this Parliament know that when my team and I did that very extensive consultation throughout Queensland, we did not get a single complaint coming forward from people wanting to remove the single operators. The only complaint that came about single operators were concerns about their security.

We are serious about doing what needs to be done in terms of prostitution reform, which is what my predecessor wanted to do but was stopped by people such as the current shadow Minister and others. I find it sad that the member wants another bite of the cherry after we have debated this Bill for two days. I certainly hope that this Parliament can move very rapidly to accept the title of this Bill, at least, so that we can debate the real issues, unless the members opposite just want to play games for the rest of the afternoon and possibly tomorrow.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Clark): Before proceeding, I reinforce the point of my previous ruling. We have had a very wide-ranging debate during the second-reading stage of the Bill. Members must confine themselves to the clauses. I will be listening carefully and I will pull up members who stray beyond that. There is no point in having a total repetition of the debate that we have been through.

I would also appreciate it if members could keep conversations to a minimum. It is very important that the Minister is able to hear the issues that are raised and is able to respond to them. I seek members' cooperation on that point.

Clause 2—

Mr BARTON (3.10 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"At page 12, line 6—

omit, insert—

'2.(1) Parts 1 and 2 and part 7, divisions 1 and 2 and schedule 4 commence on assent.

'(2) The remaining provisions of this Act commence on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

'(3) However, if a provision of this Act has not commenced before 1 July 2000, it commences on 1 July 2000.'

This is a very straightforward amendment that allows for a staged implementation of the Bill. This will allow for the appointment of the Prostitution Licensing Authority, its staff and the advisory council prior to the Bill in toto being proclaimed and coming into effect. In that way, the legislation can be implemented in a staged manner next year.

When we were drafting the legislation, we believed that a single date of operation would be adequate. However, when we went through the final rounds of consultation after the Bill was presented to the Parliament, we felt that it would be far better to first appoint the licensing authority and its staff, and give them time to organise premises and other facilities. That is effectively what amendment No. 1 to clause 2 of the Bill is all about.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—

Mr HORAN (3.12 p.m.): Clause 7(2) states—

"If a financial institution is a mortgagee of premises used by the licensee of a brothel for the provision of prostitution, the institution does not have an 'interest in a brothel' only because the institution is a mortgagee of the premises."

I ask the Minister: what if the mortgagee is not actually a financial institution? For example, what if the mortgagee is an individual, a group of individuals or an organisation? Could they then be regarded as an associate?

Mr BARTON: I think they would be because, in effect, they would be in a direct financial arrangement with the proposed licensee. We consulted with the financial

institutions on this matter. They were concerned that they might be tagged as being direct owners of a brothel when they would not want to be directly involved. If an individual owner is providing the funding source, they are a directly interested person. Also, they would not be allowed to have an involvement in more than one operation in Queensland. That would not be illegal, but they would be a direct associate of the licensee and would be treated in that manner.

Mr HORAN: We talk about registered and recognised banks, building societies and finance companies. However, there are some very grey areas with finance companies, brokerage organisations and so forth. There is the very strong possibility that someone may want to be a financial backer of a brothel. That person would then have an influence, but they could circumvent being classed as an associate because they could say that they are a financial institution and the mortgagor and are financing the organisation. I think that there will be great difficulty in getting a clear-cut delineation in some areas.

Mr BARTON: I do not think there will be. When we are talking about financial institutions, we all know who we are talking about. I make it very clear that we are talking about organisations other than the large registered financial institutions. This is a key safeguard to ensure that financiers who are tied to organised crime cannot provide finance and put other people up as fronts. The minute that someone of that nature wants to be involved in more than one brothel, they would become an interested person and they would not be allowed to have an interest in more than one brothel. I take on board the view of the member, but I make it very clear that that is the intent of the legislation. We do not want to have people acting as fronts for others who have direct financial interests in more than one brothel. If anyone other than a major banking institution in standard banking arrangements comes in in that regard, they will not be allowed to be involved and their licence application would fail. If they slip through the net, they will be in breach of criminal penalties under this Bill.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—

Mr HORAN (3.16 p.m.): Can the Minister explain clause 8(e), which relates to a person who is convicted of a disqualifying offence being ineligible for a brothel licence? What are the details of those offences? I understand that they are referred to in the two Schedules in relation to the Criminal Code and the

Migration Act, but I want the Minister to give a clear indication of the disqualifying offences.

Mr BARTON: I draw the member's attention to page 98 of the Bill. Schedule 1 outlines the disqualifying offence provisions under the Criminal Code. They include section 87, official corruption; section 121, official corruption not judicial but relating to offences; section 300, unlawful homicide; section 347, rape; section 351, abduction; section 354, kidnapping; section 354A, kidnapping for ransom; section 415, demanding property, benefit or performance of services with threats; any offences in chapter 22, Offences against Morality, if the offence relates to a child or intellectually impaired person; and any offence in chapter 22A, Prostitution, if the offences relate to a child or intellectually impaired person. I think that covers everything. One certainly would not want people convicted of those sorts of offences to be licensed as brothel owners or managers.

Schedule 2 on page 99 of the Bill is also covered under clause 8. Schedule 2 relates to disqualifying offence provisions under the Migration Act 1995, which is a Commonwealth Act. They include section 233, persons concerned in bringing non-citizens into Australia in contravention of the Act or harbouring illegal entrants; section 234, false papers and so on; section 235, offences in relation to work; section 236, offences relating to visas; section 240, offence to arrange marriage to obtain permanent residence; section 241, offence to arrange pretended de facto relationship to obtain permanent residence; section 242, offence to arrange interdependency relationship to obtain permanent residence; section 243, offences relating to an application for permanent residence because of marriage or de facto relationship; section 244, offences relating to application for permanent residence because of interdependency; section 245, offences of making false or unsupported statements; section 280, restrictions on giving of immigration assistance; section 281, restriction on charging fees for immigration assistance; section 282, restriction on charging fees for immigration representatives; section 283, false representation that a person is a registered agent.

Apart from Schedule 1—and these offences are in the Schedules to the Bill—the sorts of things that we are also trying to make sure that we guard against are people importing people for illegal work in brothels. We have seen that sort of thing happen interstate. Typically those people who have tried to do that have been caught up with, but

we are making sure that we have tough penalties and restrictions on that.

Again, "financial institution" is also defined in the Acts Interpretation Act, and the member opposite was concerned that we may have some trouble with that. He will find that, if we tie it back to other principal legislation of the State as to what is defined as a "financial institution"—it is in the Acts Interpretation Act—we should not get into any trouble with that. If other private financiers come along, they cannot have an interest in more than one brothel application.

Mr HORAN: I make the point that disqualifying offences are those listed under Schedule 1 in the Criminal Code. That certainly leaves a lot of people who have committed offences that I would describe as serious criminal misconduct—things such as fraud, break and enter, home invasion and all those sorts of crimes—still eligible.

Mr BARTON: All of those offences that the member opposite mentioned can be considered as to whether a person is a fit and proper person. Those Schedules and that clause list the offences in regard to which the Prostitution Licensing Authority has no alternative but to rub out the application of those people. If it comes to any other form of offences at all, in fact it is a value judgment for the Prostitution Licensing Authority. Frankly, I would not expect that those people are going to slip through the net.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—

Mr HORAN (3.23 p.m.): Just before I speak on this clause, I should say that I meant to say at the outset that, as members are aware, we are not moving amendments because we vehemently oppose this Bill. However, we are pointing out what we believe to be the shortcomings of these various clauses.

In relation to clause 9, what if the person is part of another group or association? This clause says—

"A person is not entitled to apply for, or eligible to be granted, more than 1 licence."

But what if that person is part of another group or association?

Mr BARTON: Very clearly, they are excluded. Of course, there can be a body corporate as well as an individual. If an individual is involved in any shape or form with a second licence application, then that licence application cannot succeed. If they were to, in

fact, hide their involvement and the PLA became aware of it, it is a very serious offence. There can be management in certain circumstances, but they cannot be involved in the ownership in any shape or form, even if it is as part of a further, broader group.

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM: Just following on the same line, I understand that the licences will only be issued to a single natural person. In the Minister's reply he emphasised the fact that a lot of attention would be given to ensuring one licence for one person only. Given the deviousness of people with dishonest intentions, I wonder what specific trail can be followed by the council, the commission or the Minister to ensure that there is no way that a person already holding a licence could fund another licence, albeit with an individual who is a cleanskin. How will the Minister ensure that southern investors do not fund the application of an individual up here for a licence? Legally they may not have a connection, but implicitly they do because it will be their funds that are being used. I do not know what sort of financial structures might be employed but, as I said, if someone is intent on doing the wrong thing, they can be quite devious.

Mr BARTON: That is one of the great challenges of the probity audits that the Prostitution Licensing Authority will be engaged in—to make sure that we track down who their associates are as well. It is very clear that we are only going to allow legal ownership or involvement in the legal ownership of one operation, not multiple operations. Certainly we want to stop the sleazebags, for want of a better term, from down south who are involved in crime. Clause 7, on page 13 of the Bill, in effect covers people who have an interest. It will, in fact, be illegal for people to have any form of multiple interest and there are very tight provisions in the Bill to make sure that associates do not as well. Associates can, of course, be family members. They can also be people who have some other form of business interest with a licence applicant. I will make no bones about it; our intention is to have the strongest probity checks and financial audit trails of people who make licence applications so that we can dig behind their facades.

When we were in Victoria late last year the Victorian vice squad was doing checks on the ownership of one brothel in Melbourne on the basis that they had intelligence information that suggested some crime figures had become involved in the ownership. They were doing those sorts of checks at that time. We aim to make sure that that does not occur before they are licensed. We hope to dig them

out before then. But if they slip through the net, there are very, very serious penalties for those people, and they will pay a price.

Mr FELDMAN: I notice that the definition of "spouse" states that it includes a de facto spouse. What is the case in relation to two persons of the same sex living together? Can they each own a brothel? I do not see that possibility covered in the legislation at all. The Government has been pushing same sex couples quite regularly but I see that somehow it is absent from this Bill. Does that mean that each member of a same sex couple can actually own a brothel when living in a de facto relationship? Does that give them the opportunity, even though they are a family unit, of owning two separate brothels?

Mr BARTON: Let us not get sidetracked in this debate with some of the nonsense that we have seen in this Parliament in recent weeks. If they are a couple, they are associates, so they will be excluded.

Mr FELDMAN: But where is that covered in the definitions? That is what I would like to know. The Minister talks about that being explicit, but it is not explicit in the Bill itself.

Mr BARTON: One of my advisers has just pointed out that page 110—the very last page—on the last line of the Bill states—

" 'Spouse' includes de facto spouse."

Mr FELDMAN: Again I say that the definition of "spouse" has been included in other legislation—industrial relations, fisheries and numerous others Acts—but here it is exclusively absent that "spouse" includes those who are in same sex relationships. Why is there suddenly an absence of that definition in this particular legislation, considering we are talking about a moral implication? The legislation virtually says that two people in a same sex relationship, which is not defined under this Act, can each own an individual brothel.

Mr BARTON: I have had two goes at this. I think that is the member's third, so it is three strikes and he's out. I have made it very clear that if they are a couple or associated they are out. They cannot, under this Bill, have a brothel a piece. End of story.

Clause 9, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 12, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 13—

Mr HORAN (3.30 p.m.): Clause 13 deals with the taking of particulars. This clause provides that those particulars cannot be used for any other purpose. What if the identifying particulars lead to the discovery that the

person has been involved in some other form of criminal activity? The provisions of this clause really afford a degree of protection to criminals.

Mr BARTON: No, this clause does not do that. It is not unusual in the criminal law for there to be a fence, for want of a better term, put around the taking of evidence or the taking of particulars. These particulars are only able to be gathered for this purpose. It is not a question of protecting people; it is a question of whether we want them to comply with this licensing regime. They are told that this is the only purpose for which those particulars will be used, and that is precisely what the Bill says.

Clause 13, as read, agreed to.

Clause 14, as read, agreed to.

Clause 15—

Mr HORAN (3.31 p.m.): Clause 15 sets out what the authority has to consider when considering an application. I refer to subsection (2)(c)(i)(ii) relating to the extent to which the character of the locality may be affected. There is a lot of concern from this side of the House about the character of areas like Surfers Paradise. What about where I live in Toowoomba? What if there were a couple of applications for brothels to go into the commercial area, the CBD or the industrial area of town? I think the same concerns are being felt in places like Logan, Redcliffe and other areas. If we look at Fortitude Valley at the moment, further applications would nearly be off the map if we are saying that we do not want to change the character of an area any further. I would like some comments on that.

Mr BARTON: Clause 15(2)(c)(i)(ii) is basically the same as what follows in clause 16(3). Clause 16(3) states—

"Also, the Authority must refuse to grant a licence if, after considering the matters mentioned in 15(2)(c), it considers that, if the application were granted, the combined total of licensed brothels and premises permitted to provide adult entertainment in the locality in which the brothel is to be situated would substantially affect the character of the locality."

I think we have to read clauses 15(2)(c) and 16(3) together. We are adamant that we are not going to allow red-light districts to come about. We are not going to allow sleazy areas to develop. This is not about having enclaves of brothels and sexually explicit entertainment. We do not want those types of districts erupting, whether it is in Cavill Mall, Toowoomba or, frankly, the Valley.

Clause 15, as read, agreed to.

Clause 16, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17—

Mr HORAN (3.34 p.m.): Clause 17 assesses the suitability of an applicant. Part (b) states—

"whether the applicant has been convicted of an offence against this Act or a corresponding law;"

In relation to (b), what type of offence is the Government referring to? Subsection (c) refers to an indictable offence or a more serious offence that has been decided by a judge and jury, yet at the top of the clause it says that the authority only "must consider". I would have thought that an indictable offence would have wiped the person out altogether. I seek the Minister's comments on (b) and (c). Also, section (3), which is over the page, states—

"The Authority must not decide that an applicant for a licence is not a suitable person to operate a licensed brothel because the applicant has worked as a prostitute."

This allows an ex-prostitute, whether they have worked legally or illegally, to be considered as an applicant to be, in this case, the licensee of a brothel. I think there would be an enormous amount of concern about that, particularly if they have worked as an illegal prostitute.

Mr BARTON: Again, we have made it very clear that this is the toughest regime for licensing that will exist in Australia. In Canberra at the moment there is a registration model by which a person simply turns up, fills in the form, pays the \$200 and they are a brothel owner. There are no probity checks, no nothing. Clause 17, particularly 17(b), relates to any offence against the prostitution laws. It could be a straightforward, very simple offence such as working as a prostitute. It could well be, if it is an offence against this Act or an offence against a corresponding Act interstate, a very serious offence in the ball game for which there are jail terms or very severe penalties of \$10,000 or \$15,000 for operating illegal brothels.

Clearly, we do not want the people who have demonstrated in the past that they are prepared to break the existing laws, particularly very significant laws, being licensed as owners or licensed as managers. Alternatively, that allows the Prostitution Licensing Authority to make value judgments about the nature of the offence. This is also one of the areas where I suppose we cannot win with this Bill. If we are talking about people who have worked in the industry or who have had a history in the

industry, they are the very people who are still out there saying, "How are we going to get people with experience in the industry if we are going to rub out the people who have some convictions for having worked in the industry?"

We have said in effect that, if they have serious offences in the industry, they will not get into the industry. They are not suitable. We do not want them, but we should not be saying to people that they cannot be licensed in the industry simply because they have worked as a prostitute in the industry before. Otherwise, we will not end up with a legal industry. It will all be driven underground, and that is not in the interests of the State, either. It is a question of finding the appropriate balance. It is also a question of finding the right people to put on the Prostitution Licensing Authority to make the correct value judgments on what offences are relevant to the application.

Mr FELDMAN: I have a few questions in relation to this clause, particularly (c), relating to indictable offences. As we all know, a person can be charged with an indictable offence such as bodily harm and aggravated assault. They can plead to those offences in a Magistrates Court where it is deemed then to be a simple offence and is no longer an indictable offence. There are also instances where, for example, that conviction is not recorded under section 679 of the Criminal Code. So, even though they have been convicted of an indictable offence, it is not recorded. Even though an offence has been committed, such as assault occasioning bodily harm and aggravated assault—and aggravated assault can be aggravated assault of a female—is it to be taken into account, especially where the offence could be somewhat hidden? If these offences have been charged as indictable offences but have been recorded as simple offences because of a plea of guilty, will they be taken into account?

Mr BARTON: The short answer is that they can be taken into account. I refer the member to page 106, Schedule 4, which sets out the definition of "conviction". They can be taken into account. In fact, under this Bill people do not necessarily get the protection of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, either. The definition of "conviction" includes a finding of guilt or the acceptance of a plea of guilty by a court, whether or not a conviction is recorded. We think we have provided for the maximum protections to take into account the matters raised by the member for Caboolture.

Clause 17, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18, as read, agreed to.

Clause 19—

Mr HORAN (3.41 p.m.): Clause 19 refers to the Integrated Planning Act and the authorisation of the holder of a licence to operate a brothel only at the premises stated in the licence. I know that later we will come to matters to do with local governments and councils. As we are talking about the Integrated Planning Act, I raise this issue now. A lot of councils would like to veto this proposal, regardless of this legislation.

Basically, councils that have a population of 25,000 or more—there are at least 23 of those in Queensland—will have to accept a brothel in their city, whether they want it or not, if the Prostitution Licensing Authority approves a brothel application. The only councils that have a form of veto are those that have a population of under 25,000. Members of a number of councils in cities such as Toowoomba, Ipswich, Logan, Redcliffe and Gold Coast have indicated that they do not want to see brothels in their cities. I think this is just a tragedy for those places that do not want a brothel in their cities. They will have a brothel forced upon them regardless.

Mr BARTON: Let us put this into context. I know there were some interjections back and forth across the Chamber yesterday. The member mentions Logan City Council. I know it well; half of my electorate is in it. A couple of councillors are deciding, against the wishes of the majority of their council, that they do not want this no matter what. I think we have to be clear that there will always be some people—I respect their right to take this view and to take the high moral ground, for all the correct reasons—who say, "We do not want that activity in our city. We are going to go out there and fight, bite, scratch and do our best to stop it."

We had a good look at the experience interstate and we found that it is the same in that, where there is in every other circumstance an appropriate location for a brothel to be introduced, some people will be very firm in their view and in some cases will in effect run interference to such an extent that they will stop what in every other way is a fair application. What tends to happen is that applications get tied up in land courts for years. It costs hundreds of thousands of dollars—sometimes millions—to get a resolution. That is not in ratepayers' interests and it is not in the interests of an operator who in every other way is going to do the correct thing.

I do not seek to be an expert on the Integrated Planning Act. The current Temporary Chairman knows that he and I ran into it when I was the Environment Minister and we were looking at coastal protection and management legislation. The IPA in effect does give people in various zoning areas absolute rights for development. Even if it is another type of activity, it is not a question of councils having an absolute right to make their own individual decision. In fact, in developing this Bill we have had to restrict the free operation of the Integrated Planning Act in some way. We have done that with the relevant Minister and his department.

In respect of the larger local authorities we are saying that, providing people are meeting the requirements of this Bill in every other way, applicants do have an as of right capacity to expect to be able to put their operation in place. If we are talking of planning decisions, providing applicants are staying away from residential areas and providing they are meeting the requirements of distance from churches, hospitals, schools and other locations for children they should have a right to be able to proceed. That is why we also have that cut-off point for cities with a population of over 25,000.

I am pleased to see that the member does accept my earlier explanation. Towns or cities with fewer than 25,000 people do have an absolute right to say that they do not want that operation in their city or town. We thought that was a fair compromise. Otherwise, the only alternative would have been to put in a planning regime that was going to end up costing people hundreds of thousands of dollars before they would get through the various appeals and the various court mechanisms. We did not think that was an appropriate way to go, either.

Clause 19, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 20 to 24, as read, agreed to.

Clause 25—

Mr HORAN (3.47 p.m.): This clause deals with automatic cancellation of a licence. We looked at disqualifying offences in relation to Schedules 1 and 2. This clause also refers to an offence against the Criminal Code—chapter 22A, other than section 229M. As I understand it, they are prostitution offences within the Criminal Code. The detail I wanted in relation to this clause I received earlier. Basically, the licence is cancelled by reasons of Schedule 1 or 2 or these particular offences. There is still the situation that in relation to those offences that are not covered in Schedules 1 and 2—I mentioned some

examples such as break and enter, fraud and so forth—a decision by the Prostitution Licensing Authority is relied upon. There is still the chance for that sort of person to get a licence. I have made that point.

Clause 25, as read, agreed to.

Clause 26, as read, agreed to.

Clause 27—

Mr HORAN (3.49 p.m.): Clause 27 deals with the grounds for disciplinary action against a licensee. One of those is if a person who has an interest in the licensee's brothel has been charged with or convicted of an offence in Queensland or elsewhere for which the penalty may be a term of imprisonment. I would have thought that if a person had been imprisoned, he or she would not be a fit and proper person, but in this case the Bill refers only to disciplinary action.

Mr Barton: Which could involve cancellation of the licence.

Mr HORAN: It could, but I think it is a bit weak.

Subclause (d) states—

"... the licensed brothel is or has been managed in a way that makes it desirable that action should be taken against the licensee."

Can the Minister provide examples of the type of mismanagement that would bring about that discipline?

Mr BARTON: I will do my best. I will discuss the philosophy behind that provision. Some people manage to stay within the rules but stretch the outer edge of the envelope continuously. They can never be pinned down. Whether it be on Rugby Union fields, Rugby League fields or in sailboat racing, one will always find people who cannot be nailed cold, even though they are rorting the rules continuously. They are stretching the outer edge of the envelope. For example, every time an inspection is done, a minor misdemeanour may be detected. They may be only minor misdemeanours, but they are continuous minor misdemeanours. They may not be hanging offences. On the cold hard facts, the offence may not warrant a licence cancellation, but the authority may know they are doing it. This is another reason why, apart from the initial licensing application, the authority will be exempt from FOI. There will be circumstances in which the licensing authority and the police who are doing the inspections will know that a particular operator is always doing the wrong thing, for example, running additional prostitutes out the back door while the police

are walking in the front door. The inspectors can never find any evidence that the operators are providing condoms or tracking down and managing in a proper way the health checks for the staff. We want the capacity—particularly under 27(d)—to discipline someone because we know that they are running the place in an undesirable way rather than having them cold on a particular offence. It is all about keeping this industry clean—legally and health wise.

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM: Perhaps this is an unnecessary simplification. It does impinge on clause 29. A place in Spring Hill was named in this Chamber in relation to alcohol licensing. The operators of that venue are always in breach of the licensing provisions. They have liquor on the premises, and they do not have a liquor licence. In circumstances such as that, where the operators are constantly in breach of the licensing provisions, can that in short measure result in the cancellation of the licence? Those people indicate by that behaviour that they are unsuitable custodians of a licence. Will that as a matter of course result in a cancellation?

Mr BARTON: Our intention is to give the Prostitution Licensing Authority the capacity to rub those people out. I know the incidents in Spring Hill that the member refers to. My recollection is that my colleague Bob Gibbs, the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing, who has responsibility for liquor licensing, has made or is introducing some changes to rub that particular gentleman out. He is also a gentleman who has a long track record and history of being involved in prostitution in this State. He is the sort of person we would address under some provisions that, from a straight civil liberties perspective, might be considered to be a little bit unfair or a little too loose in relation to applicants not being fit and proper people and under clause 27(d), which deals with the facilities not being managed in a way that makes it desirable for them to continue. We are absolutely adamant that we do not want those types of people running prostitution in this State any more than we want them holding a liquor licence in this State. Sometimes we have to be a little more open if we are going to jam those people. They always seem to be the sort of people who have the hundreds of thousands of dollars needed to tie a matter up in the courts for years until they get off on a legal technicality. We have written this Bill in this manner so that we can nail those people cold.

Clause 27, as read, agreed to.

Clause 28, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 29 and 30—

Mr HORAN (3.55 p.m.): Clause 29 sets out the disciplinary powers of the authority. Clause 30 discusses disciplinary powers limited for certain licensees. Clause 30(1) states—

"The only action the Authority may take solely on the ground that a licensee has been charged with an offence is to suspend the licensee's licence."

It appears that a person or organisation with an interest can suffer a lesser disciplinary action under clause 29—for example, a reprimand, fine or additional conditions—than under clause 30. I would like the Minister to explain clauses 29 and 30 and what they are endeavouring to achieve.

Mr BARTON: On face value it does appear to be a lesser action. In effect, clause 30(1) allows the Prostitution Licensing Authority to suspend an operation until the charge is determined. In the case of an operator who is breaking the rules seriously, a charge may take some time to be determined. If it is a pretty heavy sort of charge, the operator will no doubt fight. Under clause 30(1) the authority has the capacity to suspend them in the interim. The authority can suspend them and say, "We are charging you with the serious offence of being in breach of your licence provisions. Until that charge is determined, your doors are shut. We are suspending your licence until such time as we go through the full processes of the procedure." Otherwise, some of the sleazebags will still be open for a year or two while they spend a couple of hundred thousand dollars to keep their doors open.

Clauses 29 and 30, as read agreed to.

Clauses 31 to 40, as read, agreed to.

Clause 41—

Mr HORAN (3.58 p.m.): I am interested in clause 41(1)(c). This clause deals with certificates for managers. Under clause 41(1)(c) a manager could obtain a certificate to manage more than one brothel; is that correct?

Mr BARTON: Initially, we were not intending to go down that road; we were going to tie individual managers or staff to an individual location in a similar way to the provisions in respect of owners. But we do accept that there may be circumstances where people will want to move from one brothel to another, and they should not be restricted from doing so. For example, a manager may be at one brothel for a couple of days a week and at another one for several days a week. That gives the staff some flexibility to move

between locations. Our observation interstate was that that was very much a feature of brothels. They tend to be like gipsies and move around a bit.

Mr HORAN: I was going to raise this issue also in relation to clause 44. My point was that under clause 44 the licensee or the manager has to be present at a brothel at any time. That is logical. However, in spite of the explanation that the Minister gave, managers have the potential to manage a string of brothels. As the Minister said, they might be doing two days a week in one and two days a week in another. This creates some weakness into the system.

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM: If a person can manage one, two, three or, as the previous speaker said, a string of brothels, will that not compromise the ability of the authority and whoever else will be charged with the responsibility of monitoring these establishments, to conduct covert operations? If a person is moving from establishment to establishment, that must enhance that individual's ability to act illegally. They can justify shifting from one brothel to another after a couple of days, but they could be conducting illegal transactions. It would be much more difficult to monitor those people under these conditions than if they were locked into the one facility. How will the Minister overcome that potential?

Mr BARTON: I dare say that in a perfect world it would be a lot easier to manage and monitor them if they were located at only one brothel. However, we also had to face reality. If one operation has one registered manager or several managers working several shifts and if someone simply goes home crook, should we make that operation shut down because someone is too sick to come to work for the night or the week?

I am sure the honourable member would say that we should shut them down, but that is probably not fair on the operations or other employees. Although this system is not as tight as one that has individual employees tied to individual brothels, we felt there was a need to accommodate circumstances where people were filling in for others. I do not anticipate that people would be working across a whole string of brothels, but I could certainly see circumstances where people might, on a regular basis, be working in two brothels, depending on their operating times. Again, people do not tend to work full time in this business. Prostitutes in particular will tend to do a couple of days here and there. Our observation was that the managers are the

same. In the event of the death of an owner, there is also a clause that provides for a licensed manager to take on that responsibility so that the location can be kept open until the ownership details are worked out. We anticipate that this will be monitored very closely by the Prostitution Licensing Authority. I would think that, if they saw someone literally operating across a string of brothels, they would be having a close look at those individuals, as opposed to situations where people might be working across only several brothels.

Mr FELDMAN: What would happen if the manager of a brothel that was closed down due to the management practices of the manager were also working in a couple of other brothels? How would we address a situation where a manager was managing a brothel badly and was under suspicion in relation to that operation and yet was also managing a couple of other brothels?

Mr BARTON: One would anticipate that, if someone has been involved in an operation that has been suspended or closed, the manager's licence would also be suspended or cancelled, if they have been involved in any wrongdoing. However, if an individual licensed manager has not been involved in any wrongdoing but the owner had been and there was no proof against the manager, and if the Prostitution Licensing Authority was confident that the licence of that individual should not be suspended, the manager may be able to move to another location. But if there was any suspicion about them at all, particularly if the point is reached where a brothel is closed for wrongdoing and a licence suspended, I would think it would be pretty hard for the managers in that location to escape having their licences suspended as well.

Clause 41, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 42 to 58, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 59 and 60—

Mr HORAN (4.06 p.m.): Proposed section 59(2)(a) states—

"... the police officer must be specifically authorised in writing for the particular entry."

Is the rank of the officer who can give authorisations stipulated? An inspector can go in, but another police officer who is not of the rank of inspector has to have specific authorisation in writing. Is there any indication of the level of rank at which authorisation can be given? I missed the Minister's explanation in his summing-up in respect of my comments about what would happen if there were an

assault, a fire or some other emergency at a brothel. I was speaking to one of the Minister's staff in relation to an amendment.

Mr Barton: All right.

Mr HORAN: I turn to clause 60. There is stringent regulation of what police officers entering a premises can do. There is a provision that some form of record has to be kept. No doubt Prostitution Licensing Authority employees will go to brothels to fulfil their responsibilities, and perhaps also local government inspectors. There are stringent regulations on police, but the same regulations do not apply to PLA employees and local government or workplace health and safety inspectors.

Mr BARTON: I will cover the easy points first. In respect of clause 59, the entry must be made by a person either at the rank of inspector or above. If they are at a lower rank, they have to be authorised by somebody at the rank of inspector.

Mr Horan: It doesn't say that.

Mr BARTON: Clause 59(1) addresses that point, it states—

"A police officer of at least the rank of inspector, or a police officer authorised by a police officer of at least the rank of inspector, may at any time when premises used as a licensed brothel are open for business enter the premises."

Mr Horan: That is fine.

Mr BARTON: Although there are hundreds of police inspectors around Queensland, in some locations an inspector might not be readily available and there could be a need for the Prostitution Licensing Authority to respond to a complaint or conduct an inspection. We had to acknowledge the realities of where our police inspectors are located around Queensland in allowing a person of lower rank authorised by an inspector to go in.

When we start to work our way down the list, we then reach senior sergeants. Senior sergeants are few and far between in some locations, too. Unless it is a fairly large police station that is run by a senior sergeant, senior sergeants do tend to be a bit like RSMs or CSMs in the Army.

Mr Horan: There should be one in a town of 25,000.

Mr BARTON: There should be, but they might not necessarily be on shift at that point in time or immediately be available. We did not try to reach the point of saying that we would delineate that. It may well be that a senior

constable is the most senior officer available in a particular station. We did make it very clear that an inspector can have a look, but if someone of lesser rank is going to go in then they have to have written authority by an inspector.

Local government inspectors have their own powers from within their own legislation if they are chasing breaches of local authority laws or regulations. The Prostitution Licensing Authority will be overseeing the whole issue of licensed brothels. I know where the member is coming from, but it does appear that we are being a little tougher on the police. There is a register whereby they have to report back to the Prostitution Licensing Authority, and it is the governing body reporting directly to that board.

I am very open about saying that we have the best Police Service in this country bar none, but we do not want to leave our police officers in this State open to allegations that they are willy-nilly running in and out of brothels without due cause. The Prostitution Licensing Authority staff typically will not be going in and out of the brothels on a regular basis. Inspections will be done by members of the Police Service on their behalf, and they will be overseeing the reports that come back from the Police Service. So it is not so much a question of trying to keep a close eye on the police officers involved to make sure that everything is seen to be squeaky and aboveboard, because we do not want unfair allegations being made against police officers—which it would be pretty easy for some brothel keepers to do, if they have a police officer whom they think is being too firm with them and making them toe the rules all the time.

Police officers do have powers under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act basically to enter any location if they believe that there is a criminal offence taking place. So if they are going into a brothel for inspection purposes on behalf of the Prostitution Licensing Authority, they do need that authorisation. If they get a phone call to say that someone is being assaulted in a brothel, they can march straight through the front door, the same as they can with any other location in Queensland under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act—whether it is an assault, a theft, a rape, a fire or any other form of activity. There are no restrictions on brothels—in terms of the normal day-to-day activities of police—that are different from those in relation to any other location, whether it be a picture theatre, the parliamentary dining room or a fish and chip shop. If the police receive a report

that there is a problem, they have every right, under their overriding legislation, to go in.

Mr FELDMAN: The Minister is talking about things that are unfair in relation to placing police at risk. I am talking about risk assessment. In relation to the police who are authorised to go in there, will there be a forms package available on the QPS system that the inspector has to comply with and actually sign? I notice that the police have to produce something to the licensee—the brothel owner. I imagine that would not be just a scrap of paper with the inspector's signature on it. I imagine that it has to be some sort of formalised document that will be readily recognised, either under this Act or under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act, and which will be available maybe for court production or something like that at a later date—if a matter progresses that far—so that the police themselves feel protected to the extent that they can say, "Yes, I have received this authorisation. It is fair and aboveboard, and it is something that I can produce and I have confidence in." Will there be register entries and those sorts of things that actually protect the policeman's backside?

I think I understand where the Minister is coming from, but it is the police who are actually being sent out there who will be the targets of this and who may be the targets of a CJC investigation or whatever. And if their i's are not dotted and their t's are not crossed, it is the man on the street at the grassroots level who is going to have his backside in the sling. I just want to make sure that they are going to be protected and covered, especially if they are going into these premises and could be subject to all sorts of allegations. There could be a number of unsavoury characters in there, and those are the people we are trying to protect them from. I would like to hear the Minister's comments on that.

Mr BARTON: Clause 61 on the following page states—

"As soon as practicable after a police officer enters a licensed brothel, the police officer, or the police officer who authorised the entry, must give the Authority any particulars in relation to the entry that are prescribed under a regulation."

Typically, when drafting legislation, we get the Bill to the point of being an Act, and then the regulations are drafted. I am not able to give the member the definitive method under which that will take place. However, it is very clear from clause 61 that we intend to have regulations to cover those circumstances, so that there is a well-known format under which it

would work and a format that goes to the Prostitution Licensing Authority so that we cover the backsides of those police officers who are asked to go into brothels as part of their day-to-day work or at the request of the authority.

I keep saying it, but it is a reality. This is a tougher model than those in the other States. When we were looking at the interstate regimes that were in place late last year, we found that police had very few rights to enter brothels. We were adamant that we were going to have the direct involvement of the Police Service but in a controlled way and in a way that was covered by regulation. Systems will be put in place at both the Prostitution Licensing Authority and the Police Service to cover those circumstances by the time we get to July and put the legislation formally into place.

Clauses 59 and 60, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 61 to 63, as read, agreed to.

Clause 64—

Mr HORAN (4.17 p.m.): This clause refers to cities of less than 25,000 people. Proposed subsection (c)(ii) refers to "if ... the Minister has agreed that the applications should be refused." What if the Minister has not agreed? Because that is possible. In his reply, I think the Minister said something to the effect that if the local government in the area has said "no" then he would not necessarily override that. But the way this reads, it does allow the Minister to disagree. The clause states that the assessment manager must refuse if the local government within the area has refused it and the Minister has agreed that it be refused. So there are two conditions. In relation to that second condition, the Minister of the day could say that he does not agree.

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM: I want to deal with another part of this clause that talks about the 200 metres. Originally, when this was first discussed, prostitution was going to be placed into light industrial areas. But that is not the qualification here. It just says that the land cannot be within 200 metres of a residential building, a place of worship—I tell you what, I would not like my church to be within 200 metres of a brothel—a hospital, a school, a kindergarten or any other facility or place regularly frequented by children for recreational or cultural activities.

Two hundred metres is not far. If a brothel is located in a flat area where houses are set back off the road a little, it will be clearly visible at property boundaries. So families will be in sight of a brothel. It has been said that

brothels are not going to be able to advertise. It has now been said that their advertising will be discreet. Apparently, brothels are going to be allowed to have a sign. All of these things compound the situation in which a brothel will compromise the quality of life in an urban area. I am sorry, but a brothel being within 200 metres of a residential building is in close proximity.

I refer to a newly developing area. It might not be zoned residential; it might be located outside the residential area. A brothel located within 200 metres of houses in such an area would be clearly visible, because the trees have been knocked down and, apart from a kindergarten being built, it is a lunar landscape. So parents are going to have to say to their children, "You can't play in the front yard", particularly if the owner of the brothel is at times indiscreet or if the people who are working in the brothel are indiscreet and come outside.

I understand that the Minister is trying to get the brothels away from residences. However, 200 metres is not away from residences; it is clearly within their visibility. I wonder at what point in time, after what level of concern and number of complaints from the community the Minister will review the 200-metre limit. I do not believe that that limit is going to isolate brothels at all. I think that that limit will invite brothels into suburbia, particularly in developing suburban areas. I seek the Minister's comment as to his willingness to review this limit before the three years and the CJC review, for the benefit of the community in particular.

Mr FELDMAN: My comments will be similar to those of the member for Gladstone. We all have good eyesight. We all now how prostitutes used to operate down at the golden triangle on the Valley corner. They used to parade down to buy their cup of coffee, or whatever it was, dressed most immodestly but still in such a fashion that they could actually walk the street and not be arrested. Still, they walked the street in a manner that certainly was enticing to passers-by with good eyesight. As the member for Gladstone said, what is stopping these people walking from wherever they have set up their business? It could be located near a football field, a cricket field, or a church, most certainly 200 metres away but in full view of children or parents going about their recreational, sporting or religious activities. The prostitutes could be walking down to get a cup of coffee, or whatever, but still parading themselves and advertising that a brothel is located in the area. I just wanted to raise the same matter that was raised by the member

for Gladstone. I feel that 200 metres is not a sufficient distance in those localities.

Mr BARTON: I will try to cover the contributions sequentially. The member for Caboolture referred to clause 64(1)(c)(i) and (ii). My understanding of that provision is that it is not a question of the Minister having a right of veto. If the local authority says, "We do not want a brothel on our turf", then the Minister has no alternative but to agree. The people who have been involved in the drafting of the legislation assure me that that is what that clause means. That was certainly my instruction as to what I wanted in this Bill: that those local authorities with fewer than 25,000 people have an absolute right of veto. It is not a question of whether it is me or any other subsequent Minister having a right to override that. I give the member the assurance that that is very clearly the intention.

With regard to the 200 metres provision, which is contained in clause 64(1)(a), we need to recognise that the 200 metres is not intended to apply anywhere that is residential. The 200 metres limit applies to commercial and industrial areas, not a typical residential area.

We had a very good look at this provision. In fact, when I think back, my mind was probably made up on this matter after having a discussion with a group of people in Gladstone at the Community Cabinet meeting. We had had similar questions put to us when the Cabinet document was made public in June in terms of our overall plan for a final round of consultation. A number of groups said to us that they did not think that 100 metres was far enough and that they would like us to consider extending that limit. I recall that the most forceful arguments that I heard personally were from a group of about a dozen people who had a long discussion with me at the Community Cabinet meeting in Gladstone.

In Victoria, the limit is 100 metres. In fact, I think the Victorian legislation stipulates 50 metres in CBD areas, which are commercial areas. So once the overall plans were made public in late June, following very firm points of view being put to us by a large number of people around the State, we responded to that request for change. As I say, the limit is not intended to apply in residential areas; it is intended to apply in commercial and industrial areas to make sure that they are not close to schools, hospitals or churches

The Victorian experience is that the 100 metres limit is adequate and that it works. In relation to CBD areas in Victoria, the limit is 50 metres. We have to find a workable

compromise, because in terms of our provincial cities or Brisbane's CBD, there are old churches or hospitals in those areas. Our assessment was that, if we went beyond that 200 metres limit, we would be ruling brothels out of every CBD area in every provincial city and CBD Brisbane. So we felt that if we doubled the distance and made it 200 metres, that was a compromise. However, I want to make the point that that limit does not allow brothels to be located in residential areas.

In relation to advertising, we intend to put in place some very tough guidelines on the hoardings outside brothels. Our State is not going to become like Canberra, where brothels have neon signs that people can see from miles away. In fact, when I was in Melbourne late last year with the chief of the Vice Squad, he was trying to take me to what is the second biggest brothel in Melbourne in the CBD area. We drove past it three times before he was able to find it in order to show me where it was. The distinguishing features of brothels are usually either a neon light or brass name boards, similar to those found at solicitors' offices or business offices. Under this Bill, if prostitutes are outside a brothel, they can be charged with soliciting.

I appreciate that some people would like the distance to be more than 200 metres and, for their own reasons, some people would like it to be less. After a lot of soul-searching, we believed that 200 metres was a fair compromise.

Mr LAMING: I have consulted with my local authorities and I would like to ask some questions on their behalf in relation to this clause. If I may, I will put three of those questions together. They relate to clause 64(1)(a) and, particularly, to the definition of "primarily residential area". There will inevitably be arguments in the interpretation of what is primarily a residential area. Some places are commercial in nature, but high-rise units could be located there. Residential might not be the primary purpose of such an area, but we could end up with the situation in which an application is made for a brothel to be located in that area. I can see some problems arising.

The first question is: in the event of an appeal against the assessment manager's refusal in accordance with clause 64, will the Prostitution Licensing Authority or some other State Government agency meet the costs of the defence of the appeal? This is in anticipation of a number of appeals.

Secondly, clause 64(1)(b) relates to a place regularly frequented by children. It can be foreseen that arguments will be mounted

about what constitutes a place regularly frequented by children for recreational activities. This could include the local street where they might use their skateboards, the local shop which might have slot machines, a local park and so on. I would like the Minister's comments on the interpretation of a place "regularly frequented by children".

Thirdly, clause 64(1)(c) relates to towns with populations of less than 25,000. The Caloundra Shire encompasses basically the whole City of Caloundra, but it also includes small towns. Obviously, the council would like to know how the 25,000 rule will be applied when a local authority might be made up of contiguous small areas or a large city like Caloundra and places such as Maleny, Landsborough and Mooloolah, which are small communities. Are those small towns considered to be a part of Caloundra City, which obviously has a population greater than 25,000? I know that those are curly questions, but they are the sort of questions that local authorities throughout Queensland want addressed.

Mr TURNER: In 1958 I was employed by Burns Philp & Co., in Mary Street. The building extended through to Margaret Street and there was a brothel in Margaret Street that would not have been more than 150 metres from the back door of Burns Philp & Co. I started work there when I was 13. The usual lunch time practice was to go down to Margaret Street and watch what was happening outside the brothel. I can tell members that the streets do get cluttered. Boys will be boys, and we watched the girls arrive at work with their little poodles and everything else. We thought it was a great joke. Probably at any one time there would be up to 20 males standing outside the brothel, physically manipulating themselves before they went in. I observed that happening myself. Now that I am older, I do not think that that is so funny. We also used to go and watch the same thing happening outside a brothel in Albert Street. It happens at every brothel, I am sure, even at Kings Cross. Men do not just walk through the front door and disappear off the street. They stay outside until such time as they feel the urge to go in and do what they need to do.

Mr BARTON: I do not want to get involved in a game of hypotheticals for the rest of the day. I turn to the questions raised by the member for Mooloolah. It will be up to councils whether or not they wish to get involved in appeals under the IPA, just as happens now. I will not try to give gratuitous legal advice on how councils should conduct themselves with

regard to those applications. We have been through this at length. It is up to them. They get their own legal advice and they make their own decisions. For about the 55th time today, I make it very clear: in small communities with a population of less than 25,000 people, the councils have an absolute right of veto that the Minister cannot interfere with.

As to what happened in 1958, all I can say is that I was only nine years of age. This Bill introduces very tough guidelines. If people are acting offensively outside brothels, I expect the coppers to pick them up and charge them with indecent behaviour. If a prostitute is outside a brothel, she will be charged with soliciting under the other provisions of the Bill.

Mr HORAN: With all the other questions that the Minister was asked, he did not answer my question, which was the first one. I asked about the Minister agreeing to the application. I said that the assessment manager must refuse the application if two conditions apply: the local government for that area has required the application to be refused; and the Minister has agreed that it had to be refused. The Minister may not agree that it be refused.

Following on what from what the member for Mooloolah said, located close to the City of Caloundra are smaller townships and villages. The member for Mooloolah has raised a legitimate point. The Shire of Caloundra includes smaller townships like Maleny.

Mr BARTON: With due respect, I did answer the question of the member for Toowoomba South. I made it very clear that my advice is that the Minister does not have a right of veto over those provisions anyway. If the local authority decides that it is not on, it is not on. I do not want to go through it all again, because I am doing my best to finish this debate before 5 o'clock, although I am happy to come back to the debate tomorrow.

With regard to the question about Caloundra, we are playing hypotheticals again. If a local authority covers a township that has a population of less than 25,000 and it decides that it does not want a brothel in that township, that is it, full stop. They do not get one.

Mr LAMING: Minister, clause 64(1)(d) refers to brothels having not more than five rooms. Unless the applicants are stupid, they will not apply for something that indicates that more than five rooms are being used, but they may well increase the number of rooms after they have gained approval. Who will be responsible for policing this? Prosecution for non-compliance with planning approval would be a very unsatisfactory way of dealing with it in view of the difficulty of obtaining evidence,

as well as the protracted time that it may take to bring the matter to a hearing. That is a very pertinent question that I would like the Minister to address.

Mr BARTON: If the member reads the Bill, he will see that it refers to a maximum of five rooms. If operators go beyond that, they are in breach of the law. They can suffer very heavy fines and the loss of their licence. If they are silly enough to play games once they have been licensed, the law can be enforced by the Prostitution Licensing Authority and they can be inspected by the police. This is covered by a planning provision under the IPA. The council that they would be in breach of and even the local authority can carry out inspections if they find that an operator is effectively using more than five rooms for the purposes of prostitution. The operator would run the risk of the severest of fines and possibly the loss of the licence. I do not know what more we can do.

Clause 64, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 65 to 75, as read, agreed to.

Clause 76—

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (4.38 p.m.): This clause deals with the nuisances connected with prostitution. In the regulations or some other place, is there a measure of what constitutes the level of nuisance at which a licence could be cancelled? Again I give the example of the elderly lady who talked to me about this issue. She had lived in her home for many years when a prostitute moved in nearby. She was too frightened to report that. I was speaking with Louisa Pink about it and she said that the lady should report it. However, as an older lady, I do not think that she realised she had that option, so she put up with the nonsense for a long time. She also lived in substantial fear for a long time, undeservedly.

I wondered how this test of unreasonable annoyance will be applied and whether there will be a point at which a licensee who fails to control noise or any other nuisance from their premises could have their licence revoked or cancelled. As I said, what is unreasonable to me might not be unreasonable to someone else. Unreasonable noise to me is when my kids have their stereo up on about 6. It is not unreasonable for them; they think that it is pretty okay. In fact, they think it is quite tame. It is a subjective test and I just wonder how that test will be applied. If a person complains that the premises is making an unreasonable nuisance and that is not followed through and no action is taken, where can those people go for some remedy?

Mr BARTON: I take the honourable member's point that it can be a subjective test. We have tried to be as clear as we could in terms of putting into the Bill the types of circumstances that we consider are an unreasonable nuisance. It is always difficult trying to find the right words to cover something like that. I know from my period as Environment Minister that noise nuisance is one of the greatest problems with which we have to try to come to grips. That has been one of the issues that Rod Welford, the current Minister for Environment, has had to deal with in the past couple of weeks. He and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane have made some announcements in regard to that.

But how do we work out how we do anything about them if it continues? Very clearly, if they are being a real nuisance and it continues, they would potentially fall under that clause that I talked about earlier—the one that is almost all encompassing—section 27(d). So if someone is breaching the outer limits of the envelope all the time, clearly the Prostitution Licensing Authority would have the potential to consider whether they should continue to hold a licence.

Mr FELDMAN: I, too, was wondering about that clause. I know that, if we are setting up brothels in commercial and light industrial areas, there are going to be those people who do hang around them. In relation to that, we are getting to a situation—it is probably like down at the Valley at the moment where this industry is operating—where we are actually finding the evidence of those industries lying around the vicinity of those places, such as syringes being dropped and those sorts of things. Particularly in relation to drug use—and we know that this type of activity does revolve around drug use from time to time—is the finding of syringes in and around the commercial area and other business premises going to be cause for a nuisance? I believe it to be a nuisance because it is going to affect the health and the welfare of workers in other industries around that commercial area. No other business likes to be finding syringes and that type of stuff on their doorstep. Even though it might not be caused by people directly related to the activity inside the brothel, it is certainly going to be related to clients attending there. Is that type of activity going to be enough to be called a nuisance?

Mr BARTON: I am not going to set myself up as judge and jury or talk about every potential hypothetical situation. I think we are getting to the ridiculous stage at this time of day. Frankly, if people are dropping syringes, I do not know how we could prove that that is

directly tied to the brothel. If someone can, obviously that would be something that is part of the nuisance. As I have already said, we are writing these provisions to make them as broad as possible and tie it back to clause 27(d), which gives the Prostitution Licensing Authority the opportunity to suspend licences of people who keep breaking the rules and stretching the outer envelope. I really do not want to be sitting here trying to cover every "what if". I think that defeats the purpose.

Clause 76, as read, agreed to.

Clause 77—

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (4.45 p.m.): I take notice that the Minister is conscious of the time and is getting a little bit frustrated. Prior to the introduction of this Bill, there were no legal brothels; there were single person operators and that was it. Therefore, the probability of prostitutes having to work under duress in the past was minimised. Once there is an establishment to bring people to, there is the potential that prostitutes could be there under duress. I read the words of the clause. I can understand that the wording in an ad can be monitored, that tangible evidence can be monitored, but how are we going to know, investigate and be alerted to the fact that a prostitute is there under duress?

Mr BARTON: In the same way as any other issue where people think they are under duress: they will have to make a complaint.

Clause 77, as read, agreed to.

Clause 78, as read, agreed to.

Clause 79—

Mr HORAN (4.46 p.m.): The Minister explained this clause in his reply. In other words, a houseboat could be used as a brothel, providing it is anchored or it is tied to a spot that meets the other requirements, that is, it is anchored off a commercial area in Breakfast Creek or something like that.

Clause 79, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 80 to 85, as read, agreed to.

Clause 86—

Mr HORAN (4.47 p.m.): Clause 86 relates to entry into brothels by a police officer or the authority. Will people within the authority actually be authorised to enter the brothels to undertake these particular tasks?

Mr BARTON: The police will be acting as the agents of the authority and they will be authorised to enter for those purposes.

Mr HORAN: But it says "or the authority".

Mr BARTON: I have given the answer.

Clause 86, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 87 and 88, as read, agreed to.

Clause 89—

Mr HORAN (4.48 p.m.): Clause 89 refers to an infective prostitute working in a brothel. It does not give any details. I presume that any health checks would have to be determined and set out in the regulations. I ask the Minister to confirm that. Secondly, subsection (2) says that it does not matter whether the prostitute works under a contract of service or a contract for service. Could the Minister explain what that means? Looking particularly at subsection (5), it would seem that there is no requirement for mandatory testing. One would have to assume that that, too, would be in the regulation. Again, I ask the Minister's confirmation of that.

Mr BARTON: That will be in a regulation. Again, we are talking about whether they are under a contract of service or a contract for service. Typically, one of the big challenges interstate where they have legal brothels is literally the employment conditions under which they work. We are trying to make it clear that some of the prostitutes interstate are considered to be self-employed workers under contract. In some cases, they are actually under a normal contract of employment. We are saying that owners of brothels are not going to escape their obligations by saying that they are individual contractors who do not have normal employment obligations like any other employer. Regardless of that, the owner of the brothel is required to make sure that those health standards are kept.

Mr FELDMAN: My question relating to this section revolves around the words "is infective". Some STDs have periods where they are not infective. Does this mean that, even though a person does have a disease, such as herpes, they are allowed to work at a brothel during a period when the actual disease is not supposed to be infective even though they have been diagnosed as having that disease?

Mr BARTON: If they cannot pass it on, there is not a problem.

Clause 89, as read, agreed to.

Clause 90, as read, agreed to.

Clause 91—

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (4.51 p.m.): I have some questions relating to a couple of these clauses. Clause 91 states—

"A prostitute must not, at a licensed brothel, provide prostitution involving sexual intercourse or oral sex unless a prophylactic is used."

In the material that I was able to research, in the majority of cases a condom would not be used either at the request of the client or without a request from the client because the prostitute was off his or her face and did not realise what they were doing. Neither are likely to make a complaint about non-use of prophylactics. How is this going to be policed? It is a fine statement; it is a safeguard. But how will it be policed?

Mr BARTON: Tempted as I am to have a copper stand at the end of every bed, that is not what is intended. There is a very tough penalty which ends up in the order of \$7,500 or 100 penalty units. It is intended to empower the prostitutes, not just the client. There will always be some clients who will come in and demand sex without a condom. It is written and couched in these terms not necessarily because we want to charge the prostitutes a \$7,500 penalty; it empowers the prostitute to say to the client who is insisting on sex without a condom, "Look, if I go along with this, even if you pay me extra money, not only are you facing a \$7,500 penalty but I am as the prostitute as well. If it's not on, it's not on."

I do not know that we can take that any further, short of trying to enforce it by having police officers walk in and out of rooms while sexual activity is taking place. That is not intended, but it is clearly intended to send the strongest possible message and to empower the prostitutes to be able to, in effect, say, "If it's not on, it's not on, because we are not going to run the risk of a \$7,500 penalty for you, even if you're silly enough to run that risk."

Clause 91, as read, agreed to.

Clause 92, as read, agreed to.

Clause 93—

Mr BARTON (4.54 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

"At page 55, after line 11—

insert—

'(2) A person must not publish an advertisement for prostitution that is not in the approved form.

Maximum penalty—40 penalty units.

'(3) A person must not publish any advertisement for prostitution through radio or television or by film or video recording.

Maximum penalty—40 penalty units.

'(4) In subsection (2)—

"approved form" means—

- (a) if the Authority has, for a particular advertisement, consented to a form—that form; or
- (b) otherwise—the approved form under section 139(2).¹

¹ Section 139 (Approval of forms)."

I will not read the amendment in totality, but I will speak briefly to it because I have four or five other amendments to follow. What we are attempting to do with this amendment is to make it very clear just what the parameters are for advertising prostitution services. In effect, we think that our drafting instructions as they appeared in the Bill presented to the Parliament three weeks ago might not have been tight enough. But it is now made very clear that any advertisement must be in the approved form. We are not going to have flamboyant ads. There will be an approved format in the regulations.

This will also make it very clear that they must not publish any advertisement for prostitution through radio, television, film or video recording. In effect, it would limit advertising to print media only, and even then only in an approved form. Advertisements must be approved by the Prostitution Licensing Authority. So it is a stiffening up of the provisions with regard to advertising prostitution services over and above what was in the original Bill. I commend that amendment to the Parliament.

Mr FELDMAN: In relation to the amendment, I notice that in advertisements in southern newspapers prostitutes advertise services. I cite the example of one advertisement which says "Has poodle, toes clipped". It does not say what transpires but leaves it up to the imagination. I do not think that sort of advertisement is precluded under the legislation as it is because it does not actually say what services are provided; it is left up to the imagination of those people who are going to ask for the services. That leads me to believe that that is the sort of advertisement we will be seeing in newspapers.

Mr BARTON: Talk about fertile imaginations! We have just moved an amendment to make it very clear that advertisements must be in the approved form. If people want to invent all sorts of innovative ways to try to subvert that, then they will run smack bang into the very heavy penalties that go with breaching the advertising standards that we have put into this Bill.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 93, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 94 to 99, as read, agreed to.

Clause 100—

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (4.57 p.m.): I have one question, but I think the Minister has answered it in great measure. The authority, the committee and the council are established under this Bill. I take it that their secretariat will be funded out of their income from licences, etc. Will it be the Police Service, Health and Family Services that will do the actual groundwork that the Bill calls for?

Mr BARTON: There will be various responsibilities across a number of departments. The Police Service will have responsibility. The Prostitution Licensing Authority itself will have some responsibilities and some costs. Health will certainly have some responsibilities and costs, as will individual local authorities. In fact, Tourism, Sport and Racing, particularly the Liquor Licensing Division, will have some costs also. We do have a management plan for those costs. There will certainly be some costs in bringing this about. Hopefully the fee structure that we will put in place will meet those costs so that it is self-funding, but only time will tell.

Clause 100, as read, agreed to.

Progress reported.

STATE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Dr WATSON (Moggill—LP) (Leader of the Liberal Party) (5 p.m.): I move—

"This House notes, that after 17 long months of the Beattie Labor Government, Queensland has—

- its first budget cash deficit in over 20 years;
- the most regressive business policies in the country;
- the second highest unemployment rate on mainland Australia;
- witnessed a sharp decrease in business investment;
- failed to attract investment for any major projects;
- experienced a job creation freeze; and
- suffered international embarrassment on at least three occasions with EXPO 2002, Technomart III and Baywatch."

Queensland is fast becoming an economic basket case. From talking to the business community around this city and around this State, we understand how tough a lot of businesses are doing it. But this State is

also doing it tough. For the first time in 22 years, this year Queensland will have a Budget cash deficit in the order of \$1.235 billion. This Government, with Mr Beattie as Premier, is squandering the solid base that has been built up in Queensland over decades. That base was established by 32 years of coalition Government, not completely dissipated by the Goss Government and reinforced by the Borbidge coalition Government. Now, for the first time in 22 years, we are facing a cash deficit on a GFS accrual basis.

This Premier is intent on pandering to once trendy minority interests rather than doing the thing that Governments in Queensland have been elected to do year after year, that is, look after the fundamental economic base of this State and make sure that jobs are created and investments are made in this State. Unless we get back to concentrating on those fundamentals, Queensland will continue to slide. I will talk about that in some detail in a little while.

One of the earliest warnings came from that Budget. If it was not obvious to people beforehand, it should have been obvious after the release of a press release by Standard and Poor's headed "Queensland Budget shows weakening finances". Despite the rhetoric of the Premier and despite the first gloss in most of the newspapers around the country, except perhaps for the Australian, it was the Standard and Poor's press release which demonstrated quite clearly the truth of the budget, that is, Queensland's Budget was showing signs of weakening. Those signs were also found in the Budget papers. There we saw that the general Government deficit was \$350m and that the public trading enterprise deficit was \$885m. We have questioned part of that time and time again at question time with respect to the dividends taken out of our public trading enterprises.

One of the things this Government was supposedly elected on was the mantra of "jobs, jobs, jobs". I can remember Mr Beattie saying that he and his Ministers were going to go to bed every night thinking of jobs, jobs, jobs and that they were going to wake up every morning thinking of jobs, jobs, jobs. That would be the only times they thought about it—only when they went to bed and when they woke up. Nobody knows what they were doing in between.

Under this Government, Queensland is heading in exactly the opposite direction. Across Australia unemployment is falling. In the last month it fell from 7.4% to 7.1% on a seasonally adjusted basis. Queensland, along

with the rest of Australia, is benefiting from the economic policies of the coalition Federal Government in bringing down unemployment. Despite that, unemployment in Queensland is tending to rise. Last month it rose to 8.7%. Most worrying is that that was not just an isolated rise; in August it had risen to 8.4% from 7.6%.

This is the kind of thing we have been pointing out for some time. While the Treasurer and the Premier refuse to tell us what Treasury is telling them about economic forecasts and about where unemployment is expected to go, time and time again independent economic analysts such as Chris Murphy from Econtech tell us that their modelling shows that unemployment is going to remain exceptionally high in Queensland.

The last Econtech study, released in August this year, predicts that unemployment in Queensland will remain above 8% all the way through to the end of 2001 and not fall below that until 2002. Econtech has some credibility. Its forecast for the third quarter of this year was 8.2% unemployment in Queensland. The ABS statistics show that the average over the quarter from July through to September is 8%. Econtech's forecast was pretty close to the mark. The year before, it forecast unemployment of 8.3%. That was precisely the figure reported in the Budget as the estimated actual unemployment for 1998-99.

Everyone, other than the Premier, the Treasurer and members of the Government, is saying that Labor's mantra of "jobs, jobs, jobs" is not being converted into reality. While they talk about jobs, the reality is that there is rising unemployment in this State. There are more people unemployed. At the moment there are about 150,000 Queenslanders out of work. Youth unemployment is still above 20%. Nothing this Government is doing has made one iota of an impact on that figure. The unemployment rate today, 17 months after the Beattie Government was elected, is precisely the same as it was when it took over, despite its members going to bed every night and waking up every morning thinking about jobs, jobs, jobs. It is no wonder.

Business in Queensland is starting to lose confidence in the policies being adopted by the Beattie Government. A few days ago the Premier talked about the Small Business Index. Its assessment of State Government policies shows that the percentage of businesses in Queensland that believe the policies being implemented by the Beattie Labor Government work against them is twice

that of businesses that believe the policies work for them. The table setting out attitudes towards the State Government shows that businesses believe this Government has a position with respect to business policy that is worse than at any time since May 1998. In other words, since May 1998 the business community's confidence in the Government of Queensland has fallen dramatically. During that period, the dominant Government in this State has been the Beattie Labor Government.

Ms Bligh: What do you mean "the dominant Government"—it is the only Government.

Mr Borbidge: Since the election was called.

Dr WATSON: Yes, since the election was called. In May 1998 the Borbidge Government was in power. The honourable member's Government has been in power only since June. During that period the confidence of the business community in the Government of Queensland has fallen. That is the problem. In addition, it is predicted to get worse. If we look at the Yellow Pages Small Business Index, we see that there is even less confidence. There is a perception that over the next 12 months the economy will go in the wrong direction. They do not have any confidence in the Government, because of the policies it is introducing. I am sure some of my colleagues will speak about that later. For example, I cite its policies on workers compensation, industrial relations and its imposition of higher payroll tax. Those policies are militating against economic development in this State.

Time expired.

Hon. R. E. BORBIDGE (Surfers Paradise—NPA) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.10 p.m.): In seconding the motion moved by the member for Moggill, I wish to detail to the House the jobs, jobs, jobs record of this Government. The reality is that the member for Brisbane Central is failing in his mission. He has become preoccupied with Labor's social agenda and he has taken his eyes off the ball. In respect of employment growth and generation, Queensland has gone from pacesetter to the middle of the pack.

Let us look at the record of the coalition in office. We created 87,000 jobs. Those are official figures from the ABS. In February 1996, when the coalition took over, there were 1,514,300 full-time jobs in Queensland. When the coalition left office, there were 1,601,300 full-time jobs. In 28 months under the coalition some 87,000 full-time jobs were created. During its term in office, on average the

coalition created 3,000 new jobs per month. What is the record of the jobs, jobs, jobs Premier? Labor has let that figure slip to 2,000. But worse still, this is against the national trend. Under Labor Queensland has failed to catch the wave. When the coalition left Government, employment growth was running at 4%. As at October this year, employment growth was wobbling, stumbling and staggering around—just like this Government—at less than 1.5%. During the term of the coalition Government, Queensland created almost 40% of Australia's new jobs—37.3%. Under Labor that figure has plummeted to only 16.3%. We have now reached a situation where, among the mainland States, only South Australia has a higher unemployment rate than Queensland's.

We have Government by "stuntsmanship". We continually see public relations charades from the Premier: "Beattie works through the weekend to make Expo work"—and we know what happened there; "Premier leaves immediately to meet Expo chiefs"; and perhaps the doozey of the whole lot, "Premier to be supersalesman for smart state and Technomart". The Beattie doctrine rules supreme: when something goes wrong, it is always someone else's fault. What did the Government say after it bungled the Baywatch negotiations and then suddenly realised that it might have to go back to those negotiations? The Chairman of the Queensland Events Corporation, Des Power, said, "No, we don't want them. We don't want their grubby program here, thanks." That was only topped off by Minister Gibbs, who said, "This is the worst stabbing group I have ever been involved with in my life. It's like lying down with a blistered dog in a gutter." That is the way this Government treats people when it does not get its own way. It is little wonder we lost Baywatch, if that was the attitude of the Government going into the supposedly rejuvenated and revitalised negotiations. No wonder Baywatch went to Hawaii.

The fact is that Queensland's unemployment rate is creeping back up for a number of reasons. We all know that there is a lead time for major private infrastructure projects of about two years. We know that the big projects which were under way during the Goss Government and which were negotiated and under way during the time of my Government have now come on stream.

Mr Elder: Not one.

Mr BORBIDGE: The dud without grunt opposite cannot deliver any major new infrastructure projects to the State of

Queensland despite a 60% increase in his budget. The Minister is the biggest political dud ever to set foot in this Parliament. The Premier continues with his jobs, jobs, jobs rhetoric. Where are the jobs?

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier) (5.16 p.m.): I move—

"Delete all words after ', that' and add the following words:

'After only 17 months of the Beattie Labor Government, we have delivered, by way of illustration only:

In my own portfolio:

We have created more than 40,000 jobs in our first year of Government.

Our September Budget was designed to create at least another 41,000 new jobs in this financial year.

A record Capital Works Program of \$5.2 billion.

Initiated a 10-year strategy to make Queensland the Smart State and a leading hub for bioindustry development in the Asia-Pacific region with \$270 million earmarked for biotechnology research facilities in the State.

We have engendered record levels of business confidence and last month the Yellow Pages small business index showed that a net 20 per cent of the State's small business proprietors reported increased sales revenues for the three months to the end of October—second only to the record established under my Government in January this year.

Given Government back to the people by holding 15 Community Cabinet meetings throughout Queensland every year where anyone can walk in off the street and raise issues with any of the 18 members of Cabinet.

State Development and Trade:

1. We have established a viable long-term timber hardwood industry through the South-East Queensland Forest Agreement which has been widely supported throughout the timber industry and in communities based on the timber industry.

Treasury:

1. Delivered a balanced budget with record \$5.2 billion Capital Works Program.
2. Announced reforms to compulsory third party insurance which will make the scheme fair and affordable.

3. Maintained Queensland's AAA credit rating.
4. Presided over 4.75 per cent economic growth—a full percentage point ahead of the rest of Australia.
5. Maintained low tax status.

In Communication, Information and Local Government and Planning:

1. We have developed and launched a 5 year Communication and Information Strategic Plan which will foster growth and development in our multi-billion dollar information technology and telecommunication industries, and deliver world standard services to the people of Queensland.
2. Established the regional communities program with quarterly ministerial regional community forums conducted in eight regions throughout Queensland.

In Tourism, Sport and Racing:

1. In July 1998 we secured Queensland to host the 2001 Goodwill Games which will create almost 2000 jobs, generate almost \$170 million in economic activity, and create over half-a-million extra visitor bed nights from tourists.
2. In September 1998, the department received a budget allocation of \$35 million over four years to build or upgrade multipurpose community sport and recreation centres throughout Queensland, delivering on a 1995 election commitment scrapped by the Borbidge Government.
3. In February this year Queensland Events poached Australia's biggest V8 motor racing event, the Sandown 500, from Victoria.
4. In August, the member for Bundamba and I announced Lang Park as the preferred site for a new Brisbane stadium development.
5. In November the TAB shares appeared on the Australian Stock Exchange raising \$304 million for taxpayers.

Employment Training and Industrial Relations.

1. Introduced the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative creating 24,000 apprenticeships,

traineeships and job placements over 4 years.

2. Introduced new industrial relations legislation to restore balance to the Queensland workplace giving workers and employers a template for a fair and equitable industrial relations system for the 21st century.
3. Announced a \$30.8 million rescue package for the TAFE network.

In Justice and The Arts:

1. We have given women a fair go in judicial appointments.
2. Boosted funds for victims of crime counselling and support by \$1 million.
3. Enhanced access to legal aid with a \$5 million funding boost.
4. Introduced a public art policy based on 2 per cent on costs of new Government buildings.

In Police:

1. We have continued to deliver record police numbers since coming to power. In 1998-99 there were 363 more police on our streets exceeding our target by 46 officers.
2. We have delivered 12 new Police Beats across Queensland—exceeding our election promise of 10 new Police Beats a year over three years.
3. Delivered 6 new Police Shopfronts.

In Corrective Services:

1. We have delivered \$1 million worth of equipment for prison officers.' "

Mr Speaker, I move that the rest of this amendment be included in the Hansard record so that the amendment is, in fact, on the record.

Leave granted.

2. Established the general manager's drugs task force to tackle the drugs problem in prisons.
3. Conducted a review of corrective services in Queensland.

In Families, Youth and Community Care:

1. We held the Forde inquiry into the abuse of children in institutions.
2. Introduced new child protection legislation.
3. Committed \$30 million to the provision of services to people with a disability.
4. Created the first ever disability services portfolio.

In Public Works and Housing:

1. We have been working closely with industry to ensure the building Capital Works Program runs as smoothly as possible.
2. We have defended the Government's maintenance and minor works arm, Q-Build, against groundless Opposition political attacks.
3. We have kept a commitment to use the public sector to provide employment and training opportunities for young Queenslanders.
4. The 1999 Budget earmarked \$55.8 million for refurbishment of existing dwellings—a rise of \$12 million on the previous year.

Transport and Main Roads:

1. We have launched the Brisbane to Rockhampton and Brisbane to Bundaberg tilt train services and signed a contract for construction of the Brisbane to Cairns diesel tilt train.
2. Secured funding and signed a contract for construction of the Port of Brisbane Motorway.

In Health:

1. We have continued the Statewide rebuilding program worth \$2.8 billion that was initiated by Labor in 1992 and peaked last year with spending of \$632 million.
2. We are creating a sustainable health system by delivering services such as positive parenting programs worth \$3 million a year.
3. Introducing school nurses at a rate of 25 a year.

In Primary Industries:

1. We have introduced landmark legislation for the sugar industry.
2. We have created a new world standard research agency to be known as the Agency for Food and Fibre Sciences.
3. Cabinet has endorsed a fisheries management plan for Queensland east coast trawl fishery.

In Mines and Energy:

1. We have restructured the electricity industry to provide better service in line with community expectations and ensure greater reliability of the State's electricity system.
2. Introduced new legislation designed to prevent accidents and safeguard the health of the thousands of Queenslanders working in the mining industry.
3. We have given the go-ahead for Tarong Energy to expand its power station and pursue the development of new gas-fired generation at Wivenhoe.

4. Established an Office of Sustainable Energy to encourage the development of energy efficient technologies and the use of energy sources such as gas and renewables to reduce greenhouse emissions.

Emergency Services:

1. We have introduced fully funded free ambulance services for pensioners, seniors card holders and their dependants from January 1 this year delivering on an election commitment which affects up to 850,000 Queenslanders.
2. Implemented the Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority rescue package saving the QFRA from bankruptcy and at the same time boosting the safety of communities across the State.
3. We established a State Mitigation Committee to prioritise natural disaster mitigation need across the State.
4. Allocated record funding to Emergency Services. More than \$100 million extra in two budgets to boost service delivery to communities across the State.

In Environment, Heritage and Natural Resources:

1. Established the Environmental Protection Agency.
2. Produced the Queensland State of the Environment report, the first comprehensive assessment ever undertaken of the condition of our natural and cultural environment on a Statewide scale.
3. Streamlined the water allocation and management plan (WAMP) process to enable key decisions affecting catchments to be made sooner and provide more certainty to communities throughout Queensland.

In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, Women's Policy and Fair Trading:

1. We have tabled a report into domestic violence in indigenous communities and will provide a response early next year.
2. We have allocated \$25.4 million over three years to compensate former Government employees who suffered wage discrimination as a result of their race, between 1975 and 1986.
3. We have passed legislation making retirement villages fairer for residents and more attractive to investors and set up a new Retirement Villages Tribunal for settling disputes.

In Education:

1. We have kept our promises to increase spending on cooler schools.
2. Special education, behaviour management and school maintenance.

3. Abolished the unfair Leading Schools program.
4. Consulted with education and related communities in regard to Queensland's State Education—2010.

Mr BEATTIE: In this amendment, I have shown that this is a can-do Government which is delivering, and we are going to deliver, because this Government is going to give Queenslanders the sort of future that they deserve. And what do we get from the Opposition? We get the wreckers who want to destroy Queensland's future. Let me make it absolutely clear: we will deliver, they will whinge, and we will still be in Government.

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (5.21 p.m.): It is my pleasure to second the amendment and endeavour to value add.

Mr Beattie: As you do.

Mr ELDER: As I always do. The first thing that we provided to Queensland, upon our election, was confidence. We provided Queenslanders with confidence. They had two years of misery under the Borbidge Government. The Borbidge Government was known far and wide within the business community and broader community for not delivering for Queensland.

Mr Mickel: What about the GST?

Mr ELDER: I will come to the GST. The Borbidge Government did not deliver. Its first big impact was to freeze every project and to do some navel gazing for a year before it started spending money. It crippled the Queensland economy. What Queenslanders got from the election of a Labor Government was confidence—confidence that we would grow the economy; confidence that we had the wherewithal to deliver on the jobs program, on our projects and on our social agenda. And we have delivered on that in the past 17 months.

It is interesting that the hard issues—the tough issues—were the ones that the coalition Government left in the bottom drawer. Those issues included the restructuring of the meat industry, for instance. Members opposite had reports on the meat industry to the effect that 17 abattoirs would close and 5,000 jobs would go. But where was that issue? It was in the too-hard basket.

The RFA—the regional forest agreement—which we have negotiated was in the too-hard basket. It could not be delivered, because members opposite panicked about the belting they would get from One Nation in

the election if they moved on it, so they left it in the too-hard basket. The same situation applied with land clearing and all the other large policy issues—whether it was fisheries, primary industries, State development or social policies. All of those tough, difficult decisions—the too-hard decisions—were left in that basket. Theirs was a can't do and couldn't do Government.

It is interesting that the Leader of the Opposition is now trying to remake himself a little and rewrite history. He is right about those projects. During the time of the Goss Government, those projects were vast. The Century Zinc project, the deep ore body in Mount Isa, the George Fisher mine, the south-west Queensland to Roma gas pipeline, the south-west Queensland to Mount Isa gas pipeline, WMC Fertiliser, Korea Zinc, the sale of the State gas pipeline, Ernest Henry and QCL were all generated in the Goss Government's time.

But what about the projects that were lost between 1996 and 1998? The coalition Government walked away from Eastlink. The superstadium faltered. What a farce that was—that it actually put in place the superstadium! What about the cruise ship terminal, the Hail Creek coal project, Calliope Metals and Austeel? The list goes on. But the best was Starland—fantasy land.

I have to say that if it was a Labor Government that had developers walk through its door and, with no due diligence in the project, seek a loan of \$1.4m, and the loan had been granted but never repaid, and one of those directors was the spouse of a Federal conservative member of Parliament, there would have been a royal commission. The matter would have been off to the CJC quicker than one could blink. But it was okay for members opposite, because that was the way they did business. It is not the way that we do business.

Ms Bligh: It's not too late for that.

Mr ELDER: The Minister is right. It probably is not too late for a little peek from the CJC. The point is that if a Labor Government had done that, there would have been a hue and cry, but that was never the case. Members opposite snuck it under the carpet or left it in a drawer. Their only difficulty is that I happened to come across that drawer. And I can tell those members that I am doing a little more work in relation to looking at the consultancies and who paid the consultants. I am also doing a little more work to see whether or not any political donations were made to their political donation funds from

those particular gentlemen. I will take my time, and I will do them slowly. I have a very keen interest in seeing where my investigations lead me.

In terms of his rhetoric, the temporary Leader of the Opposition is trying to save himself from the rat pack, because they are coming at 100 miles an hour. One only has to read the Bulletin poll this week to know that he is in trouble. And when the polls start to plummet and when the next one on his leadership comes out, he will know that he is in real trouble. That is when Opposition members will really come kicking—when they have the nerve and the intellectual fortitude to take him on.

We can see how the Leader of the Opposition is trying to undermine the initiatives of this Government—undermine, whine, whinge, and wreck the economy if he can. Whether it is Tarong, the gas pipeline, Millmerran or Kogan Creek, he is trying to get in there and undermine this Government.

Time expired.

Mr SANTORO (Clayfield—LP) (5.26 p.m.): We have heard it all again tonight: a lot of bluster, a lot of rhetoric and absolutely no delivery. Do members know what the business community is saying around the town? They are saying, "We like the Premier. He has a nice smile. But we are not seeing very much happening." I do not know who the Deputy Premier is mixing with in the business community, but they are saying, "We get a smile and a slap on the back—'g'day, how are you, mate? You are looking good. You are doing all right." But the business community—the builders, the businesspeople and the employer organisations—are saying, "We get a smile from the Premier." But they do not say that about the Deputy Premier, because the style that he exhibits in this place, which is one of the most thuggish that one could ever get, is what he displays in the business community, and they do not like him one little bit.

So take the Premier's smile away from this Government's public relations exercise and all we have left is a Government that is destroying business confidence and indulging in political dishonesty. It has no delivery and no performance. The figures speak for themselves. Full-time employment was down last month. The unemployment rate was up to the second highest in Australia. Do Government members call that performance? They talk about Breaking the Unemployment Cycle and expenditure. What the Premier outlined was precisely what the Labor Party

does best: it throws money, money, money at everything that moves, and it gets absolutely no results.

What did the Opposition achieve? Record job creation! That cannot be denied. I challenge the Treasurer, who is about to speak, to produce figures to show that we did not have record job creation. Forty per cent of all full-time and part-time jobs in Australia during the coalition's term in Government were created in Queensland. We had record low industrial disputation.

Mr Borbidge: Down to 16.3% under Labor.

Mr SANTORO: The Leader of the Opposition is right and the Labor Party is absolutely wrong. When Goss left Government, we had record disputation in Queensland. Their union mates and their union friends were up against their throats, and they were tearing them apart. There was record industrial disputation in Queensland.

When we left Government, we had months and months—years—of successive record low industrial disputation. We had a record Capital Works Program. I heard the Premier this morning interject and say, "We are cleaning up after you. We are finishing off the highway to the Gold Coast." Of course, this Government is finishing it off! That is another project that we started. We had a record Capital Works Program which this Government is finishing off. We had balanced surplus Budgets. But for the first time in decades, Queensland now has a Budget that is effectively in deficit, and people are beginning to realise that. It is one of this Government's best kept secrets, but people are beginning to realise that. The Deputy Premier can smirk and say, "Go away", but it is the truth, and people realise that.

The coalition Government was well on the way towards reducing payroll tax and land tax. But what does business get under this Government? It gets various other components included in the calculation of its payroll tax, so it pays more payroll tax.

What is this Government doing in terms of anti-business practices? It is vandalising the workers compensation system to the point where it needs to charge some employers up to 500% more in premiums. It has vandalised our industrial relations laws. It has included union encouragement clauses. Union entry laws are now absolutely rampant, and unions can walk in and do whatever they want to. It has abolished the coalition's unfair dismissal laws. And all Government members can do is point to Breaking the Unemployment Cycle.

Queensland has a decline in full-time employment and an increase in the unemployment rate. Yet Government members have the cheek to come in here and say, "We introduced the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle program." They may have introduced that program, but it is another manifestation of throwing money at activities and Government expenditure skyrocketing. That is not a bad thing; the coalition Government did its bit in that area. However, we produced the results; the Government has not. Industrial disputation is increasing under this Government. Not even the Government members' mates like them. Over the past year and a half of this Government, there have been more pickets than there were in the two and a half years that the coalition was in Government.

Mr Borbidge: No-confidence motions.

Mr SANTORO: No-confidence motions have been passed all around the place. Yet Government members have the cheek to come into this place and say that they are a good Government in favour of business. The Premier can pull his stunt and read his five-minute amendment to the motion—which we probably would never have been allowed to do—and incorporate the rest in Hansard. It is just a stunt, and business realises that. They have no confidence in the members opposite and people like us will go around telling the truth. The members opposite can say that we are carping and that we are being destructive and negative. However, the truth can never be denied, and nothing that the Treasurer is about to say will be able to deny the truth.

Time expired.

Hon. D. J. HAMILL (Ipswich—ALP) (Treasurer) (5.30 p.m.): The measure of this Government's success can be seen in the text of the amendment that was moved by the Premier. The past 18 months, across a whole range of portfolios of Government, has been a period of real achievement under the Beattie Labor Government in Queensland. From my point of view as Treasurer, the core achievement can be seen in respect of our Charter of Social and Fiscal Responsibility. There are five elements to the charter, and we have delivered on each of those five elements.

The first element is to maintain Queensland's competitive position in respect of taxation. We have delivered that absolutely. In fact, on average, this year Queenslanders will pay \$1,599 in State taxes compared to the average among the other States of \$2,016 per capita. In particular, we are in the process of delivering further reductions in stamp duty to

attract venture capital into our new growth industries of information technology and biotechnology. We are assisting Queensland companies to obtain capital from overseas and foreign markets.

I always know that the Opposition is on a hiding to nothing when the member for Clayfield is rolled out to bolster the argument. True to form, when the member for Clayfield goes over matters to do with tax, he cannot find it in himself to recognise that this Government extended the general rebate on land tax, as we promised that we would when we were in Opposition. We have reduced wagering tax as part of a process that is reinvigorating the State's racing industry and delivering a significant capital uplift to that industry and securing the jobs in it. So in terms of tax, we have delivered.

In relation to our commitment to deliver a Budget surplus, we have done that again—a second Budget with a second surplus. That is important also because, by maintaining that surplus, we ensure that the delivery of services remains sustainable and affordable.

In relation to borrowings—we have run a very prudent, very appropriate policy with respect to capital raisings. We will service our capital raisings within our surplus. That is important for the sustainability of our overall budgetary position. We do not borrow for social infrastructure; we borrow for the formation of capital infrastructure. Again in our Budget—two Budgets in a row—we are delivering record capital programs that not only generate employment in this State but also generate sustained employment in this State. We also make adequate provision for our contingent liabilities.

Notwithstanding that, we have delivered wide-ranging reforms to public sector superannuation to ensure a much fairer and more equitable system of superannuation for public sector employees, particularly those who were the losers under the defined benefits schemes. In that regard, I refer to people such as teachers and nurses, many of whom were women with broken employment patterns. They will now benefit under this Government's far-reaching reforms to public sector superannuation.

At this point, I might also make mention of the ultimate in terms of the bottom line. We committed ourselves to a program of seeking, at the very least, to maintain and aiming to increase the total net worth of the State. When we came to office in June 1998, State net worth stood at \$54.4 billion. Under this, our second Budget, we forecast State net worth to

rise to some \$57.7 billion—a significant increase. How do we do it? By responsible economic management that delivers for Queensland—delivering jobs, delivering economic growth, delivering a sound, secure and comforting environment in which business confidence can thrive and private sector investment can also translate into employment creation.

As we secured growth of 4.75% last year, exceeding the figure for Australia as a whole, likewise we will again put in strong economic growth in 1999-2000—strong economic growth that will see unemployment continue to trend down and benefit Queensland in terms of more jobs for Queenslanders.

Time expired.

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—LP) (5.35 p.m.): The real facts about the last Budget that was brought down in this State were revealed in the comments by economic, independent, well-known people who said, "Beattie sends State into red". Also, there was a \$350m deficit. Of course, it would have been a lot worse because there was \$568m in capital carryover—the biggest carryover ever. That should have been added to the \$350m. Another headline was—

"Can you believe it? Queensland, financial paragon of the federation, brought to the verge of bankruptcy."

These are comments from independent commentators. Another comment was—

"In his second Budget, Beattie has the dubious distinction of bringing down the first effective deficit in Queensland for two decades."

I think that shows that, in terms of the real economic performance of this Government, the Treasurer and the Premier should hang their heads in shame.

I might also say that in terms of major economic reform—for instance, the reduction of tax and particularly tax for business—this Government has not delivered. The Treasurer said that the Labor Government has delivered on land tax. I notice that that is guaranteed for one year only. There is no guarantee in the out years that the Government will continue to reduce land tax, as the coalition said that it would, and completely abolish it. We have the absolute furphy that payroll tax is being reduced. Yes, it is being reduced by 0.1% per annum over the next two years. Of course, for the first time, employer superannuation contributions are going to be added to the payroll tax equation. This means that many more small businesses will be brought within

the purview of paying payroll tax—another clear demonstration of hypocrisy on the part of the Beattie Government.

I would also like to comment on unemployment. The Government was going to get the unemployment rate down to 5%. We know that the last real unemployment figure released was 8.7%—the highest for any State in the nation—and yet we are hearing from the Treasurer and Premier Beattie what strong economic growth we have and how they are delivering on jobs.

I would like to refer to the November 1999 Queensland Treasury Queensland Economic Update. I am sure that the Treasurer is very familiar with it. It states—

"The number of persons employed in Queensland fell 0.1%—"

which is 1,300 jobs—

"in trend terms during October 1999 (rest of Australia, up 0.3%), with revisions to the trend data indicating that employment in the State has now fallen for two consecutive months. This follows a long period of sustained strong economic growth in Queensland, with the State's annual employment growth rate having exceeded that of the rest of Australia for 39 consecutive months prior to September 1999."

We know who was in Government for most of that time: the coalition, not Labor. So Labor in Queensland is following exactly the same trends as Labor Governments did when they were in power in other States. The update also goes on to state—

"Queensland's annual growth has eased in recent months and is currently at its lowest level since June 1997."

The Treasurer made much of the sale of the TAB and the sale of the Bank of Queensland. Of course, before the election we saw the figures showing how Labor was going to fund its election promises, so we know that the Government had factored in the sale of the TAB and the Bank of Queensland. It would be very interesting to know how it is going to pay for the Lang Park stadium. There is no money for that. Instead, the money will come out of the funding for hospitals, schools and roads, purely so that Mr Beattie can deliver on the promise that he made to Bob Gibbs and Rugby League before the last election. It was in writing and he had to deliver. That is the only reason that he did deliver. Members have not seen what is in writing; that has been well hidden. But I am sure that at some stage it will come to the surface.

The mastermind behind "Technoflop" is sitting on the opposite side of the House. I still hear from people throughout the IT industry in Queensland, Australia and overseas how it has set back our State in terms of people's perceptions of Queensland's ability to manage such important economic issues. All we hear from the member opposite is that it was the Federal Government's fault, but it was very much his fault. He did not do his homework and his answer was to sack five innocent public servants. Jim is a real big bloke! He sacked those people. He finds his foil; he finds his scapegoats.

Mr ELDER: I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks offensive. They are untrue and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

Mrs SHELDON: They are very true, but if the Minister finds them offensive I will withdraw them.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member will withdraw.

Mrs SHELDON: I did, Mr Speaker.

Mr ELDER: I rise to a point of order. I find her second remarks offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

Mrs SHELDON: The Minister is very touchy. I withdraw.

Mr Elder: Tell the truth.

Mrs SHELDON: That will be the day when the Minister tells the truth.

One of the other taxes that this Government could not follow through on reducing was stamp duty for the refinancing of businesses.

Time expired.

Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (5.40 p.m.): Fancy the member for Caloundra lecturing this House on the Budget. She is the person who introduced the capital works freeze when the coalition came to Government in 1996. She froze capital works the length and breadth of this State. Queensland businesses were put out of work, workers lost their jobs and the unemployment rate rose during her time in Government. Despite that, she has the hide to come in here and lecture us about the Budget.

The member for Caloundra, in the first Budget that she brought down in this House, introduced seven new taxes and charges. We will never forget that. Seven new taxes and charges were introduced—on TAFE courses, on national parks, on fuel and oils and all the other things.

Mr Borbidge: Fuel and oil?

Mr BREDHAUER: She introduced taxes on oils and the electorate will never forget it.

Mrs SHELDON: I rise to a point of order. Could the member elaborate on the tax on oils? Oils ain't oils?

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

Mr BREDHAUER: The member for Caloundra, with the complicity of the member for Gregory who was then the Transport Minister, ripped \$100m out of QR CSO funding. That CSO funding was reduced to such a low level that Queensland Rail's very profitability was put at risk. The member for Caloundra left the \$120m black hole in the Pacific Motorway project, which this Government had to fix up.

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order. That is a fabrication. I find it offensive and I ask for those remarks to be withdrawn.

Mr BREDHAUER: I withdraw. The other day, the Premier and I opened the first stage of the Pacific Motorway at Nerang. The people there knew that it was the Labor Government that delivered the Pacific Motorway to the people of the Gold Coast. They knew that we were the ones who got on with the job. Almost 2,000 workers were employed directly on that project because we secured the funding for it after the coalition left a black hole under it. Another 4,000 Queensland workers were associated with that project. I can tell the House that the people of Nerang are eternally grateful to us for picking up the scraps that the coalition left behind on the Gold Coast in places such as the electorates of the member for Surfers Paradise and the others opposite who used to sit on the front bench.

The weekend before last, the Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson, was in town. I know that the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Surfers Paradise, and the member for Gregory were not present because they were not on the invitation list that was furnished by the Deputy Prime Minister's office. I can tell them that we had a fine time at the signing of the agreement for the Port Road. A sum of \$111m will be provided for the first stage of the Port Road project, which will create 800 jobs. It will enable us to develop the Australia TradeCoast precinct, which the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development is driving in cooperation with the Brisbane Airport Corporation Limited, the Port of Brisbane Authority and the Brisbane City Council. This Government will oversee the greatest period of development in that area.

The port of Brisbane project will create jobs and economic opportunities not just for south-east Queensland but for the entire State. That is a major project.

About two weeks before that, the Premier and I visited Maryborough, because we are interested in regional development. We went to Maryborough to open the new tilt train workshop, which will develop the \$139m diesel tilt trains that will run from Rockhampton to Cairns. Queenslanders will enjoy the same benefits from that service as are being offered by the Brisbane to Rockhampton and Brisbane to Bundaberg tilt train services. We are delivering jobs and projects for Queensland.

Up in Cairns, we delivered the acceleration of funding for the Portsmouth Road project. In the north west, we delivered accelerated funding for the redevelopment of the Barkly Highway. We have been working with the Commonwealth on those important regional development initiatives. The member for Gregory did nothing. When he was the Minister, he sat on his backside and did nothing, even though he could have delivered it.

Mr JOHNSON: I rise to a point of order. You pious, sanctimonious hypocrite.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr JOHNSON: I find that remark offensive and I ask for it to be withdrawn. John Anderson will be hearing about this one. The Minister has not heard the end of this.

Mr BREDHAUER: I withdraw, and I rest my case.

Mr BEANLAND (Indooroopilly—LP) (5.45 p.m.): Unemployment is up and job creation is half what it was under the coalition, yet the Premier comes into this Chamber and defends his Government's record with yet another stunt. That is what this is: it is another stunt. This is a Budget document, nothing more and nothing less. It is just another stunt by the Premier, as we have seen time and time again. A few moments ago we saw another stunt pulled by the Minister for Transport, who tried to claim credit for the Pacific Motorway upgrade. Of course we know that Labor lost office through its failure to agree to construct the Pacific Motorway. I remember well the so-called teddy bear tunnel, the koala tunnel. I remember well how they were going to put a toll road down there.

Mr BREDHAUER: I rise to a point of order. We did not lose office over the koala motorway. We lost it over a secret deal between the coalition and the Police Union.

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

Mr BEANLAND: Again we have another stunt from the Minister for Transport, who has nothing to add to the debate. We have seen such stunts performed by all members of the Ministry in this place. We have seen stunt after stunt after stunt. They do not go to bed at nights thinking of jobs, jobs, jobs. They go to bed thinking, "What stunt can I pull tomorrow?" All we see are stunts, stunts, stunts.

Let us look at some of the details. The Government likes to direct attention to the Yellow Pages Small Business Index. It indicates that business confidence has plummeted from 60% to 43% during the calendar year. If one looks at New South Wales, which is led by the Government's colleague Bob Carr, business confidence has risen from 46% to 57%. In Queensland, business confidence has gone down, down, down. The record of this Government is that anything positive goes down, down, down, and it is no wonder when one looks at the calibre of Ministers.

I noticed that the Premier did not mention his net bet achievement. He ran right away from that stunt. All we hear from members on the other side of the House is rhetoric. Let us look at job creation: 37.3% of all jobs in Australia were created by the former coalition Government. That figure is now down to 16.3%, which is more than half. That is what we get from this Government. The Budget itself has a deficit of \$1,235m. Standard & Poor's and a couple of newspapers picked that fact up, but it was glossed over by the Government. It is on pages 93 and 94 of Budget Paper No. 2 for the world to see. Mr Speaker, you, I and everybody else can look at it. The unemployment rate in this State goes up and up. It is not coming down, as the Government would like to pretend.

I notice that the Government is even claiming the Goodwill Games, but we all know what happened there. It was a gain of the former Government. My colleague the member for Noosa, the former Minister, acquired the Goodwill Games for the State. The Government can never let somebody else take the credit.

I notice that Government members did not mention their great effort on Baywatch—what a disaster it was—or some of the other things, such as Technomart III. They are not mentioned in this stunt document, and neither is Expo 2002.

I should spend a little time talking about Expo 2002 because that would have been one of the great achievements for this State. The former coalition Government did the work to get it started. When the opportunity came along, this Government just said, "No, we do not want it." There was an opportunity to really make this State the Smart State—an opportunity for technology and all the benefits that that brings to a State such as this. We see what happened in Silicon Valley in California. That sort of thing could have happened here, but no, not this Government, not these Ministers. They walked right away from it. Time and time again this Government has shown that anything that is tough, anything that requires a bit of extra effort, it walks away from. It simply does not produce the results. It is a Government of non-achievement and of red tape.

I will just spend a few moments looking at a few of the other issues. The matter of payroll tax has been mentioned in passing by one of my colleagues. What this Government fails to mention is that, in reducing payroll tax by 0.1% per annum, it ended up including the compulsory employer superannuation contribution in the calculation of that payroll tax.

Mr Borbidge: Another deception!

Mr BEANLAND: Yes, another deception. That means that at the end of the day the business people are paying more.

Time expired.

Hon. T. McGRADY (Mount Isa—ALP) (Minister for Mines and Energy and Minister Assisting the Deputy Premier on Regional Development) (5.50 p.m.): Under the Westminster system, we all know that Oppositions have a duty to oppose. Oppositions do not have a duty to run the State down. That is what this coalition does day after day after day. Oppositions have a responsibility, and their responsibility is to actually try to sell the State, try to tell people some of the benefits. What the Opposition has been saying tonight is simply not true.

In common with some of the other Ministers here, I go around the boardrooms of this State. Everywhere we go we are told the same thing by those directors and those other people: this is a good State; it is a good State in which to do business. If members opposite go overseas, they will hear from those people overseas that Queensland is the best place to do business because we have a good rail system, good infrastructure, good industrial relations and a good product to sell. Yet members opposite come back here and day

after day we hear this coalition rubbishing this State and trying to sell it down.

It has always been the Labor Party that had the vision in this State. Whenever we needed a fillip, it was always the Labor Party that came to the rescue. Let me just repeat to the Opposition what we did during the Goss years. For instance, there was the RA55. As a result of the decision which the Goss Government took, 12 new coalmines were established in this State, providing hundreds and hundreds of jobs in those coal areas. We did away with the concept that 12 or 18 people sitting around a table would determine where new mines were built. We did away with the concept of the brown paper bag. We let the market forces determine whether or not the coalmines would open.

We then moved to the Carpentaria/Mount Isa minerals province where, regardless of what the Opposition says, it was the Labor Government that brought or assisted in bringing Century on line, Ernest Henry on line, Cannington on line, Osborne on line and, of course, the massive expenditure by Mount Isa Mines. Of course, the greatest thing of all was the introduction of natural gas into the north-west. I hear coalition members say on a regular basis that they were the ones who introduced this; they were the ones who laid the foundation work. However, that is totally and utterly untrue. Every time they say that, it is an insult to Alf Paton and those other people who assisted the Government in pioneering this development. We then compared the Goss years to the Borbidge years and what did we have—and my colleagues have spoken about this before—a total freeze where mines closed down. Mines in Georgetown actually closed down because of the freeze imposed by the Borbidge Government.

Let us come back again now to another Labor Government—a Government with some vision. The first thing we did was remove the freeze; we restructured the electricity industry; we signed off on Callide C; we gave the okay on Millmerran; and we gave the okay to Tarong. At this point, as honourable members would know, we are doing all we can to ensure that the pipeline becomes a reality. What does that mean? It means jobs for the people in this State; it means jobs for the people in the regions.

Let us just talk about some other things that we have in the pipeline. We have chapter 2 of the Carpentaria/Mount Isa minerals province where groups of people are working long and hard, aided by the Government, to

start the chapter 2 minerals side. We are not just concentrating on the mining sector; we are also talking about agribusiness; we are talking about education and training; and we are talking about tourism. When this comes to fruition, which it will, we are going to see thousands and thousands of jobs generated in the north-west.

The people of Queensland can rest assured that they have a Government here which is delivering. Honourable members should contrast what we are doing and what the Goss Government did to what the Borbidge Government did. I think that the people of Queensland know that they have a good Government here, and I am certain that the business community understands and appreciates just what we are trying to do to stimulate the economy here and to provide jobs right around this State.

Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 42—Attwood, Beattie, Bligh, Boyle, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Clark, J. Cunningham, D'Arcy, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Gibbs, Hamill, Hayward, Lavarch, Lucas, Mackenroth, McGrady, Mickel, Mulherin, Musgrove, Nelson-Carr, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pitt, Reeves, Reynolds, Roberts, Rose, Schwarten, Spence, Struthers, Welford, Wellington, Wells, Wilson. Tellers: Sullivan, Purcell

NOES, 39—Beanland, Black, Borbidge, Connor, Cooper, Davidson, Elliott, Feldman, Gamin, Goss, Grice, Healy, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Kingston, Knuth, Laming, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, Malone, Mitchell, Paff, Pratt, Prenzler, Quinn, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Springborg, Stephan, Turner, Veivers, Watson. Tellers: Baumann, Hegarty

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Any future divisions on this motion will be of two minutes' duration.

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

AYES, 42—Attwood, Beattie, Bligh, Boyle, Braddy, Bredhauer, Briskey, Clark, J. Cunningham, D'Arcy, Edmond, Elder, Fenlon, Foley, Gibbs, Hamill, Hayward, Lavarch, Lucas, Mackenroth, McGrady, Mickel, Mulherin, Musgrove, Nelson-Carr, Nuttall, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pitt, Reeves, Reynolds, Roberts, Rose, Schwarten, Spence, Struthers, Welford, Wellington, Wells, Wilson. Tellers: Sullivan, Purcell

NOES, 39—Beanland, Black, Borbidge, Connor, Cooper, Davidson, Elliott, Feldman, Gamin, Goss, Grice, Healy, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Kingston, Knuth, Laming, Lester, Lingard, Littleproud, Malone, Mitchell, Paff, Pratt, Prenzler, Quinn, Rowell, Santoro, Sheldon, Simpson, Slack, Springborg, Stephan, Turner, Veivers, Watson. Tellers: Baumann, Hegarty

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

The House adjourned at 6.04 p.m.